

# TRUTH FOR THE TIME.

(PART IX.)

BEING NOTES OF ADDRESSES AND  
READINGS AT QUEMERFORD,  
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## MESSAGE TO THE QUEMERFORD MEETING.

It is much before me just now to bring before the brethren how little the truth, made known to Mr. Darby, has been maintained and pursued by us. I am trying to write a review of the way it has been opposed and refused, and I want them to make it a prominent subject at Quemerford, that they should give it more thought, as that which has been given by the Lord in this century, each one being responsible for its maintenance. This is my message to them, with my best love.

REVIEW OF HOW THE TRUTH, WHICH THE LORD  
REVIVED TO THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY,  
HAS BEEN OPPOSED AND HOW LITTLE ACCEPTED.

The Lord was pleased to revive through dear Mr. Darby the truth that Christ is the Head of the body, while he was still in the Church of England. Almost concurrent with this the opposition began. Dr. Pusey, who was of his own age, brought into force the great clerical opposition, called Ritualism. At that time some of the leading men at Oxford—Mr. Newton and Mr. Harris—left the Established Church, and

consorted with Mr. Darby. He having also left the Established Church, now propounded the light which he had received, having first learnt the gospel which enabled him to apprehend the truth himself.

I did not know Mr. Darby until after he was in Plymouth in 1833. After leaving the University, I went to stay with him at a brother's house at Cork, where I was his constant companion; and just to give an idea of the truth that came out, I mention an attempt of mine to compose a hymn, entirely a new idea to me, as a divinity student, raw from the University, and before I was twenty.

Hark! happy saints! loud lift your voice,  
Tell to the world how ye rejoice—  
    Yon heaven is your home.  
There lives your Head with glory crowned;  
Ye—members, for His kingdom bound,  
    All cry—"Lord Jesus, come."

You may see from this how very clearly was brought out the fact that our place is heaven, and that Christ is our Head there.

Not long after this there was a great movement in Plymouth on prophetic questions, to which Mr. Newton gave his exclusive attention, and most were carried away by it. During the few months that I was with Mr. Darby I used to hear him complain of what was going on as to

the line of teaching. When I was in Plymouth in 1844, they had become a large number, with a very large building to meet in, holding 1200 people. That was before the division. I want to point out how this prophetic teaching first diverted saints from the line of truth which the Lord had given. The division actually ensued (before the evil doctrine as to the Lord's Person was discovered), because the course of Mr. Newton and his adherents denied that the saints in one place are one with the saints everywhere, and are practically one body.

The next opposition was from Mr. Dorman, and was joined by Mr. Darby's own brother and others, who condemned him for saying that the Lord bore sufferings which were not atoning, and that He gave up the life to which sin attached. So much was Mr. Darby affected by it that he proposed to cease to break bread ; but a few of us met him at a brother's house, and dissuaded him from such a course. Thus we can easily see how low an idea was prevalent among brethren as to the Lord's humanity and work.

This discussion was a great help to me, because when I looked through scripture I saw that there were many sufferings which were not atoning sufferings. And then came the question as to the judgment of sin. There could not be

really the judgment of sin if the life was not given up. If the judgment is really borne, the man must be given up—not only the sin, but the man in whom the sin was. Mr. Dorman and others would not have it that Christ bore the judgment; they held that He only bore death. This was in May, 1866.

At a large meeting in Manchester in 1873, I remember calling the attention of brethren to the way the enemy had endeavoured to spoil the pure stream given by the Lord, first by one thing, and then by another. I then referred to the subject—speaking on the passage, “Not holding the Head” (Mr. Darby was present). I was tracing how the truth came out, how it was refused, and how little it had been accepted. I shewed that the opposition of the enemy at that moment took the form of proclaiming the gospel without the church—limiting the truth to the salvation of souls. We know what a wave of gospel excitement prevailed at that time. I remember also calling the brethren’s attention at a large brothers’ meeting in London to the fact of how the gospel was set forth without separation from the world, and an assumption of holiness without separation from ecclesiastical system—just the difference between El-elohe-Israel and Bethel. The one, where there is no sense of His presence,



the other—where the presence of God affects you down to the smallest detail of your family. The heaven has spread from that day to this, namely, that you can have *professed* nearness to God (the right ground and the right blessing) and yet have no sense of His presence. It is really the effect of accepting and *exclusively* adhering to objective truth without the corresponding subjective state, which is the Spirit's work in us.

Subsequent to this the new creation was denied at Reading. It was said that old things became new, and from that day to this great ignorance of what is the character and nature of new creation has marked the opposers, and I am afraid there is still a very imperfect sense of what new creation really is—"the new man which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth." Those who dwell exclusively on objective truth can never know experimentally what new creation is—that it is the great grace of God to give us a state fitted to the reception of His grace, as the best robe fitted the prodigal for the great supper. Thus God fits us for the new position which His grace has secured to us.

There is, thank God, a better and clearer idea now of what the new creation is than there was thirty years ago; but many of the evange-

lists do not really apprehend fully that the old man is removed from the eye of God in judgment. If this were truly apprehended they would not address the old man by seeking to work on his feelings. It is quite right to awaken souls to their lost condition, but the grace of God is that He has removed that man in judgment. But I believe that what is not understood is the nature of the *Man*, the unique character of the One who has superseded the first man before the eye of God; and until this is apprehended, and that we derive from Christ, as members of His body, there can be no apprehension that He is our Head—the source of all life and power, or of what it is to be united to Him.

Any one acquainted with the details of the controversy from Witney in 1888, on to the present time, must be convinced of the ignorance of some of the most advanced teachers as to what it is to have Christ formed in you. This was foreseen by Mr. Darby when he recommended the study of John's writings, which in a great measure are subjective.

The Lord give grace to His saints to awaken them to their immense loss in not making more of the great truth which He has revived among us. I see every one's power is in proportion as he approaches to it.

*June 1st, 1896.*

J. B. STONEY.

# RESPONSIBILITY

AS TO

## MAINTENANCE OF THE TRUTH.

(JOSHUA V.)

I WOULD not venture to say anything at all, after what has been before us, did I not in some sense feel conscious of having a word from the Lord. And what I first wish to press upon each one is our individual responsibility in regard to the maintenance of the truth. It is very easy to put the responsibility of maintaining the truth on those who minister the truth. It is certainly not given to every one to minister the truth. Ministry is in the power of gifts from Christ, and He claims to be sovereign in that matter; and it is a privilege to minister in the truth. But I say without any hesitation that it is the responsibility of every one of us to maintain the truth. We do not maintain the truth merely by clinging tenaciously to the terms of the truth, but by being ourselves the exponents of the truth. You may think what I say is hard, but I judge that we ought *to be prepared* to surrender everything—whatever we have in this life, the dearest ties and associations, whatever honour

or glory or position we may have—in order to be exponents of the truth which the Lord has given us to maintain. It is very easy to justify having things agreeable here—and God may allow us to enjoy many things here—but they may readily be too prominent with us, and when they are, the truth has a second place; and which, I ask, should have the first place—the things of this life, or the truth? Every right-minded person would allow that the truth is to be the first thing, and we are at all cost to maintain it, and the divine way to maintain it is by ourselves being the expression of it, and everything has to be subordinate to that. So I say that, in a sense the less a man has in this world the better. If we have confidence in God, God can care for His people, and He is not limited to human methods. People make provision for their families in their way, and think that God is bound to that way. God has His own way, and can make provision in His own way; He is not bound to any particular way.

I think we often lack in piety. Faith is, that we have the light of God's things; piety is, that we bring God into our own things. If you make the truth the first concern and are here entirely for the Lord, the Lord will own you, and He will provide for your things; we have

no need to be anxious on that score. For myself I can say, that is the line which I would seek to follow.

I only say that by way of preface, for what I want to come to is this—we have heard of what the Lord has been pleased to give back to us in these last days—the truth that Christ, the glorified Man, is the Head in heaven, and that His body is here. There are thousands of Christians who would allow the body in glory. What I saw long since was that the practical difficulty with saints lay in inability to realise the truth that the body was *here* in completeness. I imagine that it is accepted by every one here to-day, that the body is here, and that Christ is Head to the body. That is the prominent truth, as I should understand, which the Lord has given back to us in this century, and in which we have to stand.

There is another cognate truth, and that is, that the body is derived from Christ. Eve was taken from Adam that she might be united to Adam. No other was fit to be a help-meet for him. So the body has been taken from Christ in the time of His death to Israel, in order to be fit to be His companion in glory—His bride; that is, that she might be for His pleasure and share His honour. I just refer

to it, because that is what God has been pleased to bring us to.

I want to say another word in regard to our responsibility to maintain the truth. There are two things here to which we have to return; two things which marked saints at the beginning. Where there has been departure you are bound to go back to first principles, and you have to go to the outset to find them. If the Spirit of God has opened your eyes in any measure to the true state of things, that is what you have to do. Now the two things to which I refer are great safeguards; and you must keep within them if you want to be in the truth, and in liberty from what is about. They are the reproach of Christ and the power of the Spirit. If I may speak of them as principles (though they are not exactly principles, for the Spirit of God is not a principle), these are what you must hold to, if you want to be maintained in liberty from all that is about us—that is, from Babylon.

I want to shew the working of these principles at the beginning and now. You must remember that at the time Christ came, the people of God were under the power of Babylon. Of course, it was the Roman power at the moment, but it was the continuation of Babylon; it was the lower part of the same great image. That is where the people of God were at the moment—captive

to Babylon: they had been under captivity *in* Babylon, now they were not captive *in* Babylon, but to it. The course of things is prophetically told by the prophet Isaiah. God brought a remnant of the people back into the land under Gentile protection, in order that Christ might be presented to them. That was the external state of things, and Christ was presented to the responsibility of the people; but as to ecclesiastical form and order, everything was under the protection of the Gentile power. The Gentile power was dominant, and if it saw fit to set aside the Jewish form and order, it had power to do it. If it saw fit to maintain it, they could have it. They were dependent on the Gentile power. Christ was presented to the responsibility of the people under these conditions, but rejected.

The point is this: the Babylonish power was not set aside. Christ was crucified at the hand of that power. The Gentile was guilty in this. The Jew cast Him out of the vineyard, and put Him into the hand of the Roman power, and that power was immediately responsible for crucifying the Lord of glory. The apostle holds that the princes of this world crucified the Lord of glory. God did not come in at the moment to destroy the Romish power; on the contrary, He allowed it to remain and to

completely set aside the Jewish polity and ecclesiastical order. The whole thing was broken up, Jerusalem became a heap of stones, and it was done by the hand of the beast—the Roman power; and the ecclesiastical order—the camp—was completely set aside.

Now, I would ask, how were the saints—the remnant of that day—who did not surrender the truth (for the mass had turned apostate), how were they to escape from the Babylonish power? For Rome was not publicly judged at that time; on the contrary, it got more complete power. I will tell you how they were set free from it. It was by the acceptance of the two principles to which I have referred, the reproach of Christ, and the power of the Spirit. It was thus that Christians were saved in that day from the Babylonish power. In accepting the reproach of Christ they were delivered from ecclesiastical form and order, from dependence on the camp, as we read in the last chapter of Hebrews: "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach," and had no longer occasion to look for countenance from the Gentile power. They might in leaving the camp have to come under the reproach of impiety, for that matter; but they did not concern themselves about that. Their language was, Christ suffered without the gate;



we go to Him, and bear His reproach. In thus leaving outward form and order they became independent of man, and dependent on a power which man cannot understand at all—on the power of the Spirit of God. Some may, perhaps say: Did not the apostles set up an ecclesiastical form and order? I believe the apostles set up nothing but what was in the power of the Spirit of God. Jew and Gentile were builded together to be the habitation of God through the Spirit; but that is not form or ecclesiastical order, that is spiritual. The idea of it is that the saints are “a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices.” The whole thing was pervaded by the Spirit. That is my idea of what was set up by the apostles; nothing outside the vital power of the Holy Ghost in the soul, and that was the work of the apostles. The point to me is this—that Christians were practically set free from the Romish power because they were not dependent on it. They were prepared to suffer as Christ had suffered if need be; they had nothing but the Spirit of God. The two things that guarded them were the reproach of Christ and the power of the Spirit.

Now I want to come to the present time, which is much more difficult. Things are in such confusion. Babylon is now within; not the Romish

power, but the popish power, and I want to tell you the character of that power. It is a *worldly* power. I do not believe in the inherent power of the pope a bit. He is ruled by the world. How did he get his power? By trimming his sails to the powers that were, and playing off one against another. It was diplomacy, by which he maintained, and does maintain his power; but he is not the power, the world is the power. The *form* of Babylon is ecclesiastical, and there the saints were in bondage; but in being in bondage to popery they were in bondage to the world.

And how have we got free? On just the same principles as at the beginning, namely, by being apart from ecclesiastical form and organisation and order in the acceptance of the reproach of Christ, and by the power of the Spirit. I want every one to weigh these things, to see the immense importance of them. It is only thus that we can be maintained free from the tyranny of the world-power which has come into the professing church.

I do not believe that the Lord intended that the prominent thing with us should be ecclesiastical form and order. The assumption of this was the first great declension at Plymouth, the evil which sought to isolate the meeting there, and to give to it a certain

distinct form. We do not want to fall into the same error. We are in the scene of Christ's reproach, in the place in which He has been rejected, and we should be distrustful of everything which is not the immediate fruit of the power of the Spirit of God. If we look at the things about us, as, for instance, the State Churches, we see that while they have escaped in a certain sense from Rome, they have halted half way, and have set up in some degree the same thing in themselves. They are not in liberty. Then the various dissenting systems have set up for themselves a form and order—not exactly on the lines of Babylon, but they have not escaped the bondage of the world, and are fast going back under it. Why? Because they have not accepted the reproach of Christ and the power of the Spirit. We have professedly accepted both, and they are our safeguards. The moment you surrender either you will get back into bondage to the great world-power. You may get back into it in greater or less degree, but you will surely end there if you travel away from these two great principles.

What we find in this chapter (Joshua v.) connects itself very intimately with what I have sought to put before you, and I may remark first that what we come to here is typical of *assembly* privilege and blessing, that is, of

what is not individual but collective. Where it is a question of the wilderness everything is individual. The wilderness regards the saints as individuals; we enter into that path in which we prove God individually. My exercises in the wilderness are not the exercises of another, and the exercises of another saint are not my exercises. The experience of God which I gain in the wilderness is my own, and the experience which another gains is not mine. As has often been said, the wilderness formed no part of the purpose of God, but of His ways. It is where we learn His ways, where we learn practically what God is to us; and there it is that the manna is the food of our souls. We are supported here by the grace of Christ. Manna is daily grace for daily need. It was Christ's path as a man here. The wilderness is where I learn what Christ was in His lonely pathway down here; the lowly grace of the heavenly Man, the perfect setting forth of what is according to God "in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is," as we get it in Psalm xvi., and again in Psalm xxiii.

But here in Joshua v. we come in type to church associations, to that which is collective and corporate.

The first point to which I want to call your attention is in verse 1: When all the kings on

the other side of Jordan "heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan . . . . their heart melted, neither was there any spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel." Mark the connection with this of the next verse, "*At that time* the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel." You would have thought that if there was no more spirit left in the kings because of what God had done for Israel, that the way was clear for the children of Israel, and that it merely remained for them to go up and take possession. But a great deal of preparation was needful on their part. The first thing you get is circumcision. Circumcision has to be realised in the saints. Why so? That they may "keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace." We could not go further without circumcision. That is what we have to come to. What is it that brings in divergence of feeling and judgment among saints? Not the Spirit, but the flesh. Before we can get on collectively you must have "the putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Without that you cannot keep in the unity of the Spirit. Every one is responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. What is the unity of the Spirit? It is a unity of judgment

and spiritual affection, and there is no real unity apart from spiritual affections. I cannot understand it without. How the Spirit produces it, I judge, is that He keeps the saints under the influence of God's love, and that is the way in which we are bound together.

When I look around at a company of saints it is not unity of doctrine I look for, I should not care for our bond to be unity of doctrine, but I look for unity of affection. Doctrine is not the bond of perfectness but love. We may be lacking as to affection though orthodox as to doctrine. I cannot understand the unity of the Spirit apart from spiritual affection, and it is to be kept in the uniting bond of peace. Peace is there, on God's part there is no disturbing element. God has removed every cause of disturbance. The only thing likely to intrude is the flesh, and it is to be kept out by the power of the Spirit; we are to be maintained in this unity, and to be diligent to keep it in the bond of peace. To that end there is circumcision: "the putting off the body of the flesh through the circumcision of Christ." The body of the flesh I understand to be the weight, the incubus of the flesh; the whole thing goes. That breaks the link with Egypt. If flesh goes, Egypt is gone. Flesh subsists in the things of Egypt; not of the wilderness or of the land. Flesh must have

its food, and the food of flesh is in Egypt. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life. If the body of the flesh is put off, the link with Egypt is for ever broken. Thus the flesh is not to intrude at all. The moment it intrudes it brings in a bit of grit and so disturbs the peace. God has been pleased in divine goodness to remove everything that had any tittle or pretension to disturb. Now we are at liberty and privileged to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; let us look to it then that we do not fail in this! Let us see that our hearts are kept under the influence of divine love, and that thus we *love* one another, and not *watch* one another to see if there be evil. It ought to be pain to see evil in one another; we need to be enlarged in the knowledge of divine love and in love to one another. How can I prove that I love God? By loving the brethren. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him."

That is the first great principle, and so far we have only come to human weakness. If the body of the flesh is put off man has come to the extremity of human weakness, he is no longer

supported by natural power. Natural power is connected with the flesh, but I do not accept that support. (Ver. 9.) "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." I cannot attempt to carry out the things of God in the energy of the flesh; there is no resource left now but the Spirit of God, and in that, man is as to himself weak. As sure as you are in the power of the Spirit of God, you will know that you are weak, "When I am weak then am I strong." Where the Spirit of God is, there is bound to be the sense of weakness.

In Israel, it may be remarked, the males only were circumcised, because they were the strength of Israel. But it is not so now. The males are not the strength of the church. "By one Spirit we are *all* baptized into one body." "As many of you as have been baptised unto Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek . . . there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii. 27, 28.) Every one now, is to have put off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ. It is a principle of universal application: and on it hangs the truth of our being one body in Christ.

We read in verses 10, 11, "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover . . . and they did eat of the old corn



of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the self-same day." Two things go together here, following on the inorrow of the passover; there is unleavened bread, which maintained circumcision, and at the same time the old corn of the land. The first is what the apostle put before the Corinthians, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Here you get the two things combined, and if you know anything about the old corn of the land you will be certain to keep the feast with unleavened bread.

You may ask, What do you understand by the "old corn of the land"? I will tell you—"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above." If you can tell me what is proper to and characteristic of Christ in the scene where He is, I will tell you what the old corn of the land is. It is not the manna; the manna is the grace of Christ in a scene where all is contrary. By the old corn of the land I understand all that is characteristic of Christ in a scene where everything is congruous. Christ is gone back into that scene from which He came, where all is suitable. There is no change in that sense morally, and Christ is the centre there and commands and controls all spiritual

affections. That is to me the thought of the old corn of the land. If we know what it is to have to say to that scene we shall not fail to eat the unleavened bread; you may be sure we shall realise that sincerity and truth are suitable if we know anything of the "things above" where Christ is sitting.

One word more; I understand the eating of the old corn of the land to be not individual but collective privilege. Here you are come, I think, on to assembly ground. It is like the new man, the two (Jew and Gentile), made in Christ into one. I think the old corn of the land has been looked at too much as food individually. It appears to me that it refers to the affections and joys of the holiest, what we feed on in communion. It is spiritual privilege, the appropriation of Christ in what He is before the Father in heavenly affection and order. If you accept that you will understand why the manna ceases. The moment I enter into that scene in which Christ is Head I have done with the wilderness and the individual path, and for the moment I have done with the manna. I have to go back to it; but I enter in spirit on a scene where Christ is all, and for the moment the manna ceases. Of course you get it presented only typically in Joshua v., for when Israel were actually come into the land the manna ceased completely.

And for the Christian, when we truly reach assembly ground, when we enter into the scene of heavenly affections, the manna ceases and you eat the old corn of the land.

The old corn of the land connects itself as we have seen with unleavened bread; and so in Hebrews x. it says, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." "They did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." (Ver. 12.) The fruit of the land of Canaan is what is proper to heaven.

One point more. All that we have seen is paving the way for conflict. (See vers. 13-15.) And in speaking of conflict I may refer to a mistake into which I think we have fallen. We have been accustomed to say that Christ is Head to the assembly and that He is not Lord to the assembly. I quite admit He is Head to the assembly, but the working of that is, that we think when we come to the assembly we have done with the Lord. I admit Christ is not Lord to the assembly as such, but the assembly is privileged to be with the Lord in the conflict. I see in Ephesians we are to be "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might," I do not think that is individual. It is a question of conflict and testimony. The privilege of the assembly is to be with the Lord in the conflict against the power of evil.

The mistake Joshua made was in thinking that the Lord was to be with them, as if the captain of the Lord's host was to fight their battles. He asks, "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" The angel says directly, "Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." It is not a question of My being with you, but of your being with Me. That is the great point. If we understand anything about collective privilege, that is, if we know Christ as the Head of the assembly, then there is another privilege conferred, and that is, to be with Him in conflict against His adversaries—to be associated with Him against the power of evil. I do not think that is much understood by the saints. I think we know what it is to love the Lord individually, to confess Him as Lord, to love Him, and to look for His appearing, and we rejoice to have the Lord with us in our pathway through the wilderness; but that is all connected with our individual path, and there is another thing, which is the proper privilege of the church, namely, to be *with the Lord* in conflict with the wickedness in the heavenly places. "Our conflict is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places."

One word more in connection with verse 15;

“Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.” The ground is holy. When you are with the Lord in spiritual conflict you will not do much if you do not follow holiness. You must put off your shoes from off your feet, for it is holy ground you are upon. You are with the Lord. You have known Him in the assembly declaring the Father’s name to His brethren, leading the praises there; you have tasted that. But now there is the being with Him in the spiritual conflict; and the ground on which you stand is holy.

I only took up this chapter just to indicate these things; and what we have come back to are the two principles that we spoke of—the reproach of Christ and the power of the Spirit. We have escaped in measure from Babylonish captivity, but the liberty can only be maintained on the principles on which we began; we cannot surrender them for a moment; we must accept the reproach of Christ in the power of the Spirit. The Spirit *is here*; the Spirit has come down and convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He is the power to maintain for Christ; and if we accept the reproach of Christ we know no power but that of the Spirit.

You have come to spiritual circumcision that

every difficulty between one and another may be removed, that we may be able to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and in eating the old corn of the land you have come to heavenly associations; and the manna, the food of the wilderness, ceases; and you have come to the Captain of the Lord's host; you are occupied with His interests; you are led by Him into conflict with the power of evil—and the place is holy.

Do not make the fatal mistake of supposing that this refers only to those who minister—that no one is responsible for maintaining and guarding the truth but those who minister it. The spiritual circumcision refers to all. We all have to stand to the truth of it. It is not the "males" now, we have all as a company to stand in the truth which we have professed to accept. "We being many are one body." "All one in Christ." Though it may only be given to a few to minister, it is the responsibility and privilege of each one to stand to, and seek to maintain the truth, and that, not by dogmatism, but by being exponents of it.

F. E. R.



# NOT ONLY DOCTRINE, BUT MANNER OF LIFE.

## PUTTING OFF THE OLD MAN, AND PUTTING ON THE NEW.

(MATT. XXI. 42, 43; EPH. I. 12-14; IV. 20-24, 30.)

I READ that passage in Matthew to shew how it indicates what was before the mind of the Lord when He was rejected here. I cannot express to you, beloved brethren, how much I feel the need there is for us to realise that the Lord has been refused in this world. I think if we pondered it more it would acquire in our souls a tremendous force. I cannot convey to you what appears to me the magnitude of that one great fact, that the Lord Jesus Christ has been rejected here. Now, rejected, He becomes the source, I need hardly say, of altogether another—what shall I call it?—a system of glory, in which the church is associated with Him. But the great fact that He is rejected here is what I want to press upon you.

I think the Lord indicates here to the Jews

what I would that our hearts also should lay hold of in a distinct way. "The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." They held what had been committed to them in an outward, formal way. To speak after our manner, it was a great ecclesiastical system. Now the kingdom proffered to them should be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. There is to be nothing before God but what is real and true. I do not say the church is referred to here. No doubt He refers to the remnant as those who would bring forth the fruit of it. I only speak of the principle. The unfaithful nation should be set aside, and the remnant, as answering to that character, will become the nation. As we know, the remnant in the interval became the church; but "bringing forth the fruits thereof" is the point I would like to press upon you, and to take home to my own heart.

Through God's grace we have had recovered to us the wonderful truths which were given to Mr. Darby in this century. I need hardly say how deeply thankful I am we have not lost them. If it had been a question of our own conduct, the Lord might long ago have let us go into darkness about them. I see how many have turned aside, and if we are



here to-day to think about them it is nothing but the grace of God that has kept us. Surely every heart will be lifted up to the Lord, and accept the warning we have had that we should not be diverted from pursuing them.

It is a great thing to have our faces turned the right way, that is, to the Lord Jesus Christ where He is. God knows our weakness, how long He bears with us! But it is a great thing to have our faces set the right way at all costs, though our own inconsistency is discovered thereby. It is a principle I can honestly say that I have set before myself for many years, that however much the truth cuts me, I will never seek to lower it because experimentally I am not up to it (God knows what may hinder); but I will through God's grace hold the truth and count upon Him, with my face set the right way, to lead me on in it. If we have before us this principle, we may count upon the word, "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." I may, perhaps, have little got hold of what my heart desires, but delighting in the Lord, His things become the attraction for me, and He shews me that which hinders my getting hold of them, and this is where circumcision comes to our relief, instead of being a legal observance.

I thank the Lord for the word to us this morning; for delighting in the Lord we see the need of spiritual circumcision and the acceptance of the reproach of Christ. One thing I have seen lately, and that is, to accept the reproach of Christ. He is disallowed of men. I do not think God could attach His name to anything great in this world. What bears the name of the Lord may become like a great mustard tree, but that is not what the heart of Christ is set upon. The pearl shining in His lustre expresses what the church is to Him. I remember two or three years ago speaking in this very room on Colossians; I was saying that I thought that what makes the church so precious to Christ is that in it He saw, as being of Himself, what would set forth that which was the delight and joy of His own heart—the glory of God, of which He was the effulgence—the Father's glory. He was here for the glory of God, that God might be manifested. He is in heaven now, glorified there, in order that He may glorify the Father from that scene where He is. The Father had given Him out of the world those who believed on Him, and He accepted them as the Father's gift. Thus He brings us as sons to the Father, so that the Father will have His eternal joy in those thus brought to Him, *according to His own heart; but there is*

another thing connected with them as the church—the new Jerusalem—there will be the setting forth of that blessed Man, Christ, who was here in humiliation—God will have His joy in that. The church should be now the setting forth of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God. Israel should have been the vessel of light according to the revelation committed to them; but they were content to be a kind of depositary of the truth. They had the law in a box and guarded the letter of the truth very jealously, but they were not the exponents of it. So it is to-day, in that great Babylonish system, of which we have been hearing, called popery; they possess a most valuable ancient MS of scripture, and guard it with jealous care; but instead of being the exponents of scripture, it is a horrible system of corruption. We have to take care, beloved brethren, that we are not merely depositaries of certain truths and doctrines while we are not the exponents of them.

Here I would say a word, which I think will come home to each one's practical experience, and that is as to the question of being dead with Christ. I think a great many are trying to be it, and in doing so they are trying to deal with themselves. In order to put it more clearly I refer to 2 Timothy ii. 11. The great point the apostle

presses is that you reach Christ really through death, but not through your own death, it is *His* death. You are dead *with Christ*. That means, not that I am trying to deal with myself, but in accepting His death I accept death to all that which He has died to, and consequently His reproach here; I am dead *with Him*. I see the same thought with regard to "risen with Him;" there were those who said the resurrection was past already—their word was beginning to eat as a gangrene. I do not know exactly what form it took in their minds, perhaps it was the idea of a spiritual resurrection—that you are raised from a state of sin and death to a state of righteousness (an idea that is abroad in Christendom to-day, as the result of new birth and conversion). They had lost the great truth of being risen *with Christ*, and consequently they had lost association with Christ. If you are trying to accept resurrection apart from being risen with Christ, you lose the truth of association with Christ. It is *His death*; I am dead with Him; then I am in His reproach. If He is risen I am risen with Him. What does that mean? I seek the things that are above, where He sits. It necessarily puts me in association with Him outside of the things here. If a man merely thinks that by his conversion he has been raised out of a death

of sin, he can go on with this present world; he will not accept Christ's reproach here. I am not speaking of reckoning ourselves dead to sin, that must result from accepting death *with Christ*, because He has died to sin. If I refer to the man with the palsy in the gospels, it will illustrate what I have said. He got forgiveness of sins, healing, and was sent to his home. He returns to his citizenship in Israel. And the thought in Christendom is, that a converted man is a better citizen: he can enjoy the providential goodness of God in this world. "Dead and risen with Christ" does not mean that. It brings you into association with that blessed Man, and then you accept His reproach here.

I press this, beloved brethren, it is not what we say, it is what we are: "our manner of life" as well as "our doctrine." I do pray God that not one of us may be diverted from the great truth that has been brought before us. Take as the beginning dead with Christ, risen with Christ, then I think you will understand association with Him, and that you get everything from that blessed Man—severed from things here, but deriving from Him.

I see the saints here together on such an occasion as this, and I ask, What are we *for Christ*? Only just so much as the Spirit of God has wrought in forming Christ in us.

Everything else is nothing but flesh, and must be dropped sooner or later, for only what is of Christ abides. It is a blessed thing to learn to drop things now, and to accept the reproach of Christ. But "He is *the beginning*, the Firstborn from the dead." There I learn in association with Him that there is a new origin, deriving from Christ risen out of death; that lies at the very foundation of the truth of the church as His body.

I read the passage in Ephesians connected with the Holy Spirit, because I desire to press a point. While the Holy Spirit is given to us upon the ground of redemption, yet He comes in connection with the truth of another Man being before God. The Spirit of God is given to *believers in Christ*. Israel will be redeemed, but they will not have the Spirit of God indwelling as we have. Redemption lies at the foundation of everything, but the Lord Jesus Christ having gone up into glory there is a new man before God—a Man is there to God's entire satisfaction. The Spirit of God has come down now that Jesus is glorified, and it is in connection with that Man that we have received the Spirit of God. "IN WHOM having believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." It is in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has been raised from the dead

and glorified at the right hand of God, that we believe. Not only has all that is offensive to God been removed in the cross, and also the man in whom the sin was, the evil has been cleansed, and man delivered from his lost condition; but there is a new Man before God. He is there—I wish I could express it!—but I ask you to think what the delight of God is as He sees that blessed Man in His presence. He is to us as there the Tree of life. There is a verse in one of Mr. Darby's hymns, which, while speaking of His bringing forth fruit to God down here in humiliation, expresses what He is as transplanted “to its own rich soil.”

“Yes! that tree of life is planted,  
Sweetest fruit e'en here has borne!  
To its own rich soil transplanted,  
Waits alone the eternal morn.”

His life was taken from the earth, but we see Him to God's eternal satisfaction in that scene, where He has been glorified. It is from thence the Spirit of God has come down to connect your heart and mine with Him in that scene of divine satisfaction, and therefore immediately after you get, “which is the earnest of our inheritance.” The sealing is that God appropriates us as having believed in that blessed Man. “In whom having believed” shews that you have come to a *Person*, not

only you have accepted the *work*; that is redemption, and redemption is the basis of everything. It is brought in in verse 7 to shew how the wealth of grace has cleared us, because if you are not clear as to the old you cannot go on to the new; if the old man is not set aside, we should have continually to be occupied about him. But I say there is *another* Man in the presence of God, and the Spirit of God has come down from that glorified Man in heaven. I earnestly press this, beloved brethren—with reverence I say it, the Spirit of God is no use to you (He may be a Spirit of rebuke in us, but that is not the normal thought)—the Spirit would be no use to us if it were not in connection with that Man. It is by the Spirit that we are united to Him, and He brings our souls into the knowledge of the glories of that Blessed One who is to God's perfect satisfaction, so that "To him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages." The Spirit of God has come down according to the entire satisfaction of God in that Blessed One. I ask, How much have we known of the power of the Spirit of God?

I can look back some 46 years (and as one says it, one is ashamed that one has made so little progress), and I can well recollect how



I used to notice that the best thumbed part of a brother's Bible was the Epistle to the Ephesians. I mention it to shew how the epistle which sets forth the glorified Man was before brethren in those early days. I would also revert to a remark of J. N. D.'s after a large meeting at Taunton. He invited brethren to meet him there for humiliation. Many of us went afterwards to Bristol (in 1852 or 1853) for conference as to the things which had called for humiliation. Some of those from whom we had separated were also present. Mr. Darby spoke in this way, "When brethren first came out they gave up the world, and there was something in that to do. People got a little proud of what they had given up. But there came a moment when the world gave us up, and brethren did not like that; they did not like the reproach." It is quite a different thing to give up and to be given up; and, dear brethren, has there not been a return to the world? Have we been content to be a poor and afflicted people? Has there been no attempt to assert ourselves and obtain acknowledgment from the first man? There were those who did come out to the Lord and gave up the world and then the world gave them up, and has there not been a little trial to assert ourselves to be somebody? What has been the result?

Look at what an exhibition we have made of ourselves in every way! What a going back there has been! Forgive me, dear brethren, if I bring it before you, but I desire to take the lowest place with regard to it; I am quite sure if we wish to answer to the truth given to us we must accept the place of Christ's rejection and reproach. The world will give us up, but if we are satisfied with the company of the Lord—and to be a poor and afflicted people, the Lord will be with us. The Spirit of God will not help us to be great here.

I remember a verse of an old hymn with regard to the Spirit (perhaps not altogether correct), I suppose it is a reference to 1 John v. 6:—

“He witnessed to the constant guilt  
That marked the path we trod;  
He witnessed that Thy blood was spilt  
To bring us nigh to God.”

There are the two thoughts of man's ruin, and Christ's death as bringing us to God, for the Spirit witnesses the acceptance of that blessed Man in heaven, and He has come that we might know Him there.

One word more, it is beautiful to my own mind to see the way in which the apostle speaks to them in these verses in chapter iv. He speaks of their having learned Christ, of the truth in Jesus, and of the new man which is

created according to God, and when he speaks of evil (chap. v. 3) it is to say, It is not to be even named among you; do not bring it up, you know Christ, you have put on the new man, do not grieve the Spirit, but "Be ye imitators of God, as dear children." That is the path. I see what Christ is to God now. As to evil, he says, "Ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." There He comes to the personal name, "the truth in Jesus." None of us are of "Jesus," that name is personal to Himself. We are of "the Christ." Jesus is the blessed Person in whom all the truth came out. The effectuation of all the truth is in Him, so that there can be the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new, and the renewal of the spirit of the mind, for we get constant fresh springs in Christ. Where are our springs? I would press the question on each one, even the youngest. Are they in the world, or are they in Christ—that blessed Man who was in humiliation here and is in glory there? The very fact of there being a new man before God, shews you where to turn. Being "renewed in the spirit of your mind" is a present thing. You constantly find fresh and living springs in Christ. The character of the new man is "created according to God in righteousness and holiness

of truth." An illustration may fix it upon your mind. In the new Jerusalem you get, "Pure gold, like unto clear glass." No one ever saw that in nature, but that is the character of the new man as seen in that glorious city, pure gold, that is, truthful righteousness and perfect purity, holiness of truth. What God is as revealed in Christ shines forth from that city—all is after God, a new creation. There is the full display of the character of the new man which is created after God. May the Lord give our hearts to have a sense that we have put off the old and put on the new, and to accept the rejection of Christ.

I refer in closing to the word, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God." You see how the Spirit of God witnesses of Christ and of that scene where He has entered. He has come to tell us (if we have hearts to listen) of all the beauty and glory of that blessed Man. You are sealed unto the day of redemption, therefore do not grieve Him. Let Him occupy your heart with all that redemption brings us into. May the Lord deepen in our souls the consciousness of it!

T. H. R.

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# READING.

(COLOSSIANS II.)

F. E. R. We have had circumcision, spiritual circumcision, and risen with Christ, put before us this morning. I do not know whether it would be profitable to read Colossians ii. (Col. ii. read.) I thought of two points that are prominent in that chapter—circumcision and risen with Christ.

F. H. B. In the type in Joshua risen comes first.

J. S. B. What is the burden of the epistle?

F. E. R. It is the realisation of the truth of the one body here as Christ's body, it is before the manifestation of Christ in glory; you get the idea in the first chapter—"Christ among you the hope of glory."

F. H. B. Is "Christ in you" corporate or individual?

F. E. R. I do not think it is individual. It is Christ in the Gentiles strictly.

J. S. B. Is not chapter i. 23 individual?

F. E. R. You have not got off responsibility there. Christ in you the hope of glory is put

abstractly, as the riches of the glory of the mystery.

G. G. Is it because of the moral instruction that risen comes after circumcision ?

F. E. R. Well, I think that though typically resurrection had to come first, morally circumcision must come first, or at any rate they are concurrent.

F. H. B. Circumcising after crossing the Jordan was due to their neglect ?

F. E. R. Yes ; but you could not really have risen with Christ apart from circumcision.

G. P. What is christian circumcision ?

F. E. R. The passage tells us, "In putting off the body of the flesh."

W. B. We do not all quite understand that.

F. E. R. But then no one can help another to the understanding of it.

D. L. H. I suppose, strictly speaking, the Israelites did not properly occupy the land before circumcision ?

F. E. R. Well, they could not occupy it according to God, it would have been an owning of the flesh.

D. L. H. But you were saying something about risen and circumcision being connected as something remarkable. What did you mean ?

F. E. R. I do not think you can get the idea of "risen with Christ" except as having put off

the body of the flesh. I understand by resurrection the realisation of deliverance. I do not think it is a dead man that realises he is free ; a risen man is free ; but you are not free except as having put off the body of the flesh, and this is by the circumcision of Christ.

W. H. Putting off the body of the flesh is through death, is it not ?

F. E. R. Well, it is ; it means it in a little different aspect.

T. H. R. The circumcision of Christ was the separation of Christ from the whole circle and region of the flesh, just as the circumcision of Abraham separated him from all the nations ; of course, the circumcision of Christ goes further.

F. E. R. And therefore it is that God cannot own the flesh in us ; it is not simply the rejection of it in its gross form, but the flesh in *every* form ; it is the man gone.

F. H. B. You were saying that the moral effect of circumcision is the consciousness of human weakness.

F. E. R. Well, I think so, it is a very great point in it.

F. H. B. It brings in the power of the Spirit.

F. E. R. You are prepared for the power of the Spirit ; you are not prepared for the power of the Spirit except as you are consciously weak in

the flesh, for you would naturally cling to the flesh; but everything is gone in circumcision.

H. D'A. C. All human religion is connected with the flesh.

F. E. R. In the Old Testament the Spirit of God connected Himself with natural power. Take a man like Samson, the Spirit came upon him, and endued flesh with supernatural energy; we are on different lines now; the whole thing is refused; you have to realise you are weak. Take a man like Paul; you would have thought he might have taken up the work of the Lord in natural energy; a great many people would argue that he did so—that he was a man of great natural force of character, as is seen in his persecution, and now he is turned round and shews great energy in the work of the Lord; but that does not explain the matter to me.

T. H. R. What we see in 2 Corinthians xii. is that God made nothing of him.

F. E. R. God made nothing of him, for he says, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

A. H. Is not chapter ii. 11 true in Christ, and chapter iii. 5 the practical application to ourselves of the circumcision: when we are viewed as risen it is "mortify therefore"?

F. E. R. I think the exhortation of chapter iii. 2 hangs on "risen with Christ." (Ver. 1.) The exhortation to mortify connects itself with



verses 3, 4: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Then he says, "Mortify." I do not think "mortify" hangs on risen, it hangs on dead.

D. L. H. We could not mortify our members on the earth unless we were dead.

F. E. R. No, I do not think you could. I think the apostle is taking up the practical part in chapter iii.; chapter ii. is the way you get into the realisation of the truth of the one body. I do not think chapter ii. is the practical part; chapter iii. is the practical part; chapter ii. shews us how we have come into association with Christ—where Christ is known as Head—and it is really through these things, circumcision and resurrection; you can only come into it in that way.

T. H. R. Do you not think the great point in Colossians is, that you are complete in Him?

F. E. R. Quite so.

G. G. What is your thought in that?

T. H. R. It comes out in chapter iii., Christ is everything; you have not to go outside Christ for anything.

G. G. Is it corrective or the teaching of the epistle?

T. H. R. It is the teaching of this epistle, but

it is corrective; you get justified in Romans, complete in Colossians, accepted in Ephesians. One deals with the responsible man, the other is state, and the other place; accepted in the Beloved involves place.

F. H. B. Then being complete in Christ is not our standing before God in Him?

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

F. H. B. You said "state"—Is it "filled up?"

T. H. R. Yes.

F. H. B. The practical result of holding the Head.

T. H. R. I think fulness is a great word in Colossians; it seems so to me.

M. G. What is the idea of "complete" in Colossians?

T. H. R. That you cannot go outside Christ for anything, all connected with the flesh is disowned.

F. C. Is it being filled full?

T. H. R. Yes.

F. C. You say "fulness" is a great word in Colossians?

T. H. R. I go back to chapter i.; it is a most wonderful thing, that the doctrine of the mystery gives fulness to the word of God; the church is the fulness of Christ, and He is the spirit of all that is spoken about in scripture. If you take the doctrine or setting forth of anything in

scripture the fulness of it could not be told till the mystery came out; the mystery gives fulness to the word of God. J. B. S. has often referred to the last verses in John's gospel: if all the things that Jesus did were written in a book the world would not contain them; but in the church everything will come out.

E. C. Do you think truth as to Israel will come out in the church?

T. H. R. Yes. Israel will get much from the church. John xvii. 22, 23 shews what will be known through the heavenly saints. The new Jerusalem is the city Abraham looked for.

J. R. Is that why all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in it?

T. H. R. I think so; I think you get the idea of fulness in Colossians. Christ is the image of the invisible God, the setting forth of God, for all the fulness was pleased to dwell in Him; then in the church—the mystery, you have fulness given to the word of God; it is no longer confined to the narrow circle of Jewish thought, but expands into all the fulness of the purpose of God in Christ; then you are complete in Him, you do not want to go outside all the fulness of the Godhead.

A. P. And is it because of that you want circumcision.

T. H. R. Well, I think so, or else you come to the flesh.

D. L. H. How far are we to take this verse, chapter ii. 11, "In whom also ye are circumcised . . ." is it that it was really entered into by the Colossians, or what?

F. E. R. I do not see how it could be true if it is not entered into.

F. H. B. Could they not have it set before them to enter into?

F. E. R. He states it as true of them.

F. H. B. Is it not true of all in Christ?

F. E. R. You could not have it in any other way; you are not literally circumcised; if you are circumcised it is in Christ; it would not have been stated if it were not true of them; it is all a question of state.

F. H. B. How could a soul enter into it?

F. E. R. They might be enabled to see that it was God's way, but it is true; they had put off the body of the flesh.

D. L. H. Then does chapter ii. 11 refer only to state or standing, or does it refer to what was true experimentally?

F. H. B. What was true of them experimentally.

D. L. H. What was true in the power of the Spirit.

F. E. R. That is what I should say.

G. G. Based on what took place when Christ died ?

F. E. R. Quite so; else there could not be anything in it at all; we are not literally circumcised; it is in Him—in “the circumcision of Christ.”

F. H. B. Could he so address the whole of the company at Colosse ?

F. E. R. Is it done so ?

T. H. R. That is the point; he says, “As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.”

D. L. H. He did not address the Galatians in this way; as to the Colossians, speaking generally, it was true of them.

F. E. R. I think that is exactly the point; he could address the Colossians thus; it was saying what was characteristic of them generally; not so when speaking to the Galatians.

T. H. R. He could say to the Colossians—“As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

E. C. Then it might be true only of a minority in the assembly ?

F. E. R. It was true for all in Christ, effected for all in Christ; experimentally it might not be true of all.

F. H. B. I think that makes it plain.

QUES. “Our old man has been crucified with him”?

F. E. R. Well, but I think that is what has been effected on the divine side in order to shew you that the flesh cannot be revived; it is brought in in that way. Many things that are true for God have to be made good to me; "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." That is true for God; so, too, "our old man has been crucified." What that passage proves to me is that God would not revive that man again. Take again, "I am crucified with Christ." Here Paul says this, and it is what is realised.

E. C. As to a thing being true for God, is not Revelation xxi. 6 an example, "Behold, it is done," when nothing was done?

F. E. R. Yes, but I think in a sense everything is effected for God in Christ, and the church is to come out as Christ.

J. S. B. Is that how they had received Him?

T. H. R. It is not merely that it was a work, but a Person that they knew. I think it is an immense thing when you get to the Person.

F. H. B. That supposes that you relinquish the first man.

A. P. Joshua circumcised the children of Israel; they suffered it experimentally?

F. E. R. Everything in the history of the children of Israel is experimental; that is the great value to us of their history; God knew His purposes about them, but all that took place, all that is written, is a type of the experimental side; that shews conclusively the enormous importance which scripture attaches to the experimental side.

B—T. Is that what you mean by state?

F. E. R. Yes; no Christian is beyond what is effected in him by the power of the Spirit; that is his measure.

F. H. B. It makes us look small, when you think of what is wrought in you.

F. E. R. You are not to think at all of it.

A. P. It is very helpful to see this side of things.

F. E. R. Yes; I think the whole idea of standing and state may need to be re-considered.

D. L. H. Well, let us begin.

F. E. R. I do not quite know (I am quite willing to be taught) where the idea of standing comes from.

F. H. B. Would you not allow that a Christian has a standing in Christ?

F. E. R. If you talk of my standing, I am a justified man who has received the Holy Ghost.

F. H. B. But what about being "in Christ"?

F. E. R. The moment you bring in "in Christ" it is new creation, it is state.

F. H. B. I thought God had given us a place in Christ apart from the Spirit's work.

F. E. R. I do not talk of the work of the Spirit as my standing; there is, I admit, the revelation in Christ of God's purpose for us, and that is our title; I enter into the thought of God for me, but my standing is that I am justified and have received the Holy Ghost, all else to me is the *work* of the Spirit.

F. H. B. We have a position in Christ?

F. E. R. God has revealed His mind and purposes in Christ, and we have the light of it in Christ; but it is all made effectual by new creation; if any man is in Christ there is a new creation.

D. L. H. It is the work of God in the soul.

F. E. R. That is really state.

E. C—P. If physical death comes in, what is left?

F. E. R. What the Spirit has effected and the spirit of the man—the conscious individuality.

QUES. Nothing else?

F. E. R. Nothing else would do for God.

J. P. Well, but the ground of my peace is not the Spirit's work in me?

F. E. R. I said the contrary; that is not the ground of peace, but that I am justified.



J. P. That is standing.

F. E. R. The moment you come to "in Christ" you get the revelation of God's purpose in Christ, and the work of the Spirit in the believer according to that purpose; that is new creation, it is not a question of standing.

E. C—P. He is only fitted for the second by having the first.

F. E. R. He could not touch the second if he had not the first.

F. H. B. Has not Romans viii. 1 been put for standing, and verse 9 for state?

F. E. R. You have no direct teaching of "in Christ" in Romans; we have "we being many are one body in Christ," you get that passage.

J. S. B. What about Romans viii. 1?

F. E. R. It is an abstract statement. There is no condemnation to them which are "in Christ Jesus."

J. S. B. Is it a new position?

F. E. R. I believe it is a new creation.

D. L. H. Now with regard to Romans vi. 11: "Reckon yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus," what about that?

F. E. R. That is state and experimental; what I understand by standing is the place I have before God as a man justified. I have peace with God.

F. H. B. You are justified in Christ.

F. E. R. I quite admit that the presentation of my justification is in Christ. He is my righteousness.

M. G. God has certain purposes, what about them?

F. E. R. God has revealed His purpose in Christ; I have the light of it, and He works in me in the power of the Spirit, that I may be formed according to that purpose.

B—T. You always have the standing?

F. E. R. You always have the standing.

F. H. B. That is, a man is justified.

F. E. R. He is always that.

M. G. In heaven he will not be a forgiven or a justified man.

F. E. R. He will not need that in heaven; nothing enters heaven but new creation.

D. L. H. One is connected with responsibility, and the other with the purpose of God.

F. E. R. Precisely.

QUES. "In Christ," then, is the measure of my state?

F. E. R. Well, you do not get the glorified body here.

QUES. The measure of our spiritual state?

F. E. R. Yes; the vessel is formed here spiritually; the body is the vehicle.

D. L. H. Does not the first prayer in Ephesians unfold standing?

F. E. R. It is the Christian's place according to God's purpose, God has given us a certain place and revealed that place, the point of the prayer is, that we may enter into His purpose.

QUES. That you might really know it?

F. E. R. That you may know the inheritance and the power that brings you into it.

D. L. H. I do not quite understand the difference between standing and position.

F. E. R. It would be very difficult to define it.

QUES. Is "in Christ" in Ephesians i. standing?

F. E. R. What are you referring to?

QUES. "The eyes of your heart being enlightened"?

F. E. R. It is that you may know what is the hope, not the standing or position, but the riches of the glory of His inheritance; the whole point of the prayer is, to know what is of God, His calling, His inheritance, His power.

D. L. H. How is it accepted by the soul?

W. H. Is it not presented to the soul, and then the Spirit leads that one into it?

F. E. R. Well, I have no doubt it is.

E. C—P. God's purpose remains, but my state increases.

F. E. R. Nothing can change His purpose; you get in Christ the full, perfect light of the purpose; but then I could not say I am it yet;

but the light of His purpose about me is revealed.

M. G. We are not in the actuality of Ephesians i. 4 ?

F. E. R. No, not in the actuality of it ; but all is revealed in Christ.

E. R. The Spirit works for this ?

F. E. R. It is all on these lines that the Spirit forms the believer. I can say in one sense I am it, but not in another.

QUES. It can only be true when we are with Christ in glory ?

F. E. R. It will be all true by-and-by, and yet according to the Spirit's work it is true now.

D. L. H. As having laid hold of this purpose ?

F. E. R. Yes, quite so.

QUES. It would not be the *hope* of His calling if we were fully in it now ?

J. P. Is not Eph. i. 4 then true of us now ?

F. E. R. Not absolutely so, but, then, I should be sorry to say that J. P. is not holy and without blame before God, in that sense.

QUES. It is not practice, is it ?

F. E. R. No, but I think it is real.

QUES. How ?

F. E. R. The light is given to you that you may be real. It lies in the work of God, but it does not alter the fact that I have still my responsibility. I am a justified man in this world, and

have to walk by the Spirit. It is an interesting point to see the different ways in the different epistles in which God is presented. In Romans it is according as every man must know Him in righteousness and power, for the question is of man's responsibility; in Colossians it is according to the fulness of the Godhead; in Ephesians, according to the light of God's counsels. This gives great help in reading the different epistles. In Romans Christ is presented as revealing God in the way in which every man must know Him. In chapters iii., iv. in His righteousness and power; righteousness is set forth in Christ's blood, and power in His resurrection; you are not off the ground of the responsible man. In Colossians it is the fulness of the Godhead in Christ, that is the great point there. When you come to Ephesians all is according to the light of counsel; we have the God of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

W. G. In Ephesians we have the exaltation of Christ as man, have we not?

F. E. R. Yes; because that is connected with divine counsels. But in Colossians what you are working up to is the truth of the one Body, the scene and sphere of spiritual affections, that is the great point, not going out as in Ephesians in the power of the Lord for conflict.

M. G. It is preparatory for the conflict.

F. E. R. Exactly, preparatory.

M. G. In that way it answers to Joshua v. ?

F. E. R. Yes, you get in this chapter circumcision and risen with Christ; they are only preparatory that you may be free of the world; "quickened together with him" comes in directly after. This brings me into what is completely new; that is, into association with Christ and the scene of spiritual affections of which Christ is the centre.

J. P. Would you say in what our association consists ?

F. E. R. It is in affection; I don't know whether people understand it; love is the life of God. People often talk of these things in a dead kind of way; they speak of "quickened with Christ" as standing, and the spiritual idea is completely missed. "Quickened together with Christ" is to bring you into a scene of spiritual affection, association with Christ and with one another in spiritual affection. The apostle would not throw this down broadcast, he would not say this of the Corinthians. I do not say it was not true of them.

M. G. They were not in the good of it.

F. E. R. That is it exactly.

D. L. H. As regards life it has been common to say such and such a person has not got peace, but he has life; it is lowering the idea of life.

F. E. R. What they mean is that he is awakened.

F. H. B. That he is born again.

D. L. H. Yes, that is what they mean ; scripture does not apply the term "life" to such a state.

F. E. R. How can any person read scripture without seeing that *it* connects life with the other side of Jordan ?

T. H. R. Quickened comes before risen in Ephesians.

F. E. R. There it is raising you up in view of being seated in heaven.

T. H. R. Really here in Colossians it is to give you a place upon earth.

F. E. R. Yes ; and you come into the one Body.

E. C. Would you say they had no life in the wilderness ?

F. E. R. The question of life is not touched at all in type till you come to the brazen serpent ; then they sing, "Spring up, O well," but you don't get the springing up of the Spirit in this way till you are through Jordan. There is now a scene of spiritual affection, and we are privileged to be there, a place in which Christ was alone when on earth, but in which we are privileged to be with Him now.

D. L. H. And this is life eternal.

F. E. R. Exactly, we are privileged to be in that circle.

E. C. What do you make of Romans viii. 10, "The Spirit is life" ?

F. E. R. It is because in Romans *you* are not said to be quickened. In Romans viii. the believer has everything in the Spirit. That is the point there ; that is true of every Christian ; but then that raises the question as to how far the work of the Spirit has gone on in him ?

T. H. R. Where has it brought him to ? You cannot talk of being quickened if you are not over Jordan.

A. H. But we are the sons of God in Romans.

F. E. R. Sonship is there in the Spirit.

F. H. B. We just touch life in Romans viii. 2, "The law of the Spirit of life. . . ."

F. E. R. "Hath made me free," that only goes to liberty.

T. H. R. To assure the entrance into privilege. We have a whole scene of new affections, and that on the other side of Jordan. Flesh is gone, it is not Jew loving Jew, but the brethren ; you have been made to live in that.

F. E. R. Where can you get that except on the other side of Jordan ? I do not think death is deliverance. You must have death, of course, but deliverance is connected with resurrection. Resurrection is that I am free of all ; I am out



of it ; all of man closes in death, and you cannot reach resurrection without death.

M. G. What is the difference between deliverance and liberty ?

F. E. R. Liberty is more. It may be spoken of as privilege ; deliverance is more initial. In John we have, " If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." That is the privilege of the house, like the freeman of a city.

F. H. B. Liberty is the result of deliverance ?

F. E. R. Yes.

QUES. Romans viii. 1. Does deliverance suppose a new place ?

F. E. R. Well, I think it supposes new creation ; only Romans never brings you to new creation. The only passage which touches the Body is in the hortatory part ; that just brings in the thought of the Body.

J. P. " If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." What of that ?

F. E. R. " Ye shall live," it is conditional ; here in Colossians you get a very much more positive statement, " You hath he quickened. . . ."

J. P. What does " quickened " mean ?

F. E. R. Brought you into life in association with Christ, and I am perfectly convinced that you cannot touch it save as risen together with Him ; until you are entirely free from law and the world you do not come into it. There is

many a good Christian who is not there—not risen with Christ in that sense; I have no doubt about it; he is just as much justified as I am, and he has got the Spirit as much as I have, but does not know much about being risen with Christ. He has hardly, perhaps, got out of Babylon.

QUES. You could not well apply this passage to him?

F. E. R. It is not true in his soul.

H. D'A. C. A man that keeps sabbath and new moon, where is he?

F. E. R. Well, do you see, he is very hostile to the Colossians, trying to divert them; it is practically the Jew.

REMARK. There was philosophy.

F. E. R. Yes; you see the temptation to the Colossians was not the intrusion of the flesh in a gross form, the effort was to make it contributory to the work of God.

G. G. What is the difference between life in the Spirit, and life in Christ?

F. E. R. I do not think there is any life in the Spirit except what is in Christ. Life is to live in the blessed consciousness of the love of God in the out-of-the-world heavenly condition in which Christ lives; to live in the light of divine love.

M. G. Is it not a practical deliverance? You are not actually living otherwise.

F. E. R. Exactly, that is the point in it.

D. L. H. I think it was written by Mr. Darby that life is that by which we enjoy the position we are set in, was it not ?

F. E. R. That is the truth of it.

E. C. It is not a dogma.

M. G. We find persons in different positions, and according to the position, they live.

T. H. R. It must be a reality for every one of us. The question is whether we have reached Christ where He is ; if you have, you cannot join *with this world or anything of the flesh again* ; if we really reach Him it must be through death ; you cannot have Him this side ; surely we know whereabouts we are, whether we have gone that way.

F. E. R. Do not let us be content with shams ; let us either have the thing, or say we have not got it.

D. L. H. I suppose there has been a kind of subtlety in making people suppose that they had got it in some way or other in standing, so that they did not trouble about it more ?

F. E. R. You see the practical working out of this was that the state of the Christian was almost entirely ignored.

D. L. H. For this state they had substituted another ?

F. E. R. Practically.

F. H. B. The state of a man's soul.

M. G. Instead of a thing divinely given and formed.

J. P. What do you mean by saying that you do not get life until you come to the brazen serpent?

F. E. R. You do not get the idea of it. Looking at the children of Israel, what you have got is a justified, delivered people, started in the flesh under law. There is no life; that is the idea typically until you come to the brazen serpent when the law has done its work; the thought of life is not brought in until flesh is proved irremediable; that is why you get the brazen serpent in John iii.; it connects itself with the thought of life.

D. L. H. It looks at things from the point of view of God's counsels.

F. E. R. Exactly. You have to be identified with His death. Romans vi. is that you drink the bitter waters of Marah. The children of Israel had to drink the bitter waters, but I do not think that is to be identified with Jordan, *which is in view of the purposes of God.*

F. H. B. What about Romans vi. 2?

F. E. R. It is the bitter waters of Marah; you have to accept what is upon you.

D. L. H. What is the meaning of "If we be dead with him," verse 8, and "planted together

in the likeness of his death"? What is "dead with Christ" just there?

F. E. R. Well, it is put hypothetically; no man would care to be identified with Christ in death if he did not apprehend that he was going to live with Him.

D. L. H. Looking on to glory?

J. P. What about "If we have been planted . . . ."?

F. E. R. It is hypothetical.

QUES. There is difficulty in the type of the brazen serpent; was that counsel?

F. E. R. John iii. is on the ground of divine counsel as to eternal life, though it expresses the love of God to the world; "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The way of life was through death.

D. L. H. The brazen serpent was at the end of the wilderness, preparatory to entering the land.

G. G. Is not the Red Sea "dead with Christ?"

F. E. R. No; it is that Christ is risen, and you are justified; you are put out of the reach of the enemy's power; it is not our resurrection; it is that you are free of the accusation of the enemy. "Christ was delivered for

our offences, and raised again for our justification." It is Christ's resurrection, not ours.

G. W. It says, "we have been buried with him."

F. E. R. That refers to baptism. All these passages that begin with "if" are hypothetical; it supposes a case; it is so in chapters viii. and v. It is clear, I think, that Romans vi. corresponds to Marah, and that the beginning of chapter viii. corresponds to the brazen serpent. Between chapter vi. and the beginning of chapter viii. the law has come in and done its work. (Rom. vii.)

F. H. B. Why is life so much spoken of in Colossians?

F. E. R. It comes out there to shew there is a scene of life here in an out-of-the-world condition of things to which the Body belongs. The Father and the Son is, I think, the key to the epistle.

D. L. H. You enter into the life of heaven; is it not so?

F. E. R. In the circle of the one body, not simply in the mere fact of coming together, but as in the christian circle.

J. S. B. Why is it not individual?

F. E. R. Supposing you were an individual shut up in prison, you would not have a sphere for affections. I will tell you a verse, "By this we know we have passed from death unto life,

because we love the brethren." You have come into the circle of the brethren.

E. C. You can love them in prison ?

F. E. R. I think you want to be in contact with them.

QUES. But still the heart could go out to them.

F. E. R. Rather dull work, I do not think it would be very practical.

T. H. R. It would not be the christian circle.

F. E. R. You would get much depressed if you did not come in contact with people ; you do not love people much that you never met ; you see it exemplified in men who go to sea ; their children are strange to them, and they are strange to their children ; depend upon it, if you want affection you must have to do with people ; if you do not have much to do with God you do not love Him much ; you have to come into the presence of His love to have much sense of His affection, and the same too, in regard to Christ.

W. J. What is the relation of the prayer in Colossians i. to the teaching of the epistle. It has always been a difficulty to me.

F. E. R. I do not think it has to do with the teaching. It is introductory ; it has to do with walking worthy of the Lord to all pleasing. The teaching is opened up in connection with the

Father and the Son. The Son of His love is everything.

W. J. Then it is not that the prayer might be fulfilled by their entrance into the teaching?

F. E. R. The prayer is to remove all that would hinder you entering into the teaching; it is preparatory.

T. H. R. The apostle was setting them on new ground; even fruit-bearing came from a new graft altogether; the gospel had produced fruit in them, but the apostle desired that walk and ways might be governed by the knowledge of God's will, that they might be for the Lord's pleasure. It is a very important point for our souls—how far any one of us can say—Death is gain, that you gain by giving up here, if you cross Jordan; it is positive gain; you would not find that there is any water in Jordan; it is the realisation in our souls of what is on the other side that draws us; thus it is a question of how far I have found the gain of the other side; I enter into a scene of holy affection which I never knew before; while you are on this side of Jordan it is all repression; you cannot open out; you are continually obstructed; every influence obstructs us. I think people want to break from everything that is natural, I do not mean that they ought to be unnatural, but to break from its power.



E. C. Leave man's world to get into God's world ?

F. E. R. That is it.

D. L. H. Has not the truth of the body been reduced to a kind of ecclesiastical organisation, so that the real interest of God with regard to it has been missed ?

F. E. R. I think so.

T. H. R. The body is that in which every beautiful trait of Christ is to come out ; it is not doctrine about it, but the setting forth of Christ.

F. E. R. The reproduction of Christ in His body, and a continuation of His testimony.

G. W. G. No one individual could shew forth what was in Him ?

F. E. R. No.

E. C. The testimony of our Lord would include the mystery ?

F. E. R. Well, I think the testimony in 2 Timothy i. is the gospel ; the body is that which is set here to display Christ ; that there might be a reproduction of Christ on the one hand, and on the other to claim the inheritance.

W. What do you mean by claim the inheritance ?

F. E. R. That is the conflict. In Ephesians vi. the conflict is to maintain the inheritance of Christ ; that is the testimony of the place Christ is in.

F. H. B. You do not mean get the inheritance actually ?

F. E. R. Christ claimed it when He was here—"I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." (Psa. ii.) In a sense He claimed the inheritance ; the church stands to it ; claims it for Christ.

T. H. R. Really it is the virgins going out ; they expect the Bridegroom to come, they are true to His rights.

F. H. B. It is not claiming it for ourselves.

F. E. R. If you claim it you stand in the truth of it. God has in His will headed up everything in Christ.

T. H. R. That is a very different thing from using the inheritance for ourselves.

D. L. H. When we do enjoy it we enjoy it with Christ.

F. E. R. I think every member of the body needs to keep himself in the full light of divine love, under its influence ; you want to get increase of the body.

E. C—P. It shews how necessary we are to one another.

F. E. R. Yes ; and the way it works out is in affection one to another ; we must be in the light of divine love ; if we do not love one another it proves we are not there.

F. W. G. "Teaching every man, presenting every man" ?

F. E. R. Yes, quite so; Christ is the pattern Man.

T. H. R. I might say, too, the last time I saw Mr. Stoney he remarked that he felt he had failed in not sufficiently leading the saints into the sense of union; he told me to press upon the youngest believer that they have got a place in the body, and that they should seek to know what that place is; not to rest content with just thinking they are saved; God has got a place for them in His counsel, and the youngest should seek to know it.

W. J. Increase of God, what is the force of it? Nature—love?

F. E. R. I should say so.

T. H. R. It is the divine work in souls.

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# CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SUPPORT.

(ROM. VIII. 28-33.)

I DESIRE to say a word or two as to the way in which the completeness of the believer's justification comes out in this passage. I have no idea of entering into what is presented to us in the passage as to the purpose of God, for you get an unfolding of the purpose of God here in relation to saints. (Vers. 28, 29.) "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose," &c. But what I wanted to say a word about is as to two thoughts which are found in what follows: the one is, "Who also maketh intercession for us;" and the other, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ"? I want to bring before you, on the one hand, the way in which the believer is represented; and on the other hand, the *love* of the One who represents him. Believers are represented before God; Christ makes intercession for us; that is repre-

sentative; but there is another point of all moment, and that is the love of the One who represents us. We are supported by His love: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loveth us." The love of Christ is the real support of saints down here in the conflict to which they are exposed as in the wilderness.

Now I do not think this interferes with the ground which you get in other epistles, like Colossians or Ephesians; I think it answers more to what took place typically with the children of Israel in the wilderness. When they came out of Egypt it was the work of the enemy to harass and cut off the weak. Romans refers to the wilderness: chapter vi. answers to the bitter waters of Marah; chapter viii. to the brazen serpent; and between the two (chap. vii.) is the ground of law. The real support of saints in suffering here is the love of Christ—and "we are more than conquerors through him that loveth us."

*It is a very important point to see that God has been pleased to set forth the justification of believers in Another. I should find it difficult to prove in myself that I am justified. If I*

were challenged on the point, I should be compelled to refer to Another. No one can prove in himself his justification. In a certain sense, I think it may be different in the time to come. In the millennium a man will, I suppose, be outwardly and manifestly clear of the judgment of death that is upon him, though even then the Lord is their righteousness. No one now can say, I am perfectly clear of death. You are free from it as regards God, and the acceptance of it is to you a means of deliverance. "Death is ours;" but you are still subject to it, as to your life on earth, and so long as you are subject to it, it is evident you could not in yourself prove that you are justified. You are compelled to point to Another in order to demonstrate the fact that you are justified. Christ "was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." If you ask me to give proof and evidence that I am justified in the eye of God, I can only point to Christ risen. If I am not clear of death in myself, I am clear of it in Christ risen. He is risen for our justification.

I can go a point further; I say this—I am livingly connected by the Spirit with the One in whom I am justified. He is my life. That is the work of God as I understand it. The Spirit of Christ effects this. I am connected with Christ by a living link, but *He* is "raised

again for our justification." "*Christ* is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." *Christ* is the righteousness of the believer.

The point of justification is not merely that you are clear before the eye of God, but that you are out of the reach of the power of the enemy. You see it in the history of Israel; they were sheltered from the judgment of God in Egypt, but there was another thing, that they should be beyond the reach of the power of the enemy. It was the purpose of God to destroy the enemy—to break his power, that the people might be for ever free of Pharaoh and his hosts, of everything that was against them. Pharaoh really represented the power of the spiritual enemy, and justification is not merely that you are clear of the judgment of God, but that you are free from the power of the enemy. He is now declared to be the enemy of God.

Well now, what I see is this : If I look at Christ risen, I see my justification. Supposing there was such a thought in the mind as that a believer was justified in himself, it would be very possible to bring a great many charges of inconsistency against him ; and no doubt many Christians are greatly troubled by the sense of their own failure. They measure their acceptance before

God by their own state, and so get into bondage. As long as that is the case you expose yourself to a certain extent to the power of the enemy. What I see that God has done is this, not only has Christ been delivered for our offences, but that we might be conscious that we are completely justified in the eye of God, He was raised again for our justification, and we are justified with respect to the judgment of God that was upon us. We are justified as completely under the eye of God as Christ is risen, not only as to the offences, but as to the judgment of God that was upon us.

That is the way in which the Red Sea presents itself to me; not exactly as final judgment, but the judgment of death that lay upon man. It is deliverance from the power of death. Through the grace of God I am clear of that, because not only was Christ delivered for our offences, but raised again for our justification. It is useless to charge me with inconsistencies. I admit them, and am fully conscious of them, but my justification is complete in the sight of God in Christ risen from the dead. Not only shall I never come into judgment, but I am free before God from the penalty of death that lay upon me; even while down here I have life in the One in whom I am justified. That is what the apostle appeals to in chapter viii. 33: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's



elect? It is God that justifieth." Now mark the rest, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," He does not stop there, "yea rather, that is risen again." For justification the apostle does not stop short of Jesus risen.

Now I come to a further point, "Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession." That is, that the One raised for our justification represents saints in the presence of God. What for? That they may not fail. He makes intercession. You could not have a greater proof of God's purpose and the completeness of Christ's work than that the One who was delivered for our offences is risen again, and is so free of all that He died for that He is at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for us. God has not only freed us from His own judgment, but He has freed us from the power of the enemy; we are free from fear of accusation of all kind—all charge of inconsistency, or whatever it may be.

One word more and one of great moment, and that is that Christ *loves* you. A great many people hold doctrinally that He makes intercession for us, but have a very poor sense that He loves us. It is a wonderful thing to think that He loves us. He is not only so free that He can make intercession for us but He loves us. The passage quoted, "It is God that justifieth, who is he that

condemneth?" is a passage applicable to Christ Himself. These verses were true of Christ in a certain sense in the presence of God (see Isa. l. 8, 9), He is out of death. And then He is risen, not only to make intercession for us, but to support us in the pathway here, and to uphold us in conflict.

This does not go so far as the priest in Hebrews. It is not here a question of conducting us into spiritual privilege, making us conscious that we are His companions in the sanctuary. That is not the point. The point here is more what we are exposed to. The Christian is exposed to what Christ was exposed to—"For thy sake we are killed all the day long," &c. We may go to the wall in the world, and get into a good bit of opposition and persecution, but we are more than conquerors through Him that loveth us, and nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. He is so free that He can represent us in the presence of God, and on the other hand, nothing can separate us from His love.

I venture to say to all here, that is true to the youngest. Christ is the representative of *all*; He loves *all*. He is not your representative because you appreciate Him or understand it. He is the representative of the least as well as of the most advanced. All need Him—

none of us can do without Him. Then He *loves* us all. What a thought for us—exposed as we are to conflict down here in this world! You may say you do not know much about the conflict—“killed all the day long; accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” But you may have to know it; you may come into it, and you may depend upon it, that whatever pressure or trial you may come into, nothing will separate you from His love; whatever opposition you have to encounter, you are more than conqueror through Him that loves you. That is the great point. It is a blessed thought to me that Christ can carry me superior to anything and everything to which I may be exposed. On the one hand, no charge against me can stand in the presence of God, because Christ is my justification; on the other hand, in all the trial and pressure down here I am supported by His love. And the apostle goes still higher, in a certain sense, when he says nothing shall separate us from “the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” I do not think that is exactly the love of God as enjoyed in the holiest, or in heaven, but rather love which reaches us down here in the conflict to which Christ was once exposed, and we are thus supported in the pathway of Christ Himself.

Well, beloved brethren, it was only just those

two thoughts I had before me—Christ our justification and our support. Christ risen represents us in the presence of God, on the one hand; and on the other, we are supported by His love down here.

F. E. R.



## A FEW REMARKS ON ISAIAH IX., XI.

I WISH to say a few words in connection with what we had before us this morning, which I think we all felt to be very important, and to carry on a little the thought as to the work of the Spirit of God. Two things were brought before us in connection with the present place of the Christian, namely, the rejection of Christ, His outside place, and then the presence and the work of the Spirit, in order to understand our position at the present time.

I have read these two passages, the first giving us the judgment of God which fell upon the people and the land—"the wrath of the Lord" upon them: the second, their final blessing. This section in the prophecy takes its start from chapter ix. 8, the word that the Lord sends to the people in view of their state here described, pride, stoutness of heart, and so forth. In this section each paragraph ends with the expression, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still," until the indignation ceases and His anger in the destruction of the Assyrian. (Chap. x. 25.) Here then the wrath of the Lord is on them and the land

darkened, the people are as fuel of the fire and no man spares his brother. Their state is such as to call down His wrath thus in their fratricidal warfare, the fruit amongst other things of the pride and stoutness of heart (chap. ix. 9-12), upon which His hand comes down in judgment. Yet "his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." He has not yet done with them.

In the next paragraph (vers. 13-17), "Every one is a hypocrite and an evil doer," calling down still further judgment. Nor yet is His anger exhausted but His hand is stretched out still.

From verse 18-21 we have another paragraph, the last verses of which I have read. Instead of being shoulder to shoulder, helpers one of another, as members of one body politic, look at the dreadful state of things here pictured. When they were not quarrelling with others they were quarrelling with themselves, "Eating every man the flesh of his own arm."

Then in the next four verses (chap. x. 1-4), we have oppression of the poor, perversion of justice—a harrowing picture of heartless unrighteousness, a terrible state for the people of God to be in. But His eye was on it all and His hand outstretched in burning judgment.

But that state of things is not to be for ever,

and we now pass over from this sorrowful picture to chapter xi., as beautiful as the other is the reverse. At the end of the prophecy there is a counterpart of this which brings out the same truths, only in a wider range and with more detail—a new heaven and a new earth, everything renewed after a new creation style and order, brought before us in a picture of blessedness with which we are all more or less familiar.

We come now to chapter xi., and note how great is the change from what is presented in chapter ix. In chapter xi. 13, Ephraim and Judah are now together: the two sticks are bound up in one, with its resulting blessing. In verse 14, the neighbouring nations, some bound to them by ties of kindred, some not, but all hereditary foes, are now subjected to them, while verse 15 goes out to Egypt, the great world kingdom where their first apprenticeship in bondage was served, and verse 16 to Assyria, their last great enemy. At length all their adversaries are subjected to them. God has His own way with them in blessing, and the whole scene is as contrary to chapter ix. as light is to darkness, as the fruits of grace are to fruits of sin. The blessing which God has in store for His people by-and-by is as opposite as possible to their previous state. Love is produced among

them; they are standing shoulder to shoulder; they have one common desire, interest and affection. They are one: one in thought, heart, object and action. The blessing of God is on them and it shews itself in this way.

But we must now inquire what is the bridge? How is this marvellous change to be accomplished? It is just on that I want to say a word. There must be a bridge across this chasm. You cannot get these two things linked together save by some wonderful means. And what is this wonderful thing that changes the briar and the thorn into the myrtle and the rose; the disunion and the sorrow and the judgment of chapter ix. into the blessedness and the fruits of grace of chapter xi.? This is the wonderful problem, and who is to solve it? Who is it that can settle it to the glory of God and the blessing of His people? Chapter xi. tells us. One is to come upon the scene, "a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a Branch . . . . out of his roots," the administrator of all this blessing, in the power of the Spirit in its seven-fold perfection, the Spirit of the Lord as set forth in His double three-fold character in verses 2, 3. He is to come who is in full measure the vessel of the Spirit, to use Him and to be used by Him; who Himself led by the Spirit is the vessel of the Spirit's power, and who in turn baptises



others with the same Spirit which He has received Himself. He is the One who introduces all the blessing pictured to us here.

And here I should like to call your attention to the way in which He is introduced in Revelation i. Reference seems to be made to chapter vi. 13, an interesting and characteristic chapter, as presenting the vision of the glory of the Lord with the attendant seraphim. I dare say you may have noticed that the prophecy of Isaiah is seraphic, while that of Ezekiel is cherubic. Isaiah has the vision of the seraphim, Ezekiel that of the cherubim. The cherubim are the executors of the divine government; the seraphim are the agency of the power of God according to His nature; they cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts." The living creatures of Revelation iv. seem to unite both characteristics. The action of the seraphim is more exhaustive, more profound than that of the cherubim, which latter is more according to the ways of God governmentally; while that of the seraphim is more according to His nature. Hence the word seraphim means "burners:" and if you look through Isaiah you will find this word "burning" characterises the whole book. So here (chap. vi.), if it is a question of the judgment of sin, it is settled by a live coal. There is no such purifier as fire, no such

judgment as the judgment of fire. The fire of the altar consumed the sacrifices, while also the lake of fire tells of judgment to the extreme on the impenitent. So that the settlement of sin here was not by the waters of Noah, the deluge, but by fire—the live coal from the altar by which the sin is purged. The angel touches the prophet's lips, and declares to him, "thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." And this was necessary to qualify him for the uncompromising message he was to bear to the people, suitable alike to the glory of God and to their actual state, containing as it did also the assurance of full and final blessing. And this coincides, as I understand it, with the basis on which the gospel rests in the Epistle to the Romans; the question of sin being settled according to divine righteousness, and therefore peace with God, perfect according to the basis on which it rests (Rom. iv., v.); while christian state (Rom. viii.), by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, necessarily corresponds thereto: and from this flows practical christian life with all "the fruits of the Spirit."

Now the prophet, thus prepared for his mission, answers the divine summons, and ready to go, says, "Here am I; send me." The glory of God had first, as it were, consumed him, and he cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone,"

&c.; then the live coal consumed his sin, and he is ready to carry a message suited to that same glory. And a terrible message it is (vers. 9, 10), announcing exhaustive judgment on the people, and shutting them up to judicial blindness.

Then (ver. 11) he asks for "how long" is this judgment to endure? So long (vers. 11, 12), until all the works of man be removed from the whole land, and the man himself who did them be removed as well. The expression in verse 12 is, I understand, very strong.\*

The judgment is to last till man be removed, "the man." The idea is that man himself must go. You will see the importance of this: That man must go out of *this place*. He is a troubler here, and must not abide. This is *My* land, it is filled with *My* glory. I will not have this man here to interfere with it, and all he has done must go with him: the cities and the houses, the works of his hands, all must go,† every sign of his presence whereby he has defiled *My* land. I am going to dwell there, and fill it with *My* glory, and bless *My* people there.

An alteration must be made in the translation

\* For some very interesting remarks on this, see "Notes and Comments," J. N. D., Vol. iv., p. 39.

† I have no doubt that the houses and cities of Palestine will be architected in the millennium in a new style.

of verse 13, to read as follows: "But yet should there be a tenth, and should that tenth return, that tenth shall again be consumed," that is, consumed by burning, or burnt, as the same word is translated in chapter iii. 14, margin. We know historically what has happened to the remnant. In a certain sense they were burned. They returned to the land, and was that remnant any better than their fathers? In nowise. All their sufferings did not change their nature. The Ethiopian could not change his skin, nor the leopard his spots. There still remained the necessity for this radical change in them the same as before. Compare their history in the gospels. They, too, shall be eaten or consumed afresh. Divine judgment must consume down to this lowest point, where the root of bitterness was, which, incongruous with His holiness, must call up His anger. Yet as a teil tree or an oak have their stock remaining, even so the holy seed shall be in the stock. The substance thereof is in the stock, and it is to come up again in chapter xi. It is not like a cedar cut down. Every one knows if a cedar or fir is cut down there is no reproductive power in it, it does not sprout again. On the contrary, if you cut down an oak its virtue is in the stock, it grows again. When the Assyrian goes, he goes like a fir for ever. (Compare Isa. x. 34 and

Ezek. xxxi. 3.) This, on the other hand, is like the bush burning and not consumed. Here the stock is in itself, and it is to come up again in chapter xi. When every hope for Israel was gone, here is the One, the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning Star—the Man who would bring the power of the Spirit into the world—the vessel of the Spirit in His own Person, and now, on the ground of redemption, the Giver of the Spirit to others. And mark how the Spirit is signalised in the administration of the blessing set forth in chapter xi. The Spirit of Jehovah rests upon Him, the same Spirit set forth in chapter lxiii., and fulfilled in Luke iv., when He says, “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me.” There He is the great Preacher, the Jubilee Evangelist; here He is the Administrator of righteousness, to establish a system of equity on earth, in which His love could operate in the blessing of His people, and the action of the Spirit in each case differs according to the object in view. In verses 3, 4 He does not judge after the sight of His eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He judges the poor, and with equity He reproves or gives sentence for the meek of the earth, in contrast to the unrighteous decrees and the grievousness of chapter x. Righteousness and equity and faithfulness are

the basis on which He establishes to them all the blessings that succeed. And note the circle in which the blessings extend. This unity produced among themselves transmits its effects first to those who were near them, and branches out to the distant kingdoms of Egypt and Assyria, and the great world powers that oppressed the people of God shall be finally joined to them in the service and worship of the Lord of hosts, according to chapter xix. 18-25. He lays this basis on the administration of righteousness, so that the purposes of love can be reached. We cannot reach love apart from righteousness. "Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Love is the spring and source, the fountain-head of every divine blessing, the very nature of God Himself; but to reach it we must be established in righteousness. There is no other way to reach it. It is the foundation of the gospel, the essential theme of the Epistle to the Romans. So here it is the bridge that leads from the desolations that precede the blessings of chapter xi. and the song of salvation in chapter xii.

The connecting link between the dark picture of chapters ix. and x. and the bright picture that follows is this Man, the vessel of the Spirit, who judges not after the sight of the eyes, nor

reproves after the hearing of His ears. The settlement of things in His hands is the judgment of evil, and the establishment of truth and righteousness, "and his rest shall be glory." (Ver. 10.)

My desire was to connect this with what we had this morning, as to the instruction of the Spirit. The Spirit of Christ is the spirit and power of Christianity, that is to say, the practical power of the Christian's life; and apart from it Christianity is not. Only there must be the proper vessel through which the Spirit works.

E. C.



## HOW TO KEEP RANK.

THERE are two verses I would like to read, beloved brethren: 2 Timothy ii. 22 and Philemon 6. I am sure we are all very conscious of the opposition there is—Satanic opposition—to everything that is of the Spirit of God; but there is this immense comfort for us all, that “greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.” The moment God begins to work, the enemy begins to work too; there is abundant proof of this in scripture.

2 Timothy ii. 22 is instruction for a believer after he has purged himself from the vessels to dishonour; this purging, when real, is the work of the Spirit of God. No doubt the effort of the enemy is to prevent a believer purging himself by inducing him to compromise with error. We are here on the supposition that we have in some measure purged ourselves. Now comes the difficulty which we have to face, “Follow . . . . with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” How far shall we be able to do this? It is a very old practice of the enemy to “sow discord among brethren.” It is one of the seven things the Lord hates.



(See Prov. vi. 19.) If we have been going on in company any time we shall know how difficult it is to get on with one another. There are certain believers we can get on with well enough, but we know how difficult it often is to get on with others. It does not say, Follow with *some*, but with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. If I have purged myself, I have to follow with all those who have purged themselves: here is the difficulty, and it is a very great one; but are we to overcome the difficulty, or to be overcome by it? We shall all answer, the former. We all believe "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." It is very important we should recognise that there is a difficulty. I think we get one practical point that will help us in Philemon, which is an individual epistle. I do not think Philemon was a very prominent man. He is called a "fellow labourer," but his neighbour is called a "fellow soldier." I suppose Archippus was more prominent in fighting the Lord's battles in the gospel. Philemon laboured in the truth, but he does not appear to have been so prominent as Archippus. The Spirit seems to take up three points. 1st (ver. 7), the bowels of the saints were refreshed by him; 2nd, he was exhorted to receive Onesimus above a servant, as a brother beloved; 3rd, to prepare a lodging for

the apostle. (Ver. 22.) It all points, I think, to the fact that Philemon was a devoted man and a fellow labourer. The apostle speaks of two things that ever marked the saints: *love* and *faith*, these two blessed traits were manifested in him. "By the acknowledging of every good thing that is in you\* in Christ Jesus." That is the point I want to come to. If we really had that before us, we should find we could get on with the saints. We do not need to be spiritual to see a defect or inconsistency in another; but we do need to be spiritual to see "every good thing." Philemon was a fellow-labourer with the apostle, and had a meeting in his house; this the Spirit has recorded. I have no doubt if the Spirit led us to acknowledge every good thing in others, we should be better able to follow with them. I do not mean we are not to see *evil*, for it is one of the great privileges of the last days that we have permission to separate from evil. It would be a dreadful thing to have to go on with evil, and if we had not that scripture in Timothy I do not think we could separate. When I see the path of separation and am in it, then I seek for others who are in it also, in order that I may keep company with them,

\* The N.T. reads "us." This does not affect the subject we are speaking of.

as the scripture says, "follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace *with them* that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

Now comes the difficulty, how can I keep company with them? It must be acknowledged that one of the greatest difficulties of our meetings is to get on with one another. I think the reason is we have not come to the point of acknowledging every good thing in one another. We can see the defects well enough. Just think of a brother you find it difficult to get on with. Do you not think if you were more spiritually minded you would see something of Christ in him, and that would alter things very much? I take this as an instance, because Philemon was evidently not a prominent man in fighting the Lord's battles—not a "fellow soldier," but a "fellow labourer," and the apostle can recognise the good in him; and we must go on to that (ver. 6) if we are to enjoy the collective privileges of the assembly of God. I will tell you what has been said by some regarding the heavenly side of the truth. "It is a very beautiful *idea*." And why did they say that? Because they found it was almost impossible to give expression to it when they came in contact with the saints they knew best. It is very humbling that the better I know of some believers the less I am able to

get on with them. I know so many of their defects, and they so occupy my mind, that I fail to see the good things in them. If I were more spiritual I should see the good, that is, the grace of Christ, and hope that the workings of the flesh would be subdued by the workings of the Spirit. If the Lord has led us to recognise the privilege of separation from evil, and we *have His permission* for it, and have purged ourselves from the vessels to dishonour, then we must not suppose we are like Elijah, who said, "I only am left." Some saints think they are the only ones who are faithful, and isolate themselves; but on the contrary we have the exhortation to follow *with* those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

I ask myself the questions: How is it, then, that I cannot get on with some of my brethren? How far am I lacking in that spiritual discernment which acknowledges every good thing that is in them? I do not say we all ought to think alike. I see in scripture growth, that while we all have to begin as children, we go on to become men and learn to put away childish things. But if we are all going on together in the truth, then there will be fellowship together. I will tell you what I think is at the bottom of the difficulty of which we have been speaking—*it is the world.*

The world is man asserting himself. You get an instance of it in Adonijah, who said "I will be king." He wanted to be pre-eminent. You come to the church and you get Diotrephes; he loved the pre-eminence. Is not that often the cause of not getting on with my brethren? I want *my* views and thoughts, *my* will to be pre-eminent, and that is *the spirit of the world*. What is the one remedy for the world? I believe to be under the influence of the Father's love. The world suits us so uncommonly well; it is natural to us all. The young men in John's epistle, although the word was abiding in them, yet they were exposed to the world. The fathers were beyond it, they had reached to the point of safety, they had got to Christ. If there is one thing one desires it is to get to be a "father"! The babes were in danger of wrong thoughts about Christ, because they knew Him so little, but the young men were not in this danger; they were not to be cheated by an anti-christ; they knew the true Christ too well, yet they were in danger of the *world*. What was the corrective for the world? The love of the Father; that is, as I understand it, the thing, and the only thing, that will deliver us from the power of the world, especially in that particular form of self assertion. I may be seeking to press a right thing even and yet asserting

myself, and so bring in the spirit of the world.

We ought to be very thankful that we are together while others have dropped out who in former times were with us, but they have not been able to keep rank. And, beloved brethren, what is to hinder our dropping out? We know something of the opposition and the power of the enemy, and do you think we are more proof against it than they were? They might have answered, like Hazael, if they had been challenged, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" He could not at the moment suppose that he could do it. We cannot suppose we should ever be outside, and fallen out of the ranks, not able to keep company, "but let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." It needs much grace to go on together, and I do not believe we shall keep company unless we are more spiritually minded. Many are kept right by protection, and thank God for protection. A wife may be kept right by her husband; children by their parents; but protection does not always last; the time comes when we have to stand by ourselves, and what will enable us to stand? I think being spiritually minded; and being spiritually minded will enable us to acknowledge the good in others, and we shall see so much

that we shall be surprised. As we see the good in each other we shall lose sight of the defects. A man of the world can point out a defect, it needs the spirit of Christ to see the good. In many a one who may be a little crooked there may be a great deal of the grace of Christ. If we look for that we shall be enabled to follow with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Thank God that company will go on to the end. We have often thought we are going to be like the temple, at its destruction, "not one stone . . . upon another," but Timothy goes on to the end, and there will be those who will call upon the Lord out of a pure heart to the end. The question for us is *shall we be amongst them?* I think it very much depends on whether we are spiritually minded enough to see what is of Christ in one another. Not by any means covering up evil, but able to go on with one another, remembering we all alike have the flesh in ourselves, which is so offensive to God. But we have the Spirit of God, and if we are more spiritually minded we shall see more readily the work of the Spirit, and more of the grace of Christ the better we know one another; and like the apostle, we shall acknowledge every good thing that is in one another in Christ Jesus.

# “SHEW ME THY GLORY,”

OR

## THE LIGHT OF GOD'S PURPOSE.

(EX. XXXIII. 18; COL. I. 12-14; 27-29.)

WHAT I have before me, beloved brethren, is to press upon you two things; one is the blessed purpose of God with regard to us; the other is the deliverance which has been effected for us, and into which we must enter in order that we may enjoy the purpose. However much I may see the blessedness of God's purpose for me, yet it must be evident to every one here that I cannot step into it unless I know what it is to be clear of the old thing. We may see the desirability of entering into the purpose but we cannot take our place in it unless we know deliverance. It is those two things I want to bring before you.

I may say at the beginning, perhaps, those two thoughts were written to dear Mr. Stoney saying that if there was anything which Mr. Darby had pressed upon us it was this entrance into the purpose of God, and the other great thing he had brought out was deliverance—that entrance



must be through deliverance. I do not mean to say that was all that Mr. Darby brought out, but certainly these two were great parts of his teaching. Mr. Stoney replied, "I perfectly agree with it." I only received Mr. Stoney's letter this morning. It was not that that led me to bring them before you, for I have had it on my mind to speak of these two things here, trusting the Lord to lay them on every one's heart.

I desire, and I trust that every one here has the desire found in the heart of Moses: Lord "shew me thy glory!" That lies beyond the question of responsibility. The question of responsibility is connected with the ways of God with regard to us; that is, with responsible man down here—our course in this world, whether it be the course of man generally as seen in the history of Israel or in the individual. We have a certain course down here, and in that course we have to learn the lesson of good and evil; we have to learn that man is under the power of evil and that he does not know the good; that good is with God and evil in man. It often takes a long time to learn this, and God's ways with us in this world where responsibility comes in—God's ways in teaching us often extend over a long period of time.

If you look at the first promise of deliverance, for instance, that the seed of the woman should

bruise the serpent's head, four thousand years transpired before the fulness of the time came when God sent forth His Son. Four thousand years were occupied in the ways of God in working out the question of good and evil—God in his dealings with man always proving His goodness through various dispensations; the very heavens declaring His goodness to man; and man proving his badness. All that brings out the ways of God. That is not His purpose. If you take Israel again: they had the promises, but the law raised the question of good and evil and they have to go through a long history of proof and trial, which will eventually culminate in the great tribulation. "It is a terrible thing that I will do with thee," God says. (Ex. xxxiv. 10.) But God proclaims Himself in His ways as the God of goodness and mercy, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and truth, &c. He takes such a name (ver. 6) that it becomes the formula of Israel: "His mercy endureth for ever."

How many of us know Him thus! How often have we quoted Psalm ciii. and taken up that expression, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." That, I may say, is the outburst of a heart that has learned its lesson that the Lord is long-suffering and gracious and abundant in mercy. All that is connected with His ways. He is very long-

suffering and good, and whatever He may put us through, in the end mercy triumphs. “I will sing of the mercy of the Lord for ever.” It is from everlasting to everlasting. We prove it in our history as responsible, and that is all connected with His ways.

But there is another thing, and that is His purpose. It is to that I want now to direct your attention and to try and shew you that you must be delivered from the old in order to enter into the new.

As I stand before you, beloved brethren, I feel my own deficiency in speaking of it, but I feel the Lord has given it me to say, and I look to Him to enable me so to put it that you may receive what He would have you receive.

The desire of Moses, “Shew me thy glory,” reached beyond God’s ways then made known to him. (Ps. ciii. 7.) However much we may bless God for the character shewn in His ways *with us*, His glory is the revelation of *Himself*. In response to Moses the Lord said, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee.” He could not then shew His glory. It is not connected with our responsibility. We may look back and review our pathway, and as we each think of His ways with us we can only say, “Bless the Lord, O my soul!” The more I think what He has been to me and what I have been to Him, I

can only bow down my head and say, "All that is within me bless his holy name;" but I see there is another thing, and that is what Moses desired, "I beseech thee, shew me *thy glory*." That is, shew me the revelation of Thyself; not only what you can be to me in your ways according to my need, but how you can act of and from yourself. Moses goes beyond his former request, "Shew me now thy way." He was conscious that behind the ways of God there was His own peculiar glory, and we now know that His purpose is the display of His own glory. We may well bless Him for the mercy that followed us since we first drew breath. Mercy without ceasing, and we would not have been here this morning to speak of it apart from this mercy and goodness. But there is something beyond, and I desire that every heart here may get the sense of it. It is a great thing, however little we may have entered into it, when we are sensible of the purpose into which the wealth of mercy opens. Something purposed by the blessed God Himself according to what He is. Of course it has all now come out in Christ, but I believe that Moses had this sense—There is something in God Himself if only I could see behind His present dealings. Law, though introduced with glory, was not the revelation of His purpose, but of holy though terrible govern-

ment. In connection with that government He made known His gracious character, but the desire of Moses indicated that there was something in God Himself from which He could act, and Moses longed to see it. I believe that was wrapped up in what Moses said: "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory."

I ask my own heart and yours, beloved brethren, Has that which has been ministered to us so often and for so many years in this room, with the object of carrying our hearts into this line of things, has it at least produced this one thought—I would like to be carried into that scene of divine life where Christ is? That is what is open to us now. It was not open to Moses. That is what I find in Colossians. I cannot attempt to express to you the fulness of those words: "The kingdom of the Son of his love." I do not say that in Colossians you rise to the full height of God's purpose, but you approach wonderfully near when you get such a word as that! "The kingdom of the Son of his love." Not the Son of His power, or the "Son of his right hand;" He will come out as such. There will be the kingdom of the Son of man, the Man of God's right hand, coming in power and in the glory of God. That is not what is spoken of here; what we have now been brought into is the kingdom of the Son of God's love.

We are brought into a kingdom where love has the sway ; where all the divine affections which rest on the Son of His love are known. Eventually those who are now brought into it will be as happy as divine love can make them ; love removes every disturbing element which can intrude. Eden was happy. Paradise was a bright and happy scene, but a disturbing element, sin, could come in and did come in there ; but in "the kingdom of the Son of his love" you find that even now love has its sway. It is not connected with the responsible man at all, but with the man who in the person of the Son of His love is to God's perfect and entire satisfaction in His own presence, where love governs and acts on behalf of the "loved co-heirs."

But what I feel is, and I think other beloved brethren will go with me also, that it is when the heart is in any way awakened to God's purpose, that then you feel the need of deliverance in its full extent. You become conscious that there is not only a power that sought to hinder you from getting out of Egypt. That you saw laid low in the Red Sea (if I may turn to the figure), but the same hostile power will hinder you from getting into the purpose of God—from entering Canaan as a present thing ; not that Colossians carries you into heavenly places, but it shews the place which you have in

the kingdom of the Son of His love, and to my mind the administration of that kingdom results from the Father loving the Son and putting all things into His hands. The mere question of standing will never enable you to realise deliverance. I do not dwell upon the words "standing" or "state," they are human expressions. Of course it depends on how a man uses them. I understand what is generally meant by them, but I avoid them myself because they are human terms and may be misapplied. But what I mean is this, that the mere fact of a person saying I know God has made me fit to go to heaven will not carry you into the purpose of God *now*. I admit that every converted person is fit to go to heaven; but do they enter into the purpose of God *now*? When you are called to your death-bed (if you are called to one) you will drop every hindrance; there will be nothing to detain you then. The difficulty is to drop things *now*. How often you see that believers when they come to a death-bed have a peace they never knew before, because they have done with things here. It is through grace all clear sailing into heaven, but that is not the point. Can we drop things *now* while we are in the midst of difficulties and dangers? Hence deliverance is needed. If we are under the power of things in this present scene, where Satan has his authority,

we are hindered from being in the light of the Father's house ; we are not able to enter into the enjoyment of it ; deliverance here is from the darkness of this scene that we may enjoy the light of another scene ; the portion of the saints in light. The best robe made the prodigal meet for the father's house, and it was in the house that the light of love shone upon him. There, too, was the administration of love. We know it is in the hands of the Son of His love.

I think many would say—That is just where the difficulty comes in. I see every enemy that could hold me captive dead on the sea shore ; I see I am clear of Egypt ; but I do not know if I am clear of that which prevents my entering into heavenly privileges. The importance of entering into our heavenly privileges now has been often brought before us. When we wake up to it we begin to feel the hindrances, yet we find in this chapter that two great truths connect themselves with the administration of the kingdom of the Son of God's love ; one is reconciliation to God, and the other derivation from Christ.

We may well look to it to-day how far the truth ministered to us and pressed upon us again and again in this room, has so wrought upon us as to bring us into the enjoyment of the portion of the saints in light ; entering into that wonderful domain of life which is here characterised as



the kingdom of the Son of His love. There is no doubt that the inheritance of the saints in light will be fully realised in heaven, but there is a present translation into the kingdom of God's dear Son—the Son who administers the purposes of the Father's love, the Father who has made us meet, having reconciled us through the death of His Son. Do we live in that scene *now*—that sphere of Christ's life? It is there the heart expands! We are brought into a scene of divine affections, and the heart is set free to enjoy it. May the Lord just enable us to enter into it a little!

But that raises the question how far have we realised the deliverance that enables us to live in that sphere of divine affections? Moses dimly saw it when he said, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." Everything there is according to God's perfect and entire satisfaction; the Son of His love is there.

I would refer to the end of the chapter for one moment. But let me say another word, beloved brethren, and that is, I do not think that one of us can stand still. There are moments in our history when we reach certain points in our souls, but we cannot stop there. For instance, you may have reached the truth of justification in Romans, but you cannot stop there; it is only a prelude to going on to another. You may

reach a point in Colossians, but you cannot stop there. If you do you will go back ; you must go on. The Lord is very tender, very gracious with us. He will take great pains with us. He will help us on for years, but His purpose for you is that you should be brought into the full enjoyment of what He has got for you.

A person may get hold of a truth and say, There I will rest. You will surely go back if you do. That truth prepares you for another step ; I admit we go by steps. But you cannot say, I have taken that step, now I will stop ; you must go on to the next step, and then to the next, until the Spirit has brought you into the deep sense of the purpose of God. You do not rest even there in one sense, because when Israel got to Canaan they began to fight. There you are brought to a scene where you have to stand for the Lord, where you are identified with His interests ; but this by the way.

In the end of the chapter we have the labour of the apostle to present every man perfect in Christ. I may here mention a circumstance which occurred the other day. Some one in Germany said to me—Are you satisfied with your work in Germany ? No ; I answered, and I never shall be satisfied with what is accomplished down here ; the object of a servant's labour is the presentation of every saint perfect

in Christ Jesus. I do not think any servant will be satisfied with his work until the saints, as far as he can help it on, are perfected with Christ in glory. The apostle laboured to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. That is the goal to which the Spirit of God leads every saint.

It is not a matter of attainment by any effort of yours, but there is such a thing now as a full-grown man in Christ Jesus. If you ask me what it is? I say I think it is a person who is at home in the purpose of God. I see God's purpose for me; I am to be conformed to Christ in glory. We are not yet conformed to His image, but the light beams upon our souls. It is a wonderful moment for any soul when it sees that not only has the old man been dealt with, but it sees Christ's glory. *You* are then eclipsed and Christ shines upon you; we could not wish more. That is what Moses longed for; the desire of his heart which he could not see. The glory of God which shines in the face of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps you say, I have made long struggles, I have tried to answer to my calling, and I have not succeeded. We have each done the same. But what I now see is, that there is a blessed Man in the glory of God, One who is to God's entire satisfaction, I see what God has effected for His own delight in having His own Son before Him as man. And while it was necessary in

the ways of God that I should learn myself, and while doing so experience His tender mercy and goodness sustaining me all along (or we should never have been here to-day), still there comes a moment in the soul's history when that man who experiences the support and tender mercy and goodness in the ways of God with him, not only learns that there is no good in him, but he, in whom there is no good, is eclipsed, and another Person shines upon him—there is not only the negative but the positive.

I do not ask how much you or I have entered into it, still it is a great thing to have the sense of the glory that shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Is He not your Saviour? Yes, but He is the One who is to shine upon your soul. I do not mean the blessed beams of His work—that is where you first knew Him in the light of mercy to a poor guilty one; no, it is the light from Himself, the Son of God's love, shining from that scene where glory is, and only love is known. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"—or rather shine upon thee. What a word for our hearts, beloved friends!

Thank God, we can say, All that would hinder our souls from being at home there has been removed in the cross of Christ. The *man* as well as

his guilt has been removed by it. We need not be occupied with that man, because he is removed from the eye of God, so that we may be in the light of that which will eclipse him. You say, Have not I to reckon myself dead? Yes; but how can you reckon yourself dead except in the power of life? It is an old saying of Mr. Darby's, “You cannot touch death except in the power of life.” I say again it is not attainment in the sense of setting the old man right; it is this—*Christ shines upon you*, and as you look at Him there you see what is God's purpose for you.

Some young Christian here may think, it is all very well for you elder ones to speak thus. All I ask you is to look up to heaven, and there see the light of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ. There is the home of love and of divine affections. Any person who has seen that light shining from Christ understands how it puts out the first man, and heavenly light becomes the home of his spirit. There you realise that you are in Christ, and that is a full-grown man. Of course, “perfect” in its full sense means perfected with Christ in glory. But we want now to have as heavenly light what will then be our part, when with Him in glory in that place where only love is known. And nothing would satisfy the heart of the

apostle till he had led every saint up to that point of "perfect in Christ." He sought to lead them into the truth of the mystery. The teaching of Colossians as to the mystery is, that Christ was in the saints. They were in danger of being beguiled into adding something to Christ, walking according to the rudiments of the world and not according to Christ; and the apostle sought to lead them into the mystery, that they might know they had all in Christ, that they were filled full in Him; thus the traits and beauties of the new Man would come out. Where? Down here. But *you must go in* before you can *come out*. Moses went into the mount with God before he could come out to build the tabernacle. He went in, and was with the Lord forty days and forty nights, and neither did eat nor drink. He was impressed with the whole scene of the patterns of things in the heavens, and then he came out to carry it all out down here. If we do not go into the scene of those affections, "the kingdom of the Son of his love," we cannot come out for Him. While a soul is in Satan's kingdom he keeps it entirely in the dark as to the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we are delivered from the power of darkness and brought under the sway and administration of love. We know it and enjoy it, and then we can

come out for the Lord. The desire of the apostle for the Colossians was that they might be filled with the knowledge of His will. And what is His will, beloved brethren? To walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. Surely what God is doing during this period of the Lord's rejection is building up the body of Christ, because it is the vessel in which Christ is displayed both now and for eternal ages. For that God is working with every saint that he may be a little item of Christ's glory. A very little item perhaps, but still part of that glory. But I repeat that we must go in before we can come out.

I will give you another instance of what I mean. The supper at Bethany in John xii. The Lord goes to Bethany six days before the pass-over, which was to be fulfilled in His own death; there they make Him a supper. Lazarus was there, and Martha and Mary. The disciples also were inside the house with the Lord, and what did they learn there? Though feebly they entered into it, one thing that shone out there was the glory of the Person of the Son of God. Lazarus was the witness of that glory in power and victory over death. Another thing before them was the deep appreciation of His Person in Mary. Those two things were there: the glory of the Lord, as Son of God, and a heart that could appreciate Him. It is a wonderful

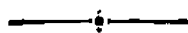
thing to get into the company of a person like Mary, who knows the Lord and appreciates Him. It must greatly affect us. These disciples must have been wonderfully affected by the glory of the Person of the Lord, and the appreciation of the heart of Mary for Him, for the next day, when the Lord rides into Jerusalem, they come out with Him, and we are told in another gospel they spread their garments in the way and shout Hosanna! But they had been in the house with Him first before they come out in the kingdom. You must go in first in order to come out. I cannot understand the pleasure of the Lord, nor answer to His will, apart from the light of Christ shining upon me. It is the pleasure of God that the youngest saint should have this light of love, so that you should display Christ here, as a member of His body. I do not think we can understand and enter into the present service of the Holy Ghost in forming the body of Christ here and leading our souls into it, if we have not been inside and learnt something of the glory there, if we have not said with Moses: "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory."

May the Lord give us to enter into it! I trust that the Lord may enable the youngest here to see it, and that on God's side all obstruction has been removed. There is a verse in



Colossians ii. which we did not touch on yesterday afternoon (ver. 15), “having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” That verse to me is like the rolling back of Jordan. It does not go to the full height of leading captivity captive, as in Ephesians; but the power of the enemy is annulled if Jordan is rolled back. There is no barrier to hinder you entering into the purpose of God. The enemy is silenced. There is no foe that Christ has not overcome, and the way is open into the heavenly places, that is, into the purpose of God. Dear young believer, may you know deliverance in the power of Christ. He has met all your sins and your guilt, and the man who did the sin has been removed from the presence of God. Christ Himself now fills that presence to the glory of God. May Christ shine upon you.

T. H. R.



## “SPILT . . . CANNOT BE GATHERED UP.”

2 SAM. XIV. 13, 14 ; ACTS XVII. 2, 3 ; HEB. II. 9, 10.

I HARDLY like to take up your time with these scriptures, beloved friends, were it not that I feel one may speak of the help the thought has been to one's own soul, and in the hope that it may also be a help to others. There are many young here to-day, and I want to bring the thought to them. I ask you in the light of what we have had before us this morning to take another look at the passage in 2 Samuel.

One has often sought to tell out the beauties of the gospel from that verse, but surely there is there something else, and something far beyond. I do not want to preach the gospel now, unless the gospel be in its full extent what we have had brought before us this morning.

Have we faced, all of us, that sentence in the beginning of the verse, “*We must needs die?*” I have often linked these two verses together, the “must needs” of judgment and the “must needs” of grace. One has preached the gospel from it in the sense of Christ being the Substitute, taking the sinner's place. But surely there is something far beyond substitution there. I have

said in this way that He must needs have suffered that we need not die; but when we see in any measure what our beloved brother has brought before us this morning, how short that comes! "*We must needs die*," if we would enter into the blessing that He would bring us into to-day. It is not merely the redemption of our souls from hell. That has been a little bit in the beginning of God's purpose for us. Christ died—"the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." If our hearts say, and God grant they may say, "Shew me thy glory," we have to learn that He must needs die in order to bring us into the place where we may see it. That is my point—*the first man must go*. "We must needs die, and are as water spilled upon the ground that cannot be gathered up."

It does not merely mean an absence of strength on our part to gather up ourselves again, but in the light of what we have had before us let me bring this application to it, beloved friends. Not only cannot we gather up ourselves again, but He has put it beyond our power. We may try to pick up what has been judged, but, thank God, we cannot. *It cannot be gathered up*.

Then that blessed Lord Jesus Christ "must needs have suffered." How blessed the difference between the way He speaks of Himself and the way He speaks of us. You have had your hearts

directed to it no doubt in Psalm xxii. 14. "I am *poured out* like water."

Remember, beloved friends, this—"we must needs die" was a truth concerning the people of God, and link it with that verse in Hebrews ii. 10. There was a "must needs" for Him to suffer; a "must needs" for Him to die "in bringing many sons unto glory." This must precede the "must needs" for us to die.

Our beloved brother took us back to Genesis iii., that wonderful seed-plot of the whole word of God. There we got the seed of the woman spoken of; we get God's thoughts and counsels 4,000 years before God brought it to pass; we get the intimation of it there. We get the two sides—the suffering side and the triumph side. "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." There must be the suffering side for Him as well as the triumph.

Man must needs die out of the presence of God in banishment, but God has devised means that His banished be not expelled from Him. He has devised means to bring them home, and how can we get home except through death? Not *our* death but *His* death.

It is not a matter of attainment, as has been said, or I would not have touched it, but if you have a sense of it at all, you have got it from the Lord, and there is not one here who may not

enter into it. But how? "*We must needs die* and are as water spilled upon the ground;" and, thank God, you *cannot* gather it up again. You cannot gather up that which has been set aside, in the sight of God, in the cross. Why try to gather it up? Why should we? Oh, the relief of looking at God's means. One word tells us His means, and that is CHRIST.

Our beloved brother made a remark yesterday to the effect that saints are not spoken of as being "in Jesus," but we are "in Christ." How beautifully that comes out in Acts xvii. "This Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ." He had been preaching Jesus, that humbled, gracious Saviour who had laid down His life in obedience to the will of the Father. Three times that proclamation was made in the synagogue that Jesus is the Christ.

If we are in Christ before God we are in the Man that is before God. Do we want to have the first man intruding there? Do we want to gather up the spilt water?

How do we get there? Psalm xxii. comes in as the link between these two "must needs." *We are as water spilled* upon the ground. We must needs go down; but mark how He changes the word in Psalm xxii.: "*I am poured out like water.*" That which is poured out like water finds its own blessed place by the side of that

which is spilled like water. May we not say that Genesis iii. gives us the spilling, and the close of the four gospels, where we get the story of the cross, gives the "pouring out"?

There is another beautiful thought there in that Psalm. "Thou hast brought *me* into the dust of death." Who? It is no wonderful thing for *us* to die. The wonder would be for us if we could prevent it. But it was a marvelous thing for the Prince of Life to die. That was indeed wonderful. "'Thou hast brought me into the dust of death." Was it not a wonderful exercise of the power of God that the Prince of Life could lay down His life. He said, "I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again." It was power to make Him die, though He was "crucified in weakness;" power, and God's power alone, that could bring Him into the dust of death.

What is the middle of that beautiful Psalm? "Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorn." He was heard, and He was gathered. He laid down His life, and He took it again. The condition changed. We know all that through grace. The condition in which He is there now in that new life, that new way in which Christ risen is in the presence of God, is the place for every one of us who believe in Christ in God's grace. We are in Him who

took His life again, who has gone into the presence of God. This is “Jesus our Saviour”—the One of whom the apostle said, “This Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ.”

May the Lord just make that verse in 2 Sam. xiv. very real and true to each one of us this morning. Let us read it again in that way that I have sought to bring it before you. “We must needs die,” &c. And dear brethren, allow me just to make one other remark. Do not let us be afraid if we hear things that we have not heard before. The Spirit of God is here to lead us into all the truth. It is not the truth that is new, though it may be new to us, because we have not as yet been led into it by the Spirit. I have often read that verse without a thought or a glimmer of what I have been trying to shew you this morning; but was it not there all the time? It is not new because we have not seen it. When the Spirit of God opens our eyes to see the truth, He brings us into what is perfectly new in our apprehension; but the truth He brings us into is as old as this book itself—the word of God.

How often we have heard it said, “The Bible is a new book to me since I have been converted.” It simply is that you read the book, and you know yourself, in a new light. I pray that you may get hold of this. Oh, may the Lord grant

that our souls may be so at home in the presence of the Lord at a time like this, that we may see the glory of God and Jesus—see the way He has gone, through death.

If that is the case, I venture to say when we take up our Bibles in that light—the light of that glory, the Bible will indeed be a new book to us again.

J. R. B.





# READING.

(COL. III. 1-17.)

T. H. R. I suppose the first verse of our chapter, "If ye then be risen with Christ," refers to what is stated in verse 12 of chapter ii. ?

W. Why "if" ?

T. H. R. I suppose it is put hypothetically, *If* risen, *then* seek.

W. B. Does the "if" imply any doubt, or is it an "if" of argument ?

T. H. R. Scripture often speaks thus, it does not imply any doubt.

E. R. We might say "Since," might we not ?

W. It is a stronger form of assertion than a direct statement.

E. C. It is the same as saying "Seeing that ye are;" is that what you mean ?

F. H. B. It was said yesterday that "risen with Christ" brings you *into* all that is connected with Christ where He is, and is not simply deliverance *out of* something; or was that connected with quickening ?

T. H. R. With quickening, I think. In Colossians you get "risen" before "quickened." It shews that "risen" is *a status* upon earth,

because you are not *actually* risen, it puts you necessarily, as to your status, in an out-of-the-world condition.

G. G. Is the exhortation founded on this statement corporate or individual?

T. H. R. I think you might say it is both; it is true for every individual believer. *I* have to seek the things that are above, but it is addressed to the company—it is what is proper to the company.

D. L. H. In order to get formally before our minds what the statement “risen with Christ” means, perhaps it would be as well to know what do you mean by “status”?

T. H. R. It is brought in in connection with baptism, that is why I say “status;” having been buried with Him in baptism, we are raised through faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead. (Chap. ii. 12.)

G. G. Is it “In whom” or “Wherein” in verse 12?

T. H. R. It is an open question. J. N. D. prefers “wherein,” J. B. S. prefers “in whom.”

D. L. H. Baptism applies to death, not to resurrection, does it not? At any rate, faith is introduced here.

T. H. R. The only difficulty with me as to in whom is the other preposition “with” following, thus saying, “*In* whom ye are risen

*with.*" Baptism, as I understand it, is the door that leads you into the status of "risen with Christ." You cannot stop in death. Baptism is the opening of the door by which you take your place with Christ risen, but it is a place really taken because it is through the faith of the operation of God who raised Him from the dead.

G. E. Then "in which" would apply to baptism, and it is the opening of the door to me?

T. H. R. You could not be really in the place without faith in Christ risen. The apostle addresses them in the Epistle to the Colossians on the christian footing, "faithful brethren in Christ;" and in the Epistle to the Ephesians also they are addressed as the "faithful in Christ Jesus;" you do not get quite so far as that in the Corinthians; there it supposes a profession, "all who call on the name of the Lord." In these epistles it supposes real saints in the christian state.

G. G. Then it is buried together with Him, and raised together with Him?

T. H. R. Well it is "*having been* buried." Baptism is not brought forward here as in Romans; there it is the bearing of the ordinance upon you; you are committed to His death; here that is supposed to be gone by—"having been buried"—and then you get the opening out,

through that door, into a status where you take your place with Christ risen, only really taken in faith. Do you see what I mean?

D. L. H. Yes; it is very interesting, I am hearing it with great interest.

F. H. B. Is it not true that in Colossians it is more the development of the christian state than the christian standing?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so, so far as I understand the words state and standing.

W. B. Will you explain the words standing and state, Dr. B.?

F. H. B. I must ask T. H. R. to do that.

T. H. R. Well, I avoid the words as far as I possibly can.

REMARK. You have used the word here.

A. P. You said the Colossians were in the christian state, what did you mean? what was in your mind?

T. H. R. I meant they had really got into Christianity, which lies on the other side of Christ's death. I do not consider anybody is in Christianity who has merely seen that Christ has died *for* him. I mean by the christian status, association with Christ on the other side.

W. G. B. Does not Acts i. answer to it?

T. H. R. I think it does; it has often struck me that the disciples must have realised the risen state when they were with the Lord after

His resurrection; it is not new to say that the Epistle to the Colossians is like the forty days the Lord was upon the earth—risen, but not gone to heaven; the disciples were in company with the risen Man, they must have realised their peculiar position; *they* were not risen, but were brought into association with One who was. The apostle says they did eat and drink with Him after that He rose from the dead. He was in an out-of-the-world condition of things, and they were, so to speak, in an inner kind of circle that the world knew nothing about; they must have realised the out-of-the-world condition in His company; though not actually raised themselves, they were in positive association with One who was, with a Man who did not belong to the world, and who was out of death and judgment. I picture it to myself in that way, and I think that is where the truth in Colossians brings you.

F. H. B. So if we are with Christ where He is, we are outside everything here. If we are not seen "in Christ" where He is, as in Ephesians, we are seen in the out-of-the-world condition?

T. H. R. Yes; it is far more the thought of association with Him here, though you do get the word "complete *in him*;" but it is more the idea of association you get here than being

"in Christ," and the result of it, because "in Christ," involves heavenly position, and you are not in the heavenly position in Colossians.

D. L. H. If we had that sense in our souls of association with Christ, it would take us very much out of the world. If really right as to that in our souls, we have done with this present world.

T. H. R. I think the disciples must have felt very much out of it and done with it.

D. L. H. Just ready for another world?

T. H. R. A person risen from the dead belongs to another world and not to this. And though I am not risen actually, yet I am in living association with the Person who is.

QUES. What is the meaning of "faith of the operation of God"?

T. H. R. God raised Him from the dead; that is where the working of God began, in raising Christ; we have faith in that; it is not a dead Christ we believe in, it is a risen One.

W. H. Is not this statement, "risen with Christ," said of those who have put off the body of the flesh?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so. Why I use the word "status" is because I can quite understand those disciples, if they were in the company of the Lord, the risen Man, and He was opening out to them during those forty days the things

of the kingdom of God, how they would feel that their actual connection with this world and with the flesh was a positive hindrance to entering into His communications. So here you get "risen with him" before "quickenèd;" though still on earth, you realise *the power* that raised Him; there is no power in death, it is weakness, therefore you get circumcision first, which cuts you off from the flesh, then risen through faith of the operation of God, and then "quickenèd," so that you may live in all that in which He lives, and which He can speak to us of.

G. G. Does "if" imply—if you are brought in the history of your soul to that point—into association with Christ?

T. H. R. Well, I think he says they *were*, it supposes that; it is a very strong way of speaking, "If ye be risen . . . seek those things which are above."

F. H. B. No other person would. That is normal Christianity.

T. H. R. It is hardly "*Set your minds*," in the next verse; it is more "have your mind on things above," according to J. N. D. That is where your mind is.

QUES. They who have are those who are risen? that is, if the first is true?

T. H. R. I do not see how you could get to this if the first were not true.

F. H. B. He was connected with Christ outside the world.

J. P. It is true of *this* christian company at Colosse ?

T. H. R. Yes.

W. B. Did you ask whether it was true of us as a christian company, or true of *this* christian company ?

J. P. Yes.

D. L. H. True of *this* christian company.

W. Was it not true of every believer because he was a believer ?

D. L. H. Is it not better for us to take scripture as we find it ? This is what is written to the Colossians, not to the Galatians. It applied to them in their then state.

W. It would not do to press too far that the different truths in each epistle are true only to the people to whom it is written ; that will hardly do ; but there is a limit, you get a minimum.

J. P. Perhaps you will make that clear for us ?

W. If the thing is only true of these Colossians, you put a limit.

D. L. H. If you put in "only," it would be very serious. What I said was, it was true of them ; no one put "only" in and made a limit ; there is a limit ; no doubt, it applies to them, but do not say "only" to them.



W. You say this verse applies to a company to whom Paul wrote, and will not have it applied to every believer.

T. H. R. It is very important to see that that company was addressed as on christian ground, as "faithful in Christ Jesus."

F. H. B. Scripture could not suppose any saints upon christian ground if they were not risen with Christ.

T. H. R. No; the danger was lest they should go back to what was of man; what I said this morning is true, I do not think there is a stopping-place for any one of us. If you have got the truth in Romans, the very truth in Romans supposes there is another point further on, and when you have got to Colossians, "quickened" carries you on to "raised and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;" there is no stopping-place short of the full purpose of God. In each epistle a certain state and condition is before the mind of the apostle; but you must go on. Hence the conflict of the apostle for these Colossians, that they might know the mystery.

W. But then Christianity is an indivisible whole?

T. H. R. Yes; but here I have come to the point that my life is where Christ is; He lives to God in a new scene, it goes further here than

reckoning yourself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Here we have "quickened together with him;" that involves having the mind in the sphere of His life, our life hid with Christ in God.

M. Then being in status brings experience?

T. H. R. You get the status of a risen man while here on earth in Colossians, for God has raised Christ. It is not status in Ephesians, you could not call it so. It takes you to heaven there, "made to sit in heavenly places in Christ," and risen is the way to that position. Here it is a status because you are not looked at as made to sit in heavenly places. It is Mr. Darby's word, and it commends itself to me, as setting forth the bearing of risen with Christ—you could not use it for Ephesian truth. Then you get a further thing, that you are quickened, you live in the life of Him who is in this risen state and condition and gone to heaven; you are not gone there, but that fact of being risen with Christ will make me seek the things above, where He is. It is a status with us, as being in association with Christ who is actually risen; but then to be real there is faith in the power of God who raised Him, and that brings experience proper to such association.

A. H. What is the difference between risen

with Christ and quickened? I want to know a little more about it.

T. H. R. I cannot explain it more than to say that risen with Christ is a status you get here on earth; quickened is that I am in the life of Him who is risen.

A. H. We could not have "risen" without quickening? You said something about "quickening" following "risen" here?

T. H. R. But here "quickened" comes after "risen," and involves new creation.

A. H. We could not have it without being in His life?

T. H. R. "Quickened with him" means you are made alive with Him in order to live in the scene where He lives.

A. H. Does verse 13 touch Ephesian truth?

T. H. R. It does.

W. B. Do you mean us to understand that the order in which these things come before our souls, in which we learn them, is first risen and then quickened?

T. H. R. It gives us risen before quickened in Colossians.

W. B. Ah! but I mean in the experience of our souls.

T. H. R. Well, I really could not tell you that. I am very chary of speaking about experience, because we learn things in very different ways;

we may learn Ephesian truth first, and then have to go back to Colossians, in order to fully enter into it. We learn the truth so very differently.

P. Is verse 13 a new paragraph bringing in the Gentiles?

F. H. B. It is all Gentiles.

QUES. He says "you" in verse 13, and "against *us*" in verse 14. I thought it had that bearing.

T. H. R. Well, it had, because he was addressing Gentiles.

F. W. G. Might we not say that verse 12, looking back at Romans, joins hands with Romans; and verse 13, looking on to Ephesians, joins hands with Ephesians?

T. H. R. I think so; verse 12 goes beyond Romans; it touches Romans and goes beyond, because Romans does not bring you to "risen;" so verse 12 carries the bearing of baptism farther than Romans, and then verse 13 goes on to the truth of Ephesians.

F. W. G. In verse 13 they are viewed as dead, just as in Ephesians?

T. H. R. Yes, but in Ephesians we get nothing about having died *with* Christ, there is nothing to die, for all are seen as already dead in sins and there is nothing but new creation, nothing

seen but God's work, quickened together with Christ when dead in sins.

G. W. Would you mind telling us exactly what you mean by status? Is it position, and ability to be in it?

T. H. R. I cannot give you a better idea than if you can put yourself with the disciples during those 40 days the Lord was with them after He was risen; the Lord's condition is not your condition actually, but you enter into what His condition was; He was no longer belonging to the Jews, or to anything in the world; He was not gone to heaven, but risen, and now He brings you into association with Himself. I think they would have felt they had got a new status; I prefer status, because the idea is a moral one; position gives you the thought of place. I think they would have felt, and I think you would have felt, it was an out-of-the-world condition He was in.

QUES. Quickened then is more than this?

T. H. R. I believe so.

H. D'A. C. Does it correspond to John xx. The Lord breathing on them?

T. H. R. I think that is were it first began.

H. D'A. C. He brought them to the rank or place in which He was?

D. L. H. Mr. Darby used to say status, not place. Place is in Ephesians.

T. H. R. That is what I say. I think it is a moral idea, not place or position; position gives more the idea of place.

A. H. Is it the children of Israel when through Jordan, but not entered yet upon the land?—not yet having taken possession of it?

T. H. R. Yes, their status was that of a "heavenly band," as we speak. My thought is that it is your qualification for entering on the heavenly position; a heavenly man belongs to heaven, but I must be delivered from the scene of the old man where he lives, and be brought into association with this risen Man; He is outside it in a totally new condition; the Lord refers to it in John xvi., "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me;" and "ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." J. N. D. says it was the child-birth of the new creation. Christ was no longer after the flesh but in a new condition altogether. Take Abraham (going back to Galatians), the great point was to put Ishmael out, and it was a

great sorrow to him, and Isaac is brought in; but when you come to Colossians you have got a step farther than that; Abraham had to learn another great lesson; Isaac according to the flesh must go, not merely Ishmael but Isaac; Abraham goes up to Mount Moriah and Isaac is put upon the altar, and Abraham receives him back again as from the dead in figure; that is the point in Colossians.

F. H. B. Now go on and apply that to Christ.

T. H. R. Christ having died and risen again I cannot have Him according to the flesh. The great effort of Satan at the present moment is to lead saints, or indeed men, to bring Christ back to their things here, instead of having Him in His things, joining Him where He is.

F. H. B. What do you mean by bringing Christ back into our things? Give an illustration of it.

T. H. R. Well, Mary Magdalene, when she saw the Lord after His resurrection, was, I believe, springing forward to hold Him, as much as to say, "Now I have got Him back again." I think the Lord meant, in saying "Touch me not," that she could not have Him in the way she had known Him any more, and His message sent to His brethren through her, shewed that they were to know Him in a new and heavenly position.

F. H. B. But she was a Jew. How would that apply to us?

T. H. R. Well, but Christians have taken the place of Jews.

F. H. B. The Jews had an established system of religion on earth.

T. H. R. And Christians have got into an established system of religion down here as much as the Jew ever had, only men try to accredit that with Christ's name, instead of seeing He is gone to the other side, and we are to seek the things above, where Christ sitteth.

W. Is that "knowing Christ after the flesh?"

T. H. R. Yes; it is.

W. J. Would you link on what you have said with chapter i. 12, "made meet"?

T. H. R. I think that is the best robe, it involves new creation; the best robe was no part of the original inheritance of the younger son; the best robe came out of the Father's house; it belonged there; but you could not have it on unless Christ had died to remove the old man, and was risen.

F. H. B. And you could not put it on the old man—the man after the flesh?

W. B. Explain what you mean. That needs a little explanation.

T. H. R. You do not want to cover up the



old man, the man after the flesh, with a new robe.

F. H. B. The notion many have in Christendom is that it is a very beautiful robe covering a very dirty man, covering up the old garments.

W. J. Did you say "risen with Christ" was a status for earth?

T. H. R. Yes, in the Colossian aspect.

W. J. Is that the reason why we have "if" in the chapter?

T. H. R. Yes.

A. H. I thought it was a heavenly status while we were here on earth?

T. H. R. Yes; you need it while you are here on earth, you will not want a status in heaven; it applies to the earth, it is a heavenly status but applies to us while on earth; so that we may as heavenly seek the things above. It is great grace that such a status is ministered to us, so that we are entitled to be heavenly while on earth.

B. How do we get it? Is it by union? Is not the mystery of God union? Do not we get union in this epistle?

T. H. R. Where? He prays that they might know the mystery, but you must go to heaven for union. Union is in Ephesians. I do not think the Colossians had reached it.

D. L. H. On the contrary, he prays that they might.

A. H. Is not all this Colossian teaching to lead us to it?—to prepare us for it?

T. H. R. Yes.

J. S. B. It must be for earth where the soul enters into it.

W. H. B.—T. It is not by effort?

T. H. R. You and I are here, and how are we to be severed from the things that are here except by seeing that Christ is apart from them, and that we are heavenly as risen with Him? I do not believe anybody could, it would be all legal effort.

B. Is chapter ii. 20 association, and chapter iii. 1 union?

T. H. R. It is "with." It is not union there. You are seeking the things above as "risen with Christ." It is more association.

A. H. Quickening implies having the life?

T. H. R. Yes, only it is "quickened *with Him*," because that keeps up the idea not only of having life, but of association with Him in the sphere of His life. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."

T. M. It is not the communication of life?

H. D'A. C. Risen and quickened are not necessarily separated by an interval of time,

both might be known at the same time ; it only presents two different thoughts, does it not ?

T. H. R. Quite so.

H. D'A. C. The first—being risen, and then secondly—the quickening, present two aspects of our association with Christ ?

T. H. R. That is so ; first “risen with Christ,” then the Christ who is risen is “our life.”

QUES. When does risen with Christ take place in the soul ? Did the disciples enter into it during those 40 days with Christ risen ?

T. H. R. I think the disciples entered into it in measure when they saw Christ. It is difficult for us to understand what the effect on them was of the actual presence with them of the Lord in resurrection.

D. L. H. Does not John xx. give us the pattern ?

T. H. R. Yes. The moment I apprehend He is risen and join Him in resurrection, I have got it.

H. D'A. C. It puts a person outside all that religious feeling, sabbath keeping, &c. They never kept a sabbath during those 40 days.

T. H. R. I do not know.

QUES. The presence of the Holy Ghost is pre-supposed ? Is it not connected with the presence of the Holy Ghost in the believer ?

T. H. R. You could not have anything apart

from the Holy Ghost, but that is not the point here; the Holy Spirit is but once mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians; the great point is your association with Christ. Even the eleven who were actually in His company could not fully enter into it until the coming of the Holy Ghost, and we could not know association with Christ but by the Spirit.

QUES. And that in life?

W. I wish you would say when does association begin?

T. H. R. I know no better answer than Mr. Stoney's—the moment when you leave the ship to join the Lord, the moment when you really come to the Lord.

B. Is not quickening God's work?

T. H. R. Yes.

B. Then how can you make it depend upon the individual?

T. H. R. But then there is the moment when you realise it.

B. Like John xx.?

T. H. R. That is the pattern, as Mr. H. says; we realise it by seeing the Lord in resurrection, and He is "our life."

QUES. Would John xiv. throw light upon it, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

T. H. R. Yes, I think so, He is the "life" as well as the way.

J. P. I suppose union with Christ and association with Christ are two different thoughts, are they not ?

T. H. R. I think so. What has often been said is, you must be suited to Him, His fellow or companion, in order to be united to Him ; I am chary about the use of the word, there is no such word as union in scripture, but what is generally understood by union is the great fact that you are brought to Christ in heaven, and know yourself as in the heavenly places in Christ ; then His interests are your interests. Mr. Stoney uses the figure of Rebecca brought to Isaac as descriptive of union. For this you must know fitness as His companion, that you are of the same order, that is what comes out in Colossians—made meet for the portion of the saints in light. You derive from Him and the practical effect is, you come out in His gracious character.

G. G. Can you give any point in the history of Rebecca where association began or where union began ?

F. H. B. Her family was related to Abraham.

T. H. R. It is a figure of union more than of association, but she was of the same kindred as Isaac and hence was fit to be his companion.

G. G. Not her leaving her family ?

T. H. R. Not exactly the same as we have here.

W. It did not begin with "I will go."

W. J. I have sometimes linked Colossians with "Come and see," linking it with John i. ? Is that right ?

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

W. B. Come and see what ?

T. H. R. He refers to John i., where the Lord said to the disciples in answer to "Where dwellest thou ?" "Come and see." That is what you mean ? They come into company and association with Him. They come and see where He dwells.

W. J. Yes. Colossians would bring us into the privileges of John xx. If I am led by Him He brings me into them.

T. H. R. I do not think you could enjoy those privileges except in the assembly : "being knit together in love" precedes the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery.

W. J. It is the status of the assembly in Colossians ?

W. B. Why not say the status of every true individual believer and not the assembly ?

T. H. R. Because they are not all in it.

W. B. When you say "the company," could the *church* ever be said to be quickened together with Christ ? Is it not individuals ?

T. H. R. What is true of the whole church belongs to every one, but what is important at the present moment is, that people have departed from the true ground of the church; most of the epistles were written because people had departed or were in danger of departing, and if then how much more so now? it is the state of souls that makes the need of so much guarding the truth, and this epistle is given to guard the saints against turning to any source but Christ.

W. B. But my point is, is the church ever spoken of as quickened together with Christ?

T. H. R. I see what you mean. I suppose the term church was merely used as a collective idea. It was used of saints at the present moment.

F. H. B. But in the main it was true of these Colossians without supposing that every individual was up to it; as a company it was true of them?

T. H. R. Quite so.

W. B. But if this were true of them they still were in danger of going back to ordinances?

T. H. R. Yes, they were.

E. R. The truth in this epistle is the antidote to it?

T. H. R. Yes.

W. J. Then I suppose, as a matter of fact, it is a dead and risen man that goes to heaven?

T. H. R. Well, he belongs there.

QUES. We could not go as we are?

T. H. R. We are not actually dead and risen.

F. H. B. Christ is, and we are associated with Him; I am thankful for having attention drawn to "with Him," and the difference between association and union. We are not actually dead and risen, but we are associated with the One who is dead and risen.

QUES. Did I understand a dead and risen man was fit for heaven?

F. H. B. If we entered into the fact that we are dead with Him we shall feel we can go on in company with the Lord into heavenly things; we should feel there is no other place for us.

W. J. What is verse 3, "ye are dead"?

T. H. R. Well, I think that goes back to verse 20 of chapter ii.

QUES. Is it your death?

T. H. R. Yes, but then it is your death *with Christ*.

G. W. Could you say of every Christian that he was dead with Christ?

T. H. R. It is said to these Colossians, it is the normal aspect of Christianity. The question we have really to ask now-a-days is—Are we Christians?

B. We must go back to the normal aspect of things if we are to be helped.



G. W. It speaks as though it were absolutely true ?

F. H. B. It used to be said this was absolutely true of all Christians, God looked at them so.

T. H. R. He is addressing certain Colossians and says to them, "ye have died."

QUES. They had so to speak entered into it ?

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

QUES. Verse 3 of chapter iii. connects with verse 20 of chapter ii. ?

T. H. R. I think it goes back to that. I think Mr. Darby always connected that verse with verse 20 of chapter ii. "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ" *from* the rudiments of the world—that is one side. Then you get another side in the beginning of verse 3, "ye have died," but going on to the scene where your life is, where Christ is.

QUES. Is it what is true of a person as before God, dead and risen, though perhaps not there yet experimentally ?

T. H. R. The moment God takes up a soul everything is true for that soul, but my coming into it is another matter. I may be a long time coming into it.

F. C. Is your thought that while before God we have died and risen, that is, as before God, yet that is what is made good in the soul ?

T. H. R. I could not exactly say that; we must remember it is a question here of a person realising the truth, not as 2 Corinthians v., "If Christ died for all, then were all dead." There the whole thing is clear before God, it is a positive statement, here it is an experimental thing, *you* have died—you realise what was actually true of Christ.

F. C. Experimental, yes. The difficulty arises when one who you know is a Christian is giving out that he is dead with Christ and yet all the time he is busy making money or mixed up with politics—it is not true?

T. H. R. Well, it is not true of him; I believe it is experimental; it is a most important thing to see the difference between this and Ephesian truth. In Ephesians "dead in trespasses and sins" is a positive statement, there is nothing alive before God at all. In Romans man is looked at as alive in sin and needs to be brought into death to be free; in Colossians if a Christian allows that he is alive in this world he would live in its elements. He has died in order to live in the life of Christ. In Ephesians there is no dying, for all is dead before God.

F. H. B. Then to say we have died is to say we have passed over Jordan; and we have gone over Jordan or we have not?

T. H. R. Yes.

A. P. There was a great space between them and the ark—"ye have not gone this way heretofore."

QUES. Then all Christians are not over Jordan?

T. H. R. No.

F. W. G. All this is not a matter of faith without being known and realised by the Spirit. It is to be realised by the Spirit?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so; I think it is experience but not effort.

W. H. B---T. Is verse 1 dependent upon verse 3—"For ye are dead"? That being the case you seek the things where your life is; if you seek your life in the things below it is not consistent.

T. H. R. I link the two first verses with verse 12 of chapter ii., though I think it goes on; you have done with the one, chapter ii. 12, and in chapter iii. 1 you seek the other.

QUES. What about verse 3? Does it not carry us to the positive side?

T. H. R. It takes up verse 20 of chapter ii., only one is *from*, and the other *to*, where your life is now.

F. H. B. "With Christ" at the close of verse 3 carries us to the positive side.

T. H. R. Yes.

W. B. Then you think this is experimentally entered into?

T. H. R. I think so, I think we find out how little we know the road.

QUES. Did you say the whole company at Colosse were dead and risen?

T. H. R. They are looked at as a Christian company in that status.

QUES. If they were not, does not the "if" raise that question?

T. H. R. I would not exactly like to say as much as that, I think it is an "if" of argument. The apostle John uses it in this way, it is the conditional—"if" so and so, *then* so and so. "If we say we have no sin,"—"If we walk in the light," and so on through the epistle.

QUES. I thought perhaps it raised a question as to whether they were there in their soul's history?

T. H. R. I do not like to speak of raising a question, but it is an experience.

QUES. Is not chapter ii. 20 connected with verse 11 rather than with verse 12?

T. H. R. One is putting off the body of the flesh, the other is going out of the world.

F. H. B. One more question—What is putting off the body of the flesh?

T. H. R. It may help you to see there was danger of reverting to the elements of the

world, because a Jew might say he was as to the flesh in a better position in this world than the Gentile, and the tendency was to bring the Gentile on to the ground of Jewish religiousness; giving him a sort of religious education; do you catch it?

F. H. B. Repeat it.

T. H. R. The thought with the Jew was to bring the Gentile into a certain Jewish position before he could have the full benefit of the gospel—"Except ye be circumcised . . . ye cannot be saved." (Acts xv. 1.) It is the thought to-day in Christendom; very few people believe that a man could be converted, and enter into christian privilege, that he could be brought from darkness into the position of a man fit for heaven as associated with Christ, without making that man a religious man first. Now what the apostle is saying is, that in Christ they had that circumcision which cut them off from the flesh altogether, Jewish flesh as well as Gentile. Jewish circumcision separated that people from the Gentiles, but Christ was separated from *all* flesh by the cross.

QUES. Could we get on a little to the putting off the old man and putting on the new?

D. L. H. I should like to ask first about "your life is hid with Christ in God," is it not that

your living association is really up there where He is ?

T. H. R. Yes, "hidden" is in contrast with the appearing with Him in glory ; we shall then be in glorified bodies, suited vessels for the life. Now we have the life, then we shall appear with Him in glory. Meanwhile Christ is the hope of that glory. He is "in you" as life, and so the hope of glory ; that is the wonderful thing that Gentiles had Christ in that way ; a Jew would look for Christ to be with them visibly. No, He has left the Jew and is among the Gentiles. It is like Joseph ; his brethren sold him, and he was hidden from them upon the throne over the Gentiles ; they had him, his glory was known to the Gentiles. The great truth is that the Gentiles have Christ now that He is hidden in God, and the Colossians had Him in them as life.

F. H. B. Our life is not down here—our life is there and nowhere else. The only life recognised by God.

G. W. G. I suppose it is a very important point for the present day, because the Corinthians were wanting to reign as kings, to come out in manifestation, and this seems to be the great effort of Christians to-day. The Christian of the present day wants to be recognised, to come out as a king.

F. H. B. What is it to put off the old man and put on the new? Does it not say we *have* put off, &c.? "Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds." (Ver. 9.)

F. C. Would it not be well to say what the old man is first?

D. L. H. The expression "old man" takes in very wide limits, it is the whole thing.

F. C. But many are not clear about it.

F. H. B. Will you say, Mr. H., what the old man is?

D. L. H. It is a very comprehensive expression, taking in the whole status of what man is as a fallen being.

A. H. Is it not the old life in which we once lived?

J. S. B. Does it not say "our" old man, never "my," it is never individual, always corporate?

T. H. R. I have often said that it took 4000 years to develop what the old man was.

F. H. B. Putting off the old man means you have done with that whole order of things.

T. H. R. Yes, that old order that belonged to that man.

QUES. What man? Adam?

T. H. R. The whole order of which he was the head.

QUES. What do you mean, Mr. B., by saying it was corporate?

J. S. B. It belongs to the race, the principle of the flesh morally, you put it off.

QUES. Is this the same as chapter ii. 11? the body of the flesh?

T. H. R. There is a little difference in the idea, because I think the apostle there alludes to certain distinctions where the Jew had advantages over the Greek; flesh is the natural state, it is what man is by nature, and with the circumcised Jew subjected to ordinances; but *all* flesh is grass, and having life in association with Christ risen, the Christian is separated from the whole system of flesh, religious or philosophic.

A. H. All that characterises man, it includes all from verses 5 to 9?

QUES. Would it take in the religiousness of man?

T. H. R. Yes, everything that belonged to him. We may learn what the old is by contrast with the new—there Christ is everything.

W. B. What is the difference between sin in the flesh and our old man?

T. H. R. Sin is the evil principle that is in the flesh; the old man is the whole order of man before Christ; then we have the new.

W. B. It is called *old* man because there is a new; there is another man brought in.



F. H. B. All the false religion of the day, no matter what form it takes, acknowledges the first man; many are thankful to know their sins have been put away, but they do not accept the truth that the old man is crucified; they retain that man, it is not the putting off of the old. Its aim is to retain and develop the old man, making much of him, instead of putting him off.

F. C. Is there a distinction between *the* old man and *our* old man?

T. H. R. Christians can say, "Our old man has been crucified with Christ;" *the* old man is abstract, but you bring it home to yourself when you say, "*Our* old man."

F. H. B. You refer to Romans vi.?

W. J. Is there not a special link with "Lie not one to another"?

T. H. R. Yes, that is my impression, because the whole of the old man is a deceit, a lie; I think it comes in very much in the same way in Ephesians, "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," and directly after we have "putting away lying," it means deceit in every shape and form.

REMARKED. He is not to be trusted.

T. H. R. I was going to make the same remark. The psalmist said: "I have said in my haste [or rather, in my distress], all men are liars." Man cannot be trusted.

F. H. B. Do you mean he is a lie in the sense that he denies all that is of God ?

T. H. R. He walks in a vain show, and it is all deception.

W. J. Man is a great lie, he is not truly what he appears to be. What is the difference between Colossians and Ephesians as to putting off and putting on ?

T. H. R. Colossians is much more practical ; "put off the old man with his deeds;" but in Ephesians you get the character, "which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" and when you come to the new man it is "after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" it gives the character of the thing, "as the truth is in Jesus." In Colossians it is much more practical : "ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

W. J. Is it not more likeness in Ephesians, and image in Colossians ? Is there any different meaning in image and likeness ?

T. H. R. The image of God in Colossians is Christ; He represents God; the new man is renewed for full knowledge; I think it is the contrast to Adam; he ate of the tree, and he got the knowledge of good and evil, but he never got the knowledge of God; and

though he got the knowledge of good and evil, he never knew good in its full meaning: that is only known in Christ, the image of God, there we have the full knowledge of God; the new man is renewed into full knowledge of things according to Christ, not the knowledge that Adam got in the fall—the philosophy of men.

W. J. Is that connected with the prayer in chapter i. ? Does it go back to chapter i. 9 ?

T. H. R. Yes, I think it does.

F. C. Have you any thought why the old man is connected with lying in Colossians, and the new man connected with truth in Ephesians ?

T. H. R. No; nothing more than that I have noticed it is so; the old man is a lie and the new man is truth, his character is truthful in love.

D. L. H. God's thought was that man should represent God, but through the fall he really ceased to be a proper representation of God, because he was a lie; he was doing his own will instead of God's will; the truth is just the opposite of all that.

T. H. R. Yes, just the setting forth of what is of God, truthful righteousness and holiness, as truth is in Jesus, and above all love.

F. H. B. Then do you connect this with Ephesians ii. : of twain making one new man ?

T. H. R. The thought in Ephesians ii. is, there

had been on earth two men before God—Jew and Gentile; now in Christ He creates one new man; here it is putting on all the characteristics of Christ; in Ephesians it is looked at as truth is in Jesus; but it is more practical and subjective in Colossians—the new replaces the old.

F. H. B. Then does that give the idea that the one new man in Ephesians was to represent God?

D. L. H. That is a new kind of man in Ephesians. Does not one new man bring into the body?

T. H. R. That comes a little lower down, you get “to the which also ye are called in one body.”

F. H. B. One new man takes in the company?

T. H. R. Yes.

A. P. What is the force of putting off and putting on? What does that convey to your mind?

T. H. R. It is rather that you *have* done it, it is the effect of Christ being our life, and of being in association with Him as risen.

F. C. Is it not the christian profession, the old man put off and the new man put on?

T. H. R. Yes, really.

F. H. B. Let us have a little bit more of that; is it christian profession or actual reality for the individual? I asked a brother, “When did you

put off the old man?" and he said, "In baptism." Is it that, or is it what I said?

T. H. R. I think it is christian apprehension through association with Christ.

W. H. B.—T. You go back to where baptism points to?

F. C. It is the christian profession when real?

T. H. R. There is really no baptism in Colossians; it merely takes it up as a past thing, having been "buried with him in baptism," to shew that as buried you have done with the world and its ordinances, and so it becomes the introduction to a new status. In Colossians it is Jordan rather than the Red Sea. Over Jordan Christ is everything.

F. H. B. Then it becomes a very real thing if I have done it?

A. H. You do not get the thought of baptism in Jordan.

G. G. It is "seeing that ye have put off."

D. L. H. Here is another case in point with regard to the Colossians, he was free to write to them to this effect. It is no doubt normal Christianity, but he is able to write to them as having accepted normal Christianity so far.

F. H. B. While it is normal Christianity you could not say every Christian has done it?

T. H. R. The danger with them was of being

beguiled to the ordinances of an earthly religion; the danger with us is that we have been in it, we have had links with a religion of that kind and the difficulty is to shake free of it; even evangelical religion is after the pattern of the palsied man (Mark ii.), he had his sins forgiven, and his disease healed, and he is sent to his house, a figure of the Jew by-and-by, no doubt; so to-day a man says, "I have my sins forgiven, I have experience of the goodness and mercy of God," and then he lives in his own things, as one that has a right to be happy and enjoy things here, being in the favour of God; but we have to leave things here and join Christ on the other side of death, and we have to ask ourselves—have I done it? I do not think you can *realise* the putting off the old man until you touch that.

C. B. How are we to arrive at that? When does it take place?

T. H. R. When Christ shines upon you it attracts you; you go to Him, you do it in the most blundering way perhaps, but it is the attraction of the Lord. I do not know how Peter blundered out of the ship, but it was the attraction of Christ that drew him. You see Him on the other side and you want to reach Him, that is the whole secret.

G. E. It is really affection.

F. H. B. It is not effort, because it is the work of the Spirit, and the Spirit works by affection; you could not reach it by any effort.

T. H. R. All I can say is I hardly know how I have come to any point; I know the Lord drew me and I came. Difficulties, dangers, besetments there are, but the Lord draws, and we are here to-day, able to talk to each other of these things; it is nothing but the blessed grace of the Lord could have drawn us as far as we have got.

E. C. Nobody could tell how it happened.

D. L. H. It is important to see that Christ Himself is made very prominent in this epistle. His beauty, His grace, His glory, is made the great point before our souls; we may well make the start. There is something worth getting.

A. H. Will you say a little word as to being "renewed in knowledge." Is it that God's thought is that He should be known?

T. H. R. I think so, and Christ is the pattern for our new apprehensions.

A. H. And "after the image of him that created him," does that refer to the original creation? What is the force of image?

T. H. R. The Son of His love is His image, not Adam; He perfectly sets forth God.

QUES. What is the "full knowledge" (New Trans.)?

T. H. R. "Full knowledge" is that I am brought into the apprehension and knowledge of everything, according to Christ.

QUES. What is the power that renews?

T. H. R. Though it does not speak of the power here, yet no doubt it is the Holy Spirit. The prominent thought in Colossians is Christ, and "renewed" is characteristic of the new man—the new man which the Colossians had put on was wholly new in its apprehensions. Where you have God in Ephesians you have Christ in Colossians; all here is Christ; the word of Christ, the peace of Christ, because He is the image of God; in Ephesians it is "Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Here it is "Forgiving one another—even as Christ forgave you."

D. L. H. Is not the point—as Christ is the perfect setting forth of God, the fulness of the Godhead in Him, so the church, the body, is for the setting forth of Christ?

T. H. R. Quite so.

G. G. Then is the new man the same as the body?

T. H. R. The new man is a moral idea, and yet it will really be fully developed in the body; the body I have no doubt is that in which every trait of Christ will come out. It is the new man in contrast with the old.



A. H. Is that why you say the new man is a corporate idea and not an individual thing so much?

T. H. R. Yes, it is not individual but collective, no *one* man could set forth Christ.

A. H. But every one is responsible to set forth Christ?

T. H. R. Yes, according to the measure given to him; as Christ gives grace, that grace ought to come out.

G. G. Is the new man corporate and we are brought into it?

T. H. R. In simple words you put on the character of Christ.

F. H. B. I think it is well to bear in mind that this is not reached by effort, or by acquiring certain doctrines, or by acquiring a knowledge of these things; it is inwrought by the Spirit of God.

T. H. R. The thing is nobody likes to move.

QUES. What do you mean?

T. H. R. The moment Israel ate the passover they had to move; they ate it with their shoes on their feet and their staff in their hands, they must leave Egypt and start for Canaan. So with Abram, he had to move; God's word was, I am going to bless you, but "Get thee out."

W. B. If you know the attractions of Christ you are drawn out.

T. H. R. Yes, you are, but you must move.

W. B. The heart of the individual saint does. I suppose when you know the attraction you are set upon it in your heart.

T. H. R. Yes, but when we come to what we actually are, there is a tendency to rest satisfied at any point to which we have attained. Perhaps Israel had gone a long journey and thought they could rest in their tents for a time, but the cloud was lifted and on they had to go ; so it is with us ; forgetting the things behind and reaching forward to the things before.

W. B. But if you have in your soul the sense of compensation you will go on. If you have the beauty of Christ before you you will be glad to go to Him. If your heart is set upon Him you will be willing to go.

F. H. B. Christ must be everything ; with many, their hearts are not set upon reaching Him.

W. How is appreciativeness of heart acquired.

W. B. God sets Christ before you.

G. G. It was said yesterday that it was a great thing to have the face set in the right direction.

T. H. R. I think that is an immense thing.

F. H. B. So do I.

W. J. Does not a sense of the purpose of God move you if you get hold of that ?

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

## “I BEING IN THE WAY, THE LORD LED ME.”

(LUKE XXIV. 51-53; GEN. XXIV. 27.)

I HAD it on my mind to say one word with regard to the leading you get here. There are not many instances where you find the Lord leading. What marks it—I believe always—is He leads them *out*. He leads them from one place to another. He leads them away from old associations into what is entirely new. He led them out to Bethany in this instance. He led them out from what was the home of the Jew—Jerusalem; He led them to a very obscure place—Bethany; and from thence He ascends to the right hand of God.

To be in the company of the Lord, then, would be to be at Bethany. Do you desire to be with the Lord, beloved brethren? You could not find Him at Jerusalem. Had you desired to be with the Lord you could not possibly have stayed at Jerusalem which the Lord had left.

There is an immense deal, beloved friends, in the leading of the Lord. I wish I understood it better! It was a great favour on His part to lead them. He always led them to something

entirely fresh. I should say it is that which He is doing Himself to-day, leading us by His Spirit to what is entirely new. Not only does He lead us to His work for safety—His work on the cross; but He is ever leading us on to something new, that we may understand more fully all He has wrought for us. I am quite sure—at least in my own judgment—that we lose an immense deal by not submitting to His leading. If you want to understand the ways of the Lord you must submit to His leading.

I take John in the book of Revelation; I find the Lord moved him five times. Sometimes John might have objected to being moved about in this way; but unless we move with God we miss the truths that God is teaching. I daresay that is one of the reasons why such troubles have come upon us of late years, that we have not been led by the Lord. Had our spiritual joints been more supple we should have been more prepared to be moved on by God. I think it was one of the great causes of late troubles, that we have not been sufficiently prepared to move when God moved. We have been accustomed to look at a truth from one point and we have been very stiff (as it were) in moving to another point to view it from thence; and because it did not present the same aspect we thought it could not be truth at all!

I take John for a moment. I find him in Revelation i. at Patmos, and there he has the vision. That was the thing in abstract; in order to get the thing in detail in chapter iv. he is called to heaven. That is a wonderful thing. First of all the Lord had passed him morally through all the phases of the church on earth, all the terrible declension, all the ruin, all the confusion, but he was not depressed; he was able to move and be moved with God. A door was opened in heaven and he was taken up there.

In chapter xiii. he has to change his position again; he stood upon the sand of the sea. In chapter xvii. he is carried to a desert; and in chapter xxi. he is carried to a great and high mountain. Different places for the different truths he had to see and understand.

If John had refused to move on, if he had stuck fast in one position, it would have been impossible for him to understand the truths which God would bring before him. I think these five positions of John shew us we ought to be prepared to go on. If God is shewing us truth after truth we shall not learn them all from the same stand-point. You have to keep close company with God to understand the different truths He is bringing out.

Of course you will be opposed by the enemy

it is a path in which you will meet with opposition, as the enemy is always seeking to turn us aside from the present truth of God.

I should press the present truth of God very much at this moment. We are "unskilled in the word of righteousness" unless we learn to walk in the present truth of God; a past truth never could establish us. It is the present truth that establishes.

No doubt the Lord meant that in John xvi. when He tells His disciples, "These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." He was speaking of the Jews; they had refused Him. They knew God, but they did not know the Father and the Son. That I believe was the present truth of God; and they did not know it, and were found opposing. It is only as we are formed in that and are prepared to move on with God that we can be kept.

Perhaps you say, I do not understand what you mean. I would very much like to make it clear. God shews different truths at different times. Year after year passes by and God has developments of truth to bring before us. He gives more. Not that His precious word is ever changed, but His truth is developed, and He has different ways of shewing the thing to us, and if we are not prepared to move with Him and turn

when He turns we shall get turned aside, and it shews we have not understood the object of the Spirit of God being here, who is to guide us into all the truth. Take a simple case, by way of illustration, of a guide shewing you across the Alps or Himalayas. He would take care to shew you the best sights; he would shew you what you could not find out for yourself, the best vistas; and would not allow you for a moment to be occupied with an unimportant one. He would carry you from height to height, shewing you the best views. If you were not in his company you would miss a great deal that you would not see but for his calling your attention to it. In the same way if we were not in the company of the Spirit we should never see anything at all of the truth. It is through lack of being in the company of the Spirit that all the troubles come in. Being in His company we go on. If we were more prepared to move with God what a vast deal of trouble would be avoided!

I am not in any way undertaking to correct persons superior to myself, but I am struck more and more with the power the Spirit of God gives a person who is content to walk with Him, and how He prepares you for every turn He takes in the journey.

If you read the gospels attentively you cannot

but see how many times the Lord turns. Take Matthew xii. and xiii. Fancy a man reading it and thinking it all the same and not seeing the great break in verse 46 of chapter xii. The Lord digressed there. We could not understand Matthew at all if the Spirit of God did not only *guide* us, but direct our attention to the movements of the Lord therein. I only bring that in to illustrate the point, that unless we are prepared to move with God we shall never understand what His present path is. I can very well understand our spiritual joints getting stiff; we have to keep them supple—oiled, if I may so say, by the Spirit of God, the grace of God, and I am quite sure that the more they are oiled, the easier it will be for us to move when He moves.

Just for a moment take a few turns. In Romans Paul tells us the Old Testament scriptures were written for our instruction; but in 1 Corinthians x. he says what befell Israel “are written for our admonition;” and to Timothy, “to make thee wise to salvation,” &c. That is what is given us by the Spirit of God; it is to shew the history as to where the turns come in.

Take the case of Jacob. I will not go over truths that have so often been brought before us, I only want to shew you how the enemy



always opposes God's present truth. He would be content for you to go back to the past, but past truth does not reveal the mind of God for the present moment. You may get very great help with regard to it. We have been talking about diversion. See how diverted Jacob was. He stopped in his journey at a half-way house called Shalem. (Gen. xxxiii.) You will recollect that directly Joseph was born (Gen. xxx. 25) he says, Now let us go back—Christ coming before him, shewing the wrongness of his then surroundings. He knew God's mind to a certain extent, but he stopped short of the goal, his spiritual instinct was right, but he failed to carry out the truth, and was turned aside into a place lower than God's, of which there are plenty to-day—these half-way houses! No doubt the presence of Joseph was a pre-figuring of the redemption of Israel when Christ re-appears on the earth. We get it in Psalm lxxx.: The Son of man, whom Thou hast made strong for Thyself. Directly He appears there will be deliverance for the Jews. (Psa. ix. consequent on Psa. viii.) Jacob was right in saying this; (God confirmed it in the next chapter), but the question was how he was to reach the point: he got diverted, he stuck fast at a half-way house, Shalem, which, of course, was not Bethel. It has often been said, wherever

the enemy diverts, he always works to turn aside to a lower object than God has for us. God always diverts from the lower to the higher. Jacob was diverted from God's purpose to what was altogether lower. At Shalem he could do as he pleased ; God woke him up there and brought him up to Bethel, and there he built an altar and called it "El-Bethel." He had reached the place where God was all in all (in figure, of course), but that is the meaning of it—God was everything.

Just look now at the remnant which came back from Babylon, and see how they were turned aside. First of all Satan tried his corrupting influence (Ezra iv. 1-3); when that failed, he tried to stop the work by violence, and that succeeded, and he frustrated the work of God for several years. Then, of course, they turned to their own interests. I recollect hearing it said in this very room, twenty-five or twenty-six years ago, how the enemy succeeded in turning them in upon themselves and diverting them from the work of God—they forgot the present truth of God. But God woke them up. I refer to the prophets Haggai and Zechariah ; they had found plenty of time for their own houses but not for the house of God. We must have an object, and if we are not taken up with God's object we shall be taken up

with what is lower than that. That is exactly what came out there.

I would refer now to Ezra viii. for a moment. It is a very remarkable chapter. Ezra trusted God, and when it was a question of reaching Jerusalem, and carrying up what was very valuable, the king would have granted him an escort; but he says, I was ashamed to ask it of the king, because “we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good who seek him.” It would have spoiled the testimony, beloved friends. Just fancy a man to-day wishing to carry out the mind of God with a troop of cavalry coming behind him! The testimony would have been compromised. Ezra trusted God. It is a wonderful thing to be able to trust God in any little sense, and to say, I will try to maintain God’s testimony. To compromise is just what the enemy ever seeks to do. He would like to turn you to another truth which is not the truth for the moment, and when he has done that he has the whip hand over you. The dangers of the way were a real hindrance, but Ezra would not turn to the world. The world would give us help directly. The world would extend its hand to us in a moment. The question always comes to this—shall we trust God or the world? Any one would bear me out who has had any little experience in

the ways of God. The devil says, You trust me, and see what a friend I will be to you ; but it is always a deception.

Well, beloved friends, I only wanted from these incidents to remind you how the present truth of God is what the Holy Ghost always leads us on to and desires to keep us in. I may say that sometimes there are very great exercises of soul as to the company in which we should find ourselves. The Spirit of God would not leave us in doubt, but we must be in the company of the Holy Ghost. There can be no doubt with the Holy Ghost, He would always lead to what is right and to the right company.

I should like to say just a word upon what I consider to be such a wonderful privilege in these last days in which you and I live. That God Himself has granted us the great privilege of being in the company with which He can have fellowship. I do not know anything like it ! I do not know anything like that privilege which God grants to a company of persons to-day, who are willing to be led by the Spirit of God, to bring them into a company with which He can have fellowship. If we will be led by the Spirit of God, He will lead us into the company of the Lord. It may be to a little obscure place like Bethany. Bethany is never mentioned till after Christ is rejected.

You may say Bethabara in John i. should be read Bethany; so it should, but it is not the Bethany of which we are speaking, not the Bethany of Lazarus and Mary. After His rejection we find the Lord at Bethany in the company of the saints on earth, according to Psalm xvi.: "the excellent of the earth, in whom is all my delight." That is the company the Spirit of God would lead to, and where you would find He would lead us, were you and I willing to be led.

Which is the right company? is a question I am often asked in passing round the world. I always say, It is no use for me to tell you, you must find it out from the Spirit of God. It is no good to find it out by my word. You be led by the Spirit of God; allow Him to take you in hand. Could He lead you wrong? Do you think the Spirit of God could lead you to a wrong company? He could not. There could not, surely, be a more wonderful privilege in the last days of the church's history on earth than to be found in company with the Lord, in the company with whom He Himself can have fellowship. To think that in the midst of all the dire confusion, all the terrible things in Christendom to-day, there is one small spot where the Lord is found, where His presence is known. That is a marvellous company!

Now I want you to turn with me—I will not keep you very long—to 2 Kings iv. I will shew you a person who was an Old Testament saint, who fully realised the idea of the present moment. (Ver. 13) The first part of the chapter, no doubt, takes up the power of God in the midst of the declension of the ten tribes—the Holy Ghost working, figured by the “oil.” The prophet asks what he can do for her, the Shunammite. She gives the most wonderful answer that could be given at that time. She replies, “I dwell among mine own people.” Who were her own people? She belonged to the tribe of Issachar, an Issacharite. What was their peculiar characteristic? If you turn to 1 Chronicles xii., you will see they “had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.” Ah, that is the company! They understand the moment—the times. These Issacharites knew what Israel ought to do. That was the company to whom this woman belonged. She says, I would rather dwell among that company than have any preferment that the king or the captain of the host could confer upon me. Do you not think so, beloved friends? That it is the highest privilege on earth to be found in the company who know what the Lord is doing? Not simply the company who rejoice in being saved, but who know what the Lord

is doing, who move with Him when He moves. That is intelligence of the right order. They do not stick fast and get stiff.

May the Lord give us grace to be more in subjection to Him. As we are in subjection to Him I believe we shall be prepared for all His mind. And if the Lord tarries, we may be certain that more exercises await us, and how shall we be prepared? He will not act apart from His Spirit, so if we are in His leading we shall be exactly in the right place. You say, they will be very few at the end? I dare say, very few at the end, but you must remember that the Lord Jesus Christ always makes one of the few, and that is the highest of all the privileges on earth to be in that company where the Lord Jesus says, "I can take My part." He takes His place there and delights to be with them. We must remember how valuable we are to Christ, we forget that sometimes. I find in Ephesians, He gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His body. He could not do without us. What would be the use of the Head without the body? That is why we are precious to Him.

That is the company the Spirit of God would lead us to. The question is, Shall you and I be prepared for all that comes? The devil

will not leave us alone. We can see that very plainly if we look back the last twenty years or so. But how are we going to be fortified against the in-coming difficulties? We must not expect easy times, though we do not look for troubles, but for the Lord Himself.

You remember Amalek smote the hindmost (Deut. xxv. 17) of Israel, he could not catch those in front. So, too, the two and a half tribes, who preferred the land this side of Jordan, were the first of all Israel to be taken captive. Moses says to them, Yea; you may have it—but, “Be sure your sin will find you out.” They were the very first persons who got into the trouble. (2 Kings x. 32.) And it is to be noted, that Moses gave them their inheritance. It is not said, Jehovah gave them the land of Janzah, how could He? He allowed them to have it.

The place of safety to-day is in the front. It will not do to fall back into the rear. If we are walking in the path that “the vulture’s eye hath not seen, nor the lion’s whelps trodden,” we shall be safe.

But it is the company that is so very precious to our souls. To be found in the company where Christ is!

J. S. B.

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# WHERE LOVE FINDS ITS REST.

(1 COR. II. 7-12; 2 TIM. III. 1-5; IV. 8.)

I THINK, beloved brethren, we shall all agree that the great end of the blessed Lord's leading is that scene of divine satisfaction that has been so much before us. He is sufficient for us here, and one thanks God for the reminder of it; He has indicated to us what is the place on earth which is according to His mind. But I think we shall all agree that the great end of His leading is that blessed spot, as we have been singing,

“Thou lead'st our hearts to that blest place  
Where rest's without alloy.”

I want to speak a word, the Lord enabling me, on the way the Lord works in this leading. It has been said many times, and it clearly is, by affection we get there. I quite admit the danger of mistaking human sentimentality for divine affection. Still it remains true that it is by affection divinely formed that God leads us. It is by affection we are drawn to Him.

So I venture to bring these passages before you. That in 2 Timothy iii. I read as a contrast to

the former. In Corinthians there is that blessed scene spoken of, that circle of divine satisfaction which God has formed for those that love *Him*.

In the latter there are those who have a form of piety, and yet the first distinct word said about them is they are lovers of *themselves*. Nothing could be more damaging than the first point the Spirit of God sets forth concerning them. They are attached to themselves, so that all their form of piety is vain. By piety I understand the actual state which suits the relation in which a man stands to God. They have a wrong centre; they love themselves and everything takes shape and colour in their thoughts in regard to themselves, so the next point is covetousness, gain, money-loving. They set out to seek satisfaction for themselves. You see how that goes to form the world. Religious profession has a distinctly worldly stamp. Here is the plainest evidence. Men love themselves; then they seek to form a circle in relation to themselves in which they can gain satisfaction, so the lowest point is they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

I suppose we all confess that naturally we had our place in this (I do not now for the moment speak of the religious phase of it); we were all in love with ourselves, and we naturally sought a scene of satisfaction for ourselves and that here

upon the earth. An unconverted man knows nothing beyond the earth. We may ask what has lifted us out of it in any measure? Thank God, though when we speak of our own experience we have to take the place of great feebleness, yet we know that in some measure we have been lifted out of this state of things—and what has done it? It is the light that has come to us of the love of God. All has sprung from that blessed source. “Not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” “We love him because he first loved us.”

If there has been love formed in our hearts toward God it has been divinely formed by the revelation to our hearts of His own infinite and blessed love. I suppose there is our starting point then, beloved friends, that the light of divine love has come to our poor dark hearts. God has been pleased to reveal Himself to us. Like the Thessalonians we turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven. There is the blessed thing that has delivered us from the love of self and from the seeking to form a circle for our own satisfaction here on earth.

I judge we see from Corinthians that the snare Satan laid for their feet was the getting occupied with man. They had not gone on as has been

pressed upon us to-day. The snare of the enemy took effect with them; they were still carnal; they had not advanced and were thinking much of man.

In the second epistle the apostle goes farther into the motives which had prompted him to write the first. (2 Cor. xi. 3.) He was jealous over them with a godly jealousy lest their minds should be corrupted from simplicity as to Christ.

So I suppose that which the enemy sought to bring in amongst the Corinthians finds its full development in 2 Timothy. They had man before them in Corinth. Here in Timothy it is man with a great, boastful, religious profession, with a form of piety, yet they are self-attached and seek for a scene of satisfaction here.

I return to 1 Corinthians. My point there is, it is "for them that love him" that God has prepared these things. He speaks of a marvellous circle of divine glory. That circle has been formed for them that love. . . . It is not said for those whom God loves, though the whole thing is the fruit of divine love. There is the circle of divine love's satisfaction, but who shall find their place in it? Those who love God. No others, I judge. None find their way consciously into that circle but those that love God.

I do not want to cast the feeblest believer back upon himself; I will speak of the way God

works to form that affection in our hearts to Himself. I spoke of its rise—the light of divine love has come to us and claimed our hearts for God. Then it is said (Rom. v. 5), “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.” Nothing could shew so clearly the immensity of divine love as this fact, that the indwelling of a divine Person was absolutely necessary that we should have the knowledge and enjoyment of divine love.

It is here we get the difference between human sentiment and divine love; the one is the product of the human mind; divine love is only made known and our souls formed in it by the Spirit of God. So “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.” What is the effect in us? The other side you get in Romans viii. “Whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” There is reciprocal affection formed in our souls by the ministry of the Spirit of God, so that we cry, “Abba, Father.” It is not the mere repetition of the names. The Spirit putting the names upon our lips, but He so forms us in the apprehension of the Father and the enjoyment of divine love that He thus produces spontaneously the response, the cry “Abba, Father.”

Is not the form of address intended to be expressive? It is put as a cry. Who cries thus but the one who is in admiration? A little

child cries the father's name in delight and admiration. The Holy Ghost so forms us in the knowledge and the enjoyment of divine love that there is the cry of adoring admiration, "Abba, Father."

What is the next step? If our heart is so formed in this knowledge, naturally we seek the circle where that divine love has its eternal satisfaction. So it is said (Rom. viii. 28), "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I do not believe for a moment that it means that God plays off certain favourable circumstances against others that seem unfavourable. It seems to me the clue is found at the close of the verse, "to them that are the called according to his purpose." God has His own thought about His people. He saved me, but He had His own thought about me in so doing. What is the thought of His infinite love about me? I suppose this is the true good which is in view. When the Spirit of God speaks of working for good there can be no truer good than the being brought sensibly into the purpose of God. Some of us have known a little of the gain that has come to us by the breaking of earthly ties. It is sorrowful work, but there is positive gain. I am brought to realise in a little fuller measure that this earth

is not the scene of my satisfaction, because it is not the place of divine satisfaction. So God is pleased to wean our hearts from this scene and to this end largely uses the circumstances through which we pass, and so makes all things work together for good to them that love God. If my heart is in devoted affection to Him through grace then it is my delight to see what is His purpose concerning me and what His thought is towards me.

I think in 1 Corinthians ii. we get the other side. If there is the weaning process—the breaking of links here on the one hand; on the other hand there is the mighty power of the Spirit of God. What a wonderful thing that we have the power of the Spirit of God to lift us into that scene of divine satisfaction, that circle of divine love. “The Spirit searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God.” The apostle shews that the circle he has in view infinitely transcends all human thought; but the Spirit of God is equal to lifting our souls into the present enjoyment of all that wondrous circle.

Well, beloved brethren, we need not speak of our feebleness. We are feeble indeed; and if it were a question of human power, our hearts might well fail us. But the very God who has formed all this for His own satisfaction and for those who love Him, has given us His Spirit

that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Let our hearts be encouraged! Encouragement has a great place in the epistles I note. There are many things that would cast down and depress—*many* things, but let us be encouraged, beloved. Our God loves us; He has conferred great things upon us; He has given us His Spirit whereby we may know them, the deep things of God. But let us beware of *man*. That is the great hindrance. I trust I have in my own soul a deeper conviction of it, that the great danger is man. It was the great danger with the Corinthians. It is the great danger with Christians still. Let our hearts be conducted to that Blessed One where He is, the One in whom is set forth to us all God's love. Let our hearts be conducted to Him by the Spirit of God, so that we may find our present joy and satisfaction, all our springs of unfailing enjoyment in that blessed spot.

One word more as to 2 Timothy iv. There is a similar contrast there. The apostle and those he delights to link with himself "love his appearing." What is that? That is the time when all this glory shall burst forth. It is hid in the heavens now. Faith only knows it and that by the power of the Spirit of God. As we become familiar with it thus, our hearts are



looking, eagerly, longingly, for that blessed moment when it will all become manifest. "Not for me only," Paul says, with beautiful grace and delicacy, "but for all them that love his appearing." Do *we* love His appearing? It is the only righteousness here on earth. Righteousness is not dwelling here now as we all know. "The crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day." Why? Because he was morally consonant with it though here on earth; and it is the only moral consonance to be here in the love of His appearing.

I refuse this present world; and why? Because it has refused the Lord of glory. It has sealed its own condemnation; it has shewn its perfect destitution of divine wisdom. The Head and Centre of eternal glory, the administrator of all that scene which is the expression of divine wisdom, man has adjudged worthy of a death of shame and a malefactor's grave. They crucified the Lord of glory. The one who loves the Lord refuses that which has refused Him.

What a sad snare Demas fell into! He loved this present age—this present course of things. May God deliver us from that snare. Demas is a terrible contrast to the apostle. His eye was not set upon the Lord in glory; he was not in the love of His appearing; he loved things as they are at the present time.

God grant that one distinct effect of our being here at this time may be that we may not only have a clearer idea of scripture, and how scripture presents things (though I do not in any way undervalue that), but that we may have a deeper knowledge of that blessed One and a deeper sense of how God loves us, that our hearts may be formed in those divine affections that can never rest outside that circle of divine satisfaction.

J. R.



# ATTACHMENT OF HEART TO CHRIST.

(2 SAM. XV. 19-22 ; GEN. XXIV. 55-61.)

THESE scriptures, I think you will see, connect themselves with the subject that was before us yesterday morning so blessedly—the reproach of Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost.

The Lord enabling me, I desire to shew how attachment of heart to Christ is formed, and to give some different characters of attachment, as supplied to us in different illustrations and examples in scripture.

The first, I think, we get in the woman of the city in Luke vii., who “loved much.” A poor sinner’s heart attracted and attached to Christ. What attracted her? What brought her to the place where she knew she could only meet with reproach and scorn? Ah! there was grace in the heart of that blessed Man that attracted her to Himself. She knew there was grace to meet the need of a poor “five hundred pence” debtor like herself. That is where attachment *begins*—Christ *meets our need*.

The second case I take you to is in 1 Samuel xviii. 1-4. Here, I take it, the attachment was for *benefits received*. And I would not depreciate

it for a moment. We find after the death of Jonathan how sweet and precious it was to the heart of David. (2 Sam. i. 26.) It was love because of benefits received, yet strongly as he was attached to David—his soul knit to him—he would not follow the rejected king; he preferred to remain in the place where he was in favour in the king's court, and where David was out of favour. A great deal may be surrendered by souls, and is, in the warmth and fervour of first love to Christ. It was not only the value of his dress and arms he divested himself of. I think he said in effect, The one who has vanquished the foe is the only one who is worthy of the throne. He recognises that David is to be king. (1 Sam. xxiii. 17.) He willingly gives him the place. His attachment was great. He divested himself of all that was dearest to him, but it did not take him far enough—he did not *follow* David in his rejection.

We get another form of attachment, and I think a higher form, in Ruth. (Chap. i. 14–17.) Here is one whose soul not only clave to her object but she *followed* her. Apparently she had nothing to gain by it; Naomi tells her so. Nothing to gain, but everything to lose—she had to “move” (as we have been hearing), she had to break with natural ties that held

her. She says, in effect, "I will go." She *followed* Naomi. Is she a loser? Did she lose by it?

We find another little history in connection with Ruth, when she met with Boaz. He orders that handfuls should be let fall on purpose for her. (Ruth ii. 16.) It was the gifts of grace. Are you satisfied with the gifts of grace, beloved? They have fallen to us in rich abundance from the blessed hand of Christ. Are you satisfied with the gifts, and do not you want to know *the Giver*? Do not you want to seek after Him? Does not the grace He has shewn you draw your hearts' affections to Himself, and attach you to Him? If not, you have missed the object for which He let those handfuls fall. What was the purpose of His heart? I could not tell you if it went so far at first with Boaz as it did after, namely, to unite Ruth to himself. But I *do* know the purpose of the blessed Lord in letting fall such rich handfuls of grace for us all. It is to attract our hearts to Himself. What we find in Ruth is *answering attachment* to its object; and it had its reward.

I turn now to the scriptures I read. (2 Sam. xv. 19, &c.) Ittai's attachment goes a step further than Ruth's. Jonathan loved David, but he did not follow him. And what was the end? He falls on the mountains of Gilboa.

He does not share in the reign of the rejected king. Here David is cast out: what he says of Ittai is true of himself; he is "a stranger and an exile" now. Here is one who "came but yesterday" willing to become so afresh. What for? Attachment of heart to David. *He follows him in his rejection.* Beloved brethren, it is nothing less than that which the love of Christ demands from your heart and mine, and He is worthy of nothing less than the whole-hearted affections of His saints, the whole-hearted attachment of the one that follows Him, and He thus makes them willing to share His rejection and reproach. It is to encourage those who are getting into it I would say that we never get a bit of reproach for that blessed One, who seeks to draw us to Himself, but we get such a sense of His love and grace, what He is *Himself*, His glory, and the blessedness of His Person, that it much more than compensates for the reproach. He never allows us to suffer a bit of reproach but He rewards us beyond anything we can ask, or anything we could have thought. That is shewn out in Ittai. He is promoted to the command of one third of the king's forces, when David has returned to the throne. (2 Sam. xviii. 2.)

What we had this morning, as well as what we had yesterday, took me to this subject. To

be in the purpose of God there must be deliverance. And how does it work? By a bit of doctrine that we have in our heads? No, beloved friends; our hearts are affected and it works by love. The Spirit attracts our hearts to Christ on the side of things where He is, our hearts are drawn to Him, and there is the sense produced in our souls—I must be where He is. To reach Him I must go the same road He did. The road is by death, and I must go that road to join the One who has won my heart and attracted it to Himself.

In Mary Magdalene I think we get another form of attachment—others may come to the sepulchre at her instigation, but she had been before them—“very early.” Others may come and go and draw their own conclusions. One might believe after seeing and then go to their own homes. But she remains rooted to the spot. Call it blind attachment if you will. It blinded her to everything but its object. Would that we knew more of it. Would that our hearts were more affected by it. An attachment that would blind us to all in this world that gave Him a grave. Talk of intelligence! She was more intelligent than the whole college of apostles in a few moments. *She* was the one to whom the Lord appeared, and He seeks to draw her heart away to that blessed scene of affection of which

He is the centre. "Go tell my brethren I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God." In Mary of Magdala we see *attachment for what the Lord was to her.*

In Mary of Bethany we get another step which seems to me to be in advance of all the preceding instances. What is the first scene in which we find the blessed Lord and Mary of Bethany? She is at His feet hearing His word. (Luke x. 38-42.) It is not the Lord meeting one's need as in Luke vii.; no; it is meeting His need if I may so express it. His heart desired to lead her into that blessed scene with which He was so familiar. "That good part" was not to serve the Lord—blessed as that is—it was to sit at His feet and hear His word, to let her heart be led away into all that blessed circle of affection—into that world from which He had come, and to which He was going back as Man—to which He sought to lead the heart of Mary of Magdala; that world which He was already opening to the heart of Mary of Bethany. In John xii. we find she had already learned the secret of His Person. She had learned His divine glory as the Son of God (chap. xi. 4, 25, 40, "that they may *believe* that thou hast sent me," 42), and so you do not find her at the grave. Her heart was already in that scene to which death was the way for Him and is now the road for



you and me. In Mary of Bethany we get attachment to Christ *for what He was in Himself*. I turn last of all to Rebekah, the fullest example of all. (Gen. xxiv.) There we get the complete history of a soul from start to finish. She is picked up in a distant country and decision is formed in her heart by the servant whom Abraham sends. It is a picture we well know of the blessed office of the Holy Ghost, and what He delights to do with each of us to-day. Oh, that we may not "hinder" Him.

It has come to me in this meeting that we should not like to bring before a brother, whom we expected to minister to us, anything which would ruffle or distract him. How much less the Spirit of God—the blessed Spirit who is here. We should be most jealous to do nothing that would grieve or hinder the Spirit from the purpose He is set upon—the blessing of those so dear to His heart from whom He is sent. Decision is formed in Rebekah, and not only that, but there is continuance. "She rode on the camels and followed the man." There is the journey to take and one would not hide the fact. There is the journey for the soul to take to join Christ on His side of things. But what greatly encourages me is, there is the power of the Spirit of God who has come down from that blessed Man in glory. There is all His power, there are

all His resources to lead our souls along that way. He first sets our hearts and faces in that direction, and then sustains us in every step in order to conduct us to that blessed One in the glory of God.

Where does self-obliteration take place? Not until Rebekah saw Isaac. Then she took a veil and covered herself. What I feel is this. If there is so much of myself visible what is the reason? It is that I have seen so little of that blessed Man; I am so far off Him, there is such distance between us. When we get near Him self must disappear. And how gladly we part with it! How gladly we take the veil!

Where did that veil come from — I would ask? Not from Rebekah's country. All came from Isaac's country. It is only in another power altogether that we can afford to extinguish ourselves; and in the presence of that blessed, heavenly Isaac. We find in the end there is union, and comfort is ministered to the heart of Isaac. Wonderful that we should be allowed to contribute present comfort to the heart of Christ! In Rebekah we get an illustration of *bridal attachment* to Christ. I have brought this subject before you more by way of suggestion. I felt encouraged to do so by the last word spoken. For what is of paramount importance is *attachment of heart to Christ*, true affection for

Himself. He values this beyond everything else. It is not loving Him in a natural way, not by any effort of our own, dear friends, we could never manage it that way. It is the blessed attractiveness there is in Himself. It is the glory, the blessedness, the grace, the excellency, there is in Him; that blessed circle of divine affection into which He can lead the heart. It is these things that *attract* our hearts to Himself.

There is another word I specially love. He *allures* our hearts to Himself. We cannot say how, we cannot say at what turn, at what corner He will come, but we know He has met us at most unexpected moments and ways, and has allured and drawn and attracted these hearts of ours, and attached them to Himself. It is Christ which the Spirit is set upon ministering to us and bringing us into the fulness of, that we may know union with Himself there, and not merely for *our* joy and comfort but for *His*, for the joy and comfort of His own blessed heart.

What is true for the bride as a whole, by-and-by, when the wilderness journey is over, is made good in *present* grace to us individually. What the Spirit of God is set upon, and what He has been unfolding in these last days in order really to have hearts attached to that blessed One, is that we may enter into the present sense and enjoyment of union with Him.

May the Lord by His grace create this attachment, and where it is formed, thank God for leading hearts to it in any measure. May He promote in our hearts, whole-hearted, simple attachment to Himself—sharing His reproach now, giving comfort to His heart, and sharing His glory, His home, and His throne ere long.

W. G. B.



# READING.

(EPH. IV. 7-25.)

F. H. B. read Ephesians iv. 7-25.

I was thinking more particularly of what you get as the objects of ministry. I think you get three things: the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, and edifying of the body; that is developed in the following verses, is it not?

T. H. R. The first great thing is the perfecting of the saints.

F. H. B. Does not verse 13 give the idea of the perfecting of the saints, "until we all arrive . . . at the full-grown man"?

T. H. R. Yes; it would help us, I think, if we looked at the difference between the first part of the epistle down to the end of chapter ii. 10, and the end of chapter ii., because chapter iv. connects itself with the end of chapter ii.; you get heavenly privilege in the first part. (Chap. i.-ii. 10.) In the first chapter we have the counsels of God as to Christ and the saints, and the body as the fulness of Christ; then in the first ten verses of chapter ii. you get the power of God

now working, so that the saints should be brought into those counsels, quickened, raised up, and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ. In the latter part of chapter ii. the fact is touched upon, that as Gentiles they had no place in the ways of God down here; that is, not like the Jews, who were connected with the household of God *on earth*. In this part you come down to a position and privilege on earth. It is not that you leave heavenly ground, but it is not "made to sit in the heavenly places;" it is a privilege on earth to be of the household of God. The Jew only formerly had this privilege, now you get the great truth that the Gentiles who were afar off, and had no portion in the commonwealth of Israel, are brought nigh by the blood of Christ, both Jew and Gentile have access by one Spirit to the Father, it is a spiritual worship, they belong to the city and house of God, and then the whole building grows into a holy temple in the Lord, for all is for heaven; and finally, that the Ephesians, as a local body of Christians, were actually built together for a habitation of God by the Spirit. That lays the foundation for this chapter iv., which takes up what we are called to on earth, and also the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the body, which all goes on upon earth.

J. S. B. What is the order in verse 12 ?

T. H. R. Well, the first great idea is the perfecting of the saints.

G. E. What do you mean by perfecting ?

T. H. R. The word here is not "full grown," but "exactly fitted." I think the idea is what is seen in Solomon's temple; every stone was fitted and squared and polished, the stone was not fit to be built in until it was got ready. The first great thing is to get the saints into the truth of the christian position, according to the counsels of God, and to get them formed in the divine nature.

E. C—P. That is before church truth comes out for them.

T. H. R. Yes. Then the second thing is, the gifts are for the work of the ministry—that really embraces the gospel and the mystery of the gospel; and then, thirdly, for the building up of the body of Christ. The first great point before the mind of the Spirit is perfecting the saints.

E. C. The word for perfecting is also used in 2 Corinthians xiii.: "This also we wish, your perfection." Articulated is the thought.

T. H. R. The idea is, accurate adjustment.

W. G. B. Ready to go into the building ?

T. H. R. Yes; all grows to a holy temple in the Lord.

F. H. B. Then it is not quite the same thought as "a full-grown man" in the next verse?

T. H. R. No, not exactly; but it runs very near to it.

J. S. B. It is the squaring of the stones for the building.

T. H. R. I merely used the figure of the temple. In Ephesians we have divine workmanship all through, though by means of gift—created in Christ Jesus; even in chapter ii. 22 only divine work is seen.

G. W. G. Do you take the perfecting as individual?

T. H. R. Yes; only it is that *all* may arrive at a perfect man.

W. G. B. Then they would have come to the Living Stone, the stones being squared?

T. H. R. The idea in Peter is leading the believing Jews out of their old association into their new one; they were connected with those who were born again—"the brethren"—and belonged to a new and spiritual building. Peter has before him the chief corner stone laid in Zion; but in Ephesians we have Christ exalted, and gifts given, so that the saints may know the love of God revealed in the Son, and be formed according to what Christ is, as the One who is to fill all things according to God's counsel.

F. H. B. If saints were really in Christianity



the rest would be a comparatively easy matter. The great point, then, is to bring them there?

T. H. R. Yes; the perfecting of the saints.

W. Does the teaching in Romans bring you to that?

T. H. R. I hardly think that is the teaching of Romans.

J. P. It would include the truth of Romans?

T. H. R. That lays the foundation for everything, but then Romans goes very little beyond a justified man in whom the righteousness of the law is fulfilled; it just touches the mystery, but does not go on to unfold it. It teaches the great principles of the relations of God with man. God comes out to man in the gospel on the ground of blood-shedding, and that He has raised Christ from the dead. It shews what His present attitude towards man is, and how He can justify the one believing in Jesus; then shews a state in the Spirit that responds to the love of God, so that the believer can present himself to God as alive out of death; but it does not go on to proper christian privilege.

J. McD. Does not 1 Corinthians i. 16 give the idea—perfectly joined together—the same thought of bringing together in Christianity?

T. H. R. That would be the outward aspect of it.

J. McD. It is the same thought of bringing together.

T. H. R. I think we have very little idea of what the christian position is, and what our privileges are. To begin with, we very little know the Christian company; we have not left our old associations to find our home in the new.

J. McD. The apostle wanted to bring about the same mind and the same judgment?

T. H. R. But he first tells them that God had called them to the fellowship of His Son.

J. McD. Yes, as perfectly joined together in that fellowship.

T. H. R. Yes; and therefore, as has been often said, he brings them to the truth of the Lord's supper, which lays the foundation of our fellowship in the death of Christ; how could you bring incongruous elements together on really true ground except by the death of Christ?

F. H. B. That is the reason of the want of fellowship—incongruous elements.

T. H. R. Now supposing there were two saints breaking bread, both in the same business, and customers went from one to the other; one has got another's customers, it would be hard not to feel that; how then could all feeling as to it be dropped so as to be in fellowship together except by the death of Christ, which excludes flesh?

E. C. Death puts out all hindrance to fellowship in the Spirit.

T. H. R. There was nothing more opposed in the flesh than Jew and Gentile; the point in Ephesians is bringing those two together, it must be on the other side of death; both reconciled to God in one body by the cross. Reconciliation places us on new ground with God, where old things have passed and the new have come.

J. McD. It is most important to note that there are different degrees of apprehending the death of Christ, but the difference of apprehension does not affect the fellowship.

QUES. In what way? as meeting their need?

J. McD. No, but I mean as setting the first man aside and bringing in the second man.

T. H. R. In the death of Christ there is not only atonement but He has gone out of the world, put to death here, and of necessity if you follow Him you must go out too; in the Lord's supper we are together in the fellowship of His death, but Christ has gone out of the whole connection with flesh, and we know Him as the Son of God—Jesus Christ our Lord.

F. H. B. What is connected with that here? I think it is a very important point in the passage, "Until we all arrive at the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, at the

full grown man." I should like to ask what is involved in the knowledge of the Son of God ?

T. H. R. I hope no one will mistake me, but I think we are very much more familiar with Him as the gracious Man, having come into man's estate, than we are with the fact that there is a Person, who, although He came into man's estate, is outside of it ; not outside of manhood, but of man's estate ; when I see Him outside it as Son of God in resurrection power, I am impressed with the glory of His Person ; the knowledge of the Son of God is to me the knowledge of that Person in that place, still a man, in a totally different estate. In the figure you see this difference—when the Lord was in the boat with His disciples in the storm, He was with them, and they appeal to Him, and He stills the storm ; and then they say, "What manner of man is this ;" afterwards in another scene, when figuratively He has gone up on high, and then comes to them from thence a pattern of what He said in John xiv., "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you," then they see One so outside the estate of man, that they say, "It is a spirit." He is not with them in the boat but walking on the water ; as I see Him there I am impressed with the greatness of the Person who belongs to another sphere, not to the sphere of man ; it is in resurrection this is

made good. In resurrection He is outside of it all, and the wonderful glory of His Person is declared. They say when He comes into the ship, "Thou art the Son of God."

F. H. B. The term Son of God expresses His fullest glory as Man, does it not? Now I am distinguishing between the terms "Son of God" and "Son," which is expressive of His eternal relationship.

T. H. R. I have found it helpful to contrast the terms Son of *man* and Son of God. The moment we come to the term Son of God we have got the new order. Peter's confession was that the Son of man is the Son of the living God. He has come into manhood, and Son of man is the name He took in humiliation and suffering, the name in which He became a little lower than the angels, yet directly the glory of His Person shines out He is the Son of God, declared to be so in resurrection.

F. H. B. Jesus is the Son of God?

T. H. R. The term Son of God conveys the idea of a different order from sons of men; even the angels are called sons of God, as of heavenly order. See how it is put in Luke xx., speaking of those who obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, "They are equal unto the angels and are the sons of God, [N. T.] being sons of resurrection," that shews that it brings

in a new order. As born into the world Jesus was Son of God, but declared to be so in resurrection.

F. H. B. That agrees with what you were saying, something outside the estate of man, sons of Adam.

T. H. R. I do not say outside manhood, do not mistake me.

H. D'A. C. Not outside what man will be, the eternal state for us ?

T. H. R. That is outside the estate of Adam.

W. H. He always was the Son of God.

T. H. R. In the truth of His Person He is always the Son.

F. H. B. The full truth of His Person was not the testimony in the Old Testament scriptures, it is something entirely new ; therefore when Peter says, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," the Lord speaks of the church (Matt. xvi.), it is an entirely new start.

T. H. R. Entirely, I don't see how anybody apart from revelation could have recognised the Person of the Son of God. All could see a man, the most wonderful man, come from God, but nothing but revelation could make it known.

F. H. B. Not only revelation, but a new revelation ; when Paul begins he begins on that line—that Jesus is the Son of God.

T. H. R. He does. We read in John's epistle,

“Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.” It connects us through His Person with another range of things outside of this world altogether.

F. H. B. And that is called *our* faith?

T. H. R. Yes, it is the Christian faith.

F. H. B. We could not have the revelation of the Father except in connection with the Son; not only that there must be the Son to reveal Him; but in connection with the Son, a man revealed in that relationship with God, or we could not understand what the relationship of Son is nor what love is. I think it is of great importance to distinguish between the Son of God and the Son. By comparing the passage in Matthew xi. we see that there He is looked at in His own proper divine glory, here we come to the knowledge of the Son of God.

J. McD. Say a word on “Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee.”

T. H. R. That is what I have been saying; it was outside the range of flesh and blood; I do not see how they could possibly discern it apart from a revelation.

J. McD. “Flesh and blood” takes in the range of man as in the old creation?

T. H. R. Flesh and blood can only comprehend what is in the domain of flesh and blood; it is not there communicated by the Spirit exactly,

but still it is the Father making known no doubt through the Spirit the wonderful revelation that the One whom the disciples regarded as the Messiah, and who called Himself the Son of man, was the Son of God.

J. McD. Really outside Christ as in flesh and blood, outside the order of things in which He came. We read of "the days of his flesh."

T. H. R. It is outside that order.

F. H. B. It is a thing that became declared or manifested by the resurrection from the dead, and it is especially there we find His glory. In the epistle of John there are three witnesses, the water and the blood, and the Spirit come down revealing Him in glory as the Son of God.

T. H. R. Yes. The word here, "*the knowledge* of the Son of God," means that I recognise Him as such; it is the full recognition of His Person. "The Christ" is the anointed Man; as Son of God we recognise Him in His own glory and sphere.

F. H. B. It is the knowledge of the Father and the Father's love; that is how it delivers us from the world, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" That brings you to the new sphere. That is a faith that we not only start with but go on with. It is "believeth."

T. H. R. It is the character of the person.



F. C. And this makes the full grown man correspond to the "father" in John?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so; the "full grown man" of Paul corresponds to the "father" of John.

REMARKED. It is wonderful how the two go together when you compare them.

F. H. B. What a wonderful thing ministry is!

T. H. R. What we had yesterday is of immense importance—that we should find the Christian company. I am really more knit with the saints here than I am with my own family. Do not mistake me, but I have got a heavenly link with the saints, they are the new company that belongs to Christ now that He has gone out of the world. I have to go through it, yet I am introduced to a new company. We may none of us be up to Paul, who could say, "I know no man after the flesh," yet you can find the christian company; nearly every apostle speaks of the christian company.

F. H. B. Paul and Peter and John.

T. H. R. John says, "Every one that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," therefore he is my brother and I love him; *whoever*, whether Jew or Gentile, if he believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. There is the company, and then you come to the faith of that company, that Jesus is the Son of God; that is

the true faith of the company. In John xiii. the disciples were to love one another because the Lord was going away; they were the new company; and then in chapter xiv. the new scene opens out; I know the scene in proportion as I know the Person; you know the place and the way to it if you know Him.

F. H. B. And we are all at home in the place.

E. C—P. Unlike natural relationships which often weaken, these things strengthen.

E. C. They are spiritual and eternal.

T. H. R. With the Jew it was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy." It is remarkable how it comes out in Peter; you get there redemption, not from sin or Egypt, but from their vain conversation received from their fathers. Then he brings in "born again" to shew the christian circle, not the seed of Abraham but the seed of God.

W. H. Does Jude speak of the Christian company?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so, "building up *yourselves*;" and in Hebrews there is "not forsaking the assembling of *yourselves* together;" some were going back to the temple.

REMARKED. Some do that now—go to church.

T. H. R. The moment you are in the truth of the christian company it leads to the truth of the assembly.

F. H. B. We must get into the christian company to enjoy christian privileges.

QUES. Do you mean with all saints ?

T. H. R. Yes. The way you get into it is by the death of Christ, which abolishes all distinctions; you come together and find your own company. As to our daily duties here, as Mr. Darby says, we should fill as a hireling our day; but my heart is with the christian company. It is a great thing to get together, because we learn to bear with one another and love one another.

G. G. It would abolish all discord.

T. H. R. We find out, if we are simple, where we are wrong, and that some one knows more than we do.

J. McD. It would augment the attendance at our meetings.

W. J. Is not the supper the starting of everything ?

T. H. R. Yes, it is in an outward way. It is very interesting to me to see that while in the three first gospels you get what is to us the outward sign of fellowship and of the Lord's love—the supper; in the fourth gospel you get what is more inward and intimate—the Lord washing the disciples' feet. He drew them thus closer to Himself to have part with Him. Both Matthew and John introduce the betrayal of Judas at the moment of the supper and of the

feet washing; there is the fact that man, the world, gave Him up; and then the Lord drew His disciples after Himself into a new place; the supper was the turning-point—His death here. In John He is going to the Father.

J. S. B. Could you define the idea of the table?

T. H. R. It is a moral idea which takes in all the Christians in any given place; it cannot be actually realised now, as at Corinth, but we *can be in the truth of it.*

F. H. B. It is based on the death of Christ.

J. S. B. But do you think they all realise it?

T. H. R. I think only those can who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

E. C. No particular company could claim to have the Lord's table?

T. H. R. No, I do not think they could; but I could not recognise anything as representing it outside the fellowship of those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. The great thing for us is to answer to that character.

W. J. If we were true to christian fellowship we should enter into christian privilege more.

T. H. R. I think we should; we want to know more of feet-washing, that the Lord is drawing us into His company. John xiii. runs with the table in a wonderful way.

QUES. What answers to feet-washing?

T. H. R. The Lord applies to us the truth connected with Himself, and His then position as about to die and go to the Father. The application of the truth of His betrayal and death would sever them from their old Jewish and earthly association, that they might be in association with Him on heavenly ground.

J. R. B. What would that be practically now ?

T. H. R. If we could affect one another by the truth of the Lord's rejection here, and so draw one another away from earthly association to Himself, that would be washing one another's feet, and helping each other to realise the christian company.

W. H. Does the Lord do it apart from the saints ?

T. H. R. The Lord does not do it Himself apart from the saints now, but you are conscious it is a touch of His hand.

G. G. How do you say the Lord does it ?

T. H. R. He applies the truth of His own death as the One rejected here but going to the Father, in order to draw our hearts into the new position He was taking. He would not be without us. It is an immense thought for our hearts that He would not do without companions when He left the world; it was a necessity of His love in that moment of His rejection, so He stooped toward their feet that

they might have part with Him ; that was the beginning of the christian company that was to represent Him here, as being in association with Himself.

REMARKED. For their sakes I sanctify myself that they also may be sanctified ?

T. H. R. That is the sanctifying power of the truth connected with the Father and the Son. "Sanctify them through *thy* truth, *thy* word is truth ;" that is the Father's word ; the Son had made it known, communicating the knowledge of the love in which He was at home ; He was about to be separated from every earthly association, and to be with the Father, and the sanctifying power of that truth was to draw them to Himself in that scene. Cleansing is freeing us from this scene.

W. J. Is not the supper an outward act of fellowship with a spiritual meaning ?

T. H. R. Yes, it is.

W. J. Do you think we partake of the supper in the Holiest ?

T. H. R. It is more the ground of our fellowship, that we come together in the fellowship of the Lord's death ; but that death has made a way for us into the Holiest.

W. J. Some say it is the Holiest, therefore you must not do this or that.

T. H. R. We come together as those who have

their place in the Holiest, but it rather tries me to hear a good deal of worship that belongs to the Holiest, and then to go back to the supper. To me the supper is like being over Jordan, and looking back into the place where the ark was; that is not exactly enjoying our privileges as over.

E. C. You like the supper early?

T. H. R. I should object to any rule. If the saints are not up to it, it is better deferred; but I would like them to be up to it. If a brother at the beginning of the meeting is enabled of the Lord to lead the minds and hearts of the saints to the Lord's death, it is happy, and the supper would come early.

J. S. B. In France they had the supper quite at the end of the meeting. Are the sufferings of the Lord before us at the Table?

T. H. R. I do not like to make rules, but the thought is—He has died and gone out of the world, as refused here. We announce His death, with all that is involved in that death—He was cut off here.

W. J. Cutting off, and His love, are not these two things shewn in the supper?

T. H. R. Yes, His love. He gave Himself for us.

F. H. B. And His blood, the blood of the new covenant, the foundation, opening out of God's counsels.

W. H. Does not the supper give an expression of the table ?

T. H. R. The idea of the table is that of the fellowship of the saints, the death of Christ is the basis of it. It is a great thing to get away from a mere material idea.

W. H. B—T. There is a great deal of materialism about us.

W. H. We speak sometimes of going from the table, &c.

W. J. As a matter of fact we are always at the table, in christian fellowship.

A. H. What is the unity of the faith ?

T. H. R. Unity is brought in because of the Jew and Gentile, to shew that there was but one faith, I believe its character is the faith of the Son of God.

F. H. B. It is not one faith for the Jew and another for the Gentile ; there was but one.

QUES. It is *the* faith ?

T. H. R. It is christian faith, that of the Son of God. Ministry is really to bring saints to christian privilege ; many stop short, having only the thought of faith in a Saviour.

A. H. Then ministry is to bring us into the unity of the faith ?

G. G. What do you mean by entering into privilege ?

T. H. R. Whether Jew or Gentile they



belonged to a new company altogether. We do. Reconciliation brings us into the joys of the house. The Son makes us free.

A. H. Is it the same as the "one faith" of verse 5? It is only here the unity of it is spoken of?

T. H. R. I think it is the same, but more connected with outward profession there perhaps.

A. H. Is the knowledge of the Son of God a further thought?

T. H. R. My impression is, that in this passage "faith" is connected with the Son of God as much as "knowledge." I think "of the Son of God" belongs to both substantives; that is, "the unity of the faith" is connected with the Son of God as much as "knowledge" is.

F. H. B. Our faith is the faith of the Son of God generally. Nothing less than the apprehension of Him in that character would be quite christian faith.

A. H. If you reached the unity of the faith you would have reached the knowledge of the Son of God; it is outside world distinctions, that is what is the force of it here, is it not?

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

F. H. B. Ministry then is to bring us to the knowledge of the Son of God.

W. H. Is it a growing thing?

T. H. R. If I recognise Him in that glory it

will affect me in every way. Think of the disciples at Bethany sitting there in the company of the One who raised Lazarus; and again when they saw Him afterwards, when *He* was raised from the dead, it must have had a wonderful effect upon them.

A. P. You would say that a person who has reached this point is established?

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

A. H. Then he is a "perfect" man.

T. H. R. To arrive at a full-grown man is to be established according to the knowledge of the glory of Christ.

F. H. B. There is no safety for a man until he reaches it; we are not to be babes tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine; a great many Christians are carried away because they are not established, they have not reached the Son of God.

T. H. R. You see what the Lord said to His disciples in John xvi., that He came forth from the *Father*, and they said as it were, we understand what you say, you came forth from *God*; they did not lay hold of the great truth that He had come from the *Father*, and the Lord said, "Do ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh that ye shall be *scattered*." It was because they had not got the truth that could hold them together; they had not the truth of His Person,

as come from the Father. Every relationship on earth was going to be broken up, Messiahship and all; but the truth of His Person remained, everything hung upon that. When He was raised from the dead, the message from Him gathered them again, but had they recognised the truth of His Person, it would have had power to hold them. There is power in that truth to hold saints at any time, because it is outside the collapse of everything here. In 2 Timothy, Paul throws Timothy upon what is eternal—life in Christ Jesus, and the purpose and grace of God in Christ Jesus, and also upon the great truth of the Lordship of Christ; it is an immense thing that He is at the right hand of God.

W. J. The passage in the epistle of John about "the victory that overcometh the world" is in contrast with John xvi., all leaving Him and going to their own.

F. H. B. In the second chapter of that epistle the apostle warns the babes and the young men, but there is no warning for the fathers. Of course there is always a danger until the soul is established, he is liable to be carried away; when the soul is established the wind of doctrine does not drive him about. If we realise this how anxious we shall be to get souls established.

T. H. R. In ministry it is a great thing to have something at your back so that whatever

the state of the saints may be, you know you have that which will lift them above difficulties instead of getting under them yourself.

G. G. The truth draws you out of the difficulty.

A. H. Would you say a little as to verse 13. "The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," is that the perfect man?

T. H. R. Yes, but I suppose he is really looking at the company, it is that all the members may grow up to Christ, so that the perfect Man would be Christ seen in all His members, because it is *a* perfect *Man*, not perfect *men*.

W. J. "Perfection" in Philippians iii.—would that be individual?

T. H. R. Yes, there it is individual, "Let *us* therefore as many," &c., but here the great idea is of *all* the saints coming to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, so that the church should be the fulness of Christ.

A. H. It has to be reached individually?

T. H. R. Each one has to be brought up to it.

H. D'A. C. One saint even if full grown could not himself be the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

A. H. What is meant by the *fulness* of the Christ?

T. H. R. Christ, if I may so say, is the full

vessel of the divine nature, and the church is the fulness of the Christ, inasmuch as the saints are to grow up to Him, the Head *in all things*.

J. W. B. Does it not refer to chapter i. 23? "Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

T. H. R. The church is His fulness, as deriving from Him. We read that the earth will be full of the glory of the Lord; it will be filled by means of the church.

A. H. Have you reached union when you have apprehended this?

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

W. H. B—T. What is union?

T. H. R. Union is you have reached Christ where He is, that is what is generally understood by union.

A. P. Verse 15. "Holding the truth in love we grow up"?

T. H. R. There you get the idea of growth, that is in contrast with children, no more tossed about, but all growing up in Christ.

E. M. Is the "fulness of Christ" collective or corporate?

T. H. R. The church as the fulness of Christ is corporate because it is the body, but growing up must be individual.

J. McD. You have a company of individuals in what is collective, corporate is the body.

T. H. R. The idea of growing up is not corporate, each individually grows up to Him who is the Head, and then we have what is corporate.

A. H. Does not the corporate come in in verse 16? "From whom the whole body." You get it there?

W. H. B—T. The perfect Man you say is collective?

T. H. R. We grow up to *a* perfect Man, though each one grows up; it is not to perfect *men* but *a* perfect man, so that is a collective idea.

W. G. B. Say a word to us as to the effectual working in the measure of every part.

T. H. R. It supposes all are drawing from the Head, "from whom the whole body."

W. G. B. In the seventh verse it says, "Grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

F. H. B. Grace given in the 7th verse is to that end?

T. H. R. But then it supposes the normal condition of the body deriving from the Head, and then the self-building up in love; it all grows, a body deriving from the Head.

M. H. All this is hindered by the deplorable state of things around?

T. H. R. Yes, as to the manifestation of it. But there is still grace flowing from the Head, so that the body does grow.

W. J. It is parallel with Colossians ii. 19 ?

T. H. R. Colossians gives a little more prominence to the Head ; there having nourishment ministered from the Head is prominent ; here the effectual working in the measure of every part. The Ephesians had really understanding of the truth ; the Colossians were in danger of slipping away ; therefore he brings the Head more prominently before them. Here, though of course the supply is from the Head, yet it is self-building up in the divine nature.

QUES. Would you say there are two distinct kinds of edification ; one—special gifts, and then that which comes through the working of every part ? It looks like that to me.

T. H. R. I think there are special gifts and the working in its measure of every part.

G. E. It is a figure borrowed from our own natural body.

T. H. R. Yes, my hand is a most useful member, but no use without ligaments or joints.

G. E. Nor without being linked to your head.

W. H. Every saint's condition affects the condition of the whole body.

T. H. R. Yes, even in ministry the condition of the saints in a meeting is a help to a servant of the Lord or a drag.

E. C. You get greatly helped at the time.

T. H. R. Mr. Wigram used to say, if we had

more Annas and Simeons it would make a great difference in our meetings. A woman might be the most spiritual person in the meeting, and though she could not take a prominent part, grace in her might help considerably.

J. S. B. All are servants ?

T. H. R. Yes, all serve, but I understand the expression to mean that there are those who specially addict themselves to the saints for service.

E. C. There was an old sister who said to a brother one night after the preaching, " You got on well to-night ; while you were speaking I was praying."

F. H. B. So that the well-being of the company depends upon the help of each individual part.

J. McD. What distinction do you make between the " new man " and the " perfect man " ?

T. H. R. You *put on* the new man, the idea is perfect in itself ; it is what Christ is ; it is put on that it may be seen in His members. " Perfect man " is, each one is to arrive at full growth ; Christ becomes everything to such an one. Paul could say, " Be followers together of me." There is one thing I do. He does not count he is perfected, for he has not reached Christ in glory yet, but that is the object before him ; he says, " Let us . . . as many as be perfect,



be thus minded." A perfect man in Philippians is one who has Christ as the object before his soul; I do not mean as Saviour merely, but as the centre of God's purpose and counsels. People are using Christianity for man's advancement. Of course one would do good to all, but we have another object. In Christ glorified man is perfectly presented in the presence of God according to His own pleasure and purpose; one who is following after that object is what Paul calls "perfect."

QUES. Take a man that is seeking to better things here?

T. H. R. That man is not "perfect," he has not got Christ simply before him.

F. H. B. Christ has eclipsed everything to a perfect man.

J. McD. A man may have his face towards it and yet not be there?

T. H. R. Yes, but it is his object; I do not mean to say we may not fail and get turned aside, but if Christ is our object, we are not happy if we have wandered until we have Him again before our hearts.

QUES. What is the difference between the state of the Ephesians and the Colossians?

T. H. R. It was a characteristic of both that they had faith in Christ Jesus and love to all the saints; there was the Object in heaven, and the

company of the saints on earth; but with the Colossians there was the danger of being led away by bringing in what was of man. The apostle could not, so to speak, lead them into the heavenly places, where Christ is according to the purpose of God, the Father of glory, as with the Ephesians; he has to establish them by shewing them that they derived nothing from man, but everything from Christ. In John xiii. the Lord there commands the disciples to love *one another*; when He was gone away they were not to go back to the temple; then in the beginning of chapter xiv. He says, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me;" so also in the Epistle of John. (Chap. iii. 23.) Thus we have Christ in heaven and the saints on earth.

F. H. B. It is striking that the commandment in the epistle is to believers.

T. H. R. When the Lord spoke to them in John xiv. i. they were believers, yet they were to believe in Him when absent from them in heaven.

A. H. It is needful to be in the truth of this, to be going on with it, or we shall be caught by the error around us, what is described in verse 14.

T. H. R. I believe it is what preserves us, not talking about the truth, but holding the truth in love.

A. H. If we are not going on with this we shall be going back.

T. H. R. God may recover us, but if we are not going on we turn back to our own things. I have been greatly struck by what Paul says to Timothy in the second epistle (chap. iv.), "Preach the word"—set forth the truth; you may argue and argue, and people will hold error all the same; set forth the truth and people measure themselves by it, and then they see that they are defective.

G. W. G. Argument lowers; a man gets the worst of it in his soul even if he is the best in the argument.

W. H. B—T. How does the truth preserve?

T. H. R. I think it connects you with the sphere of God's purpose and grace in Christ Jesus; it may be very little, but you will bear the impress of what you know of that scene; association with Christ will alter your walk and everything.

F. H. B. The apostle could say, "The life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God."

QUES. Would John ix. answer to it—the revelation of the Son of God to the man who had been blind?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so; the sight was given him that he might see the Son of God.

J. S. B. What is water in John ix. ? I mean the pool of Siloam, in which the blind man washed and came seeing ?

T. H. R. The meaning of Siloam is "Sent." I suppose it is the apprehension that the One in humiliation was the One sent from God.

G. W. G. Have you any thought about gifts, how far they can be distinguished now ?

T. H. R. I should think we could distinguish the evangelist now, the pastor and teacher seem to go together.

G. W. G. They seem to be very much mixed up now.

F. H. B. I do not think a man shines in more than one thing: the state of things now is a very broken one, and we have to do all sorts of things, but I think a man is more blessed in one thing, shines in one thing more than in any other—he is more blessed in one particular line of things.

W. H. Some quote "Do the work of an evangelist" as authority for preaching, whether they are evangelists or not.

T. H. R. My impression has always been that it was an encouragement to Timothy to go on with that work. When the tide is setting against you, as in 2 Timothy, and things are in a bad state, a servant may be disheartened. I have known brethren discouraged from evangelising because of the state of the meeting:

where were the converts to be sheltered ? But the state of things was not to hinder Timothy ; he was to be in power and freshness, going on with the work of an evangelist—preaching the word : that was the great thing, although it might be against the full flood-tide of evil : for the Lord knew them that were His.

F. H. B. Timothy was a special man, and Paul did everything : he was an apostle, prophet, and evangelist in one.

W. H. The gospel has been so defectively preached that people who have been under it need to have it preached to them still.

T. H. R. Dear Mr. Darby used to say, all the preaching to-day is to nominal Christians.

W. H. And to real Christians too.

G. W. G. The first gifts to the church were great ornaments to her, now she has become unfaithful to the Lord ; He still looks after her, but He does away with that which would be an ornament, as a stated gift like an evangelist's would be. That was a wonderful ornament, but He cannot put ornaments upon an unfaithful church. I have thought it was this mixed state of things that accounted for the indistinctness in the gifts.

T. H. R. Now that we have got on to the subject of gifts, I may say this—I do not like the evangelists to be separated from the other

gifts and made a special class of. I think there is a danger of this among us; it is not that I do not sympathise with evangelising; I may say this the more freely because I am supposed to be the friend of the evangelists; but I set my face against making a class of evangelists; we are all working to one end.

W. J. How often you find that saints will have special prayer when an evangelist comes along, but they would not when you come along.

T. H. R. I think it is very sorrowful, and it shews a low character of things among the saints. It is quite true what Mr. Stoney has said "People can have the gospel and the world as well; but if you have got the truth of the Son of God you *cannot*." People can go on with all manner of things, have their minds in passing things, and they set over against that a good gospel ministry, but they are not really in the truth of the assembly.

J. McD. I think it is important not to divorce the gospel preaching from the truth as to the church.

F. H. B. Then as to prayer, people have a sort of idea that for conversions you must pray to God; of course it is just the same as to ordinary ministry; we cannot do without His power to bless the word ministered.

T. H. R. If you have a number of people coming crowding to the preaching you shew a good front in the town, and that is a snare, but perhaps you are very feeble in the assembly. If the gospel is a special effort by some one visiting the place, when he is gone things become flat; but if you keep true to our heavenly character, however feeble you may be, you will be known. Tradesmen used to call Mrs. W—— an angel in disguise; we ought to be known in that way, but not as making a great show before men. People ought to say of each of us—"if any one is a Christian, there is a Christian." But as to the company, we ought to be in Christ's reproach, known of Him, but not known by the world, because Christ hides His treasure. We have to be content with being known of Him, but nothing in the eyes of men.

W. H. Some turn up at the gospel preaching and prayer meeting who are never at the ordinary meeting.

E. C—P. If we get hold of the idea that the gospel leads to the church we should all pray for it.

T. H. R. Please do not think I object to prayer for the gospel or an evangelist; what I have seen is that evangelists are classed too much by themselves. We do not want to see them walking alone, we are all in the interests of

Christ; it is not as though teachers were head and shoulders taller than others.

E. C—P. I notice some preachers after a while get very much into church truth, take to ministering that. F. E. R. said he hoped to see no evangelist become a teacher.

T. H. R. God enables the evangelists to help souls, but it is not good for an evangelist to attempt the place of teacher if he is an evangelist.

G. W. G. It is a remarkable thing, gifts are very mixed now; it is a mixed kind of thing; I suppose it is because we are in Christendom where the truth is known.

