

RICHERS
≡≡≡ IN ≡≡≡
GLORY



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Price—Threepence.

CONTENTS

	Page
Riches in Glory	193
The Will of God	197
The Antidote to Intellectualism	201
The Majesty of His Name	206
Ultra Violet Rays	207
A Contrast in Two Sets of Three V's	209
The Victory of Faith	212
The Creature that Turns up the Eye	215
The Single Eye	216
A Cloud of Witnesses	219
The Accuracy of Biblical Science	221
The Pride of Life	224

RICHES IN GLORY.

The term "glory" has a varying significance in Scripture according to the context in which it is found. For example, the apostle gloried in his infirmities, *i.e.*, he tested their value, and as a consequence made his boast in them, and thus rejoiced; and similarly, in the summary of the "Pilgrim's Progress" in the 5th chapter of Romans, he associates himself with others who glory or rejoice in tribulations. Then there is the glory of man, which denotes all the pomp and tinsel associated with the display of the results of human achievement, and this is described in Scripture as the "flower of grass which withereth and falleth away."

The glory of God in creation is of a different order, and speaks of the distinctive character of His handiwork. Then even the glory of God has different bearings according to its context. This is a subject which transcends human comprehension, not to speak of human expression, and it is essentially the subject of the Holy Spirit's teaching. Spiritual matters are communicated by spiritual means, and they are compared by spiritual standards, but since the only vehicle of communication of human thought is by "words," so like those who feared the Lord at the close of the last dispensation, we are found speaking often one to another of our essential interests, *viz.*, the precious things of heaven. Since the Scriptures abound in references to God's handiwork in the material creation, we do well to pay attention to their distinctive character and magnitude. Geographers tell us of the size and wonderful physical features of the earth, which is a spheroid of 8,000 miles diameter containing 6,000 trillion tons of matter and we have only direct knowledge of a few miles thickness of its crust or exterior layers, and much of

its surface has not been explored. It may be instructive to consider a series of magnitudes in the physical creation. A rain-drop is a sphere of about one-eighth of an inch diameter, and yet its physical characteristics are no less wonderful than those of the earth.

Physicists tell us that the ratio of sizes between the ultimate atom of its constitution and the rain-drop is similar to the ratio of size between the rain-drop and the earth. While the atom itself is no longer the hard, indivisible point conceived in the minds of 19th century scientists, but is believed to be a system analogous to the solar system in which negatively charged electrons circulate round positively charged protons in marvellous adjustment. Again, in the ultra-megascopic sphere, the distinctive features of God's creation are no less marvellous than in the afore-mentioned ultra-microscopic spheres. The earth is a mere speck in the solar system, the outpost of which is over sixty times the distance of the earth from the sun, which, nevertheless, controls every member of its system according to an exact uniformity; but the solar system itself is also a mere speck in the immensity of space. Every

star in the bespangled firmament is a sun possibly with attendant satellites. There are about six thousand stars visible to the naked eye, but millions have been brought into evidence by the aid of the telescope, and moreover, stars have been photographed which are beyond the power of the telescope to reveal, and the star-maps and catalogues record the existence of at least one hundred millions, and each star is separated from each other by distances of inconceivable magnitude.

The nearest star is at such a distance from the solar system that it takes light three and a half years to come therefrom, and light travels at the great velocity of 186,000 miles per second. Thus undoubtedly the more distant stars are seen as they were hundreds of years ago, because the light has been so long on the way. Someone has illustrated the magnitude by putting a speck in the midst of Madrid to

represent a star, another in Oslo, in the north, and a third in Bukharest in the east. Recognising all the space between the suburbs of these cities as empty, we get some idea of the prophetic reference in the 34th chapter of Isaiah, "He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness." Yet the last expression is suggestive. Space is completely filled with a subtle medium which has been styled the luminiferous ether, as it has the power of transmitting light, although it differs from ordinary matter as it does not affect our senses and thus may be described as empty relative to matter which can be weighed in a balance. Yet physical discoveries would suggest that the emptiness contains the essential stuff or stones out of which the universe has been built. The things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. (Heb. 11, 3). Albeit the initial framing of the universe was by the Word of God.

With such conceptions in view we understand the reference in Isaiah, chapter 40, that the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance, and He has meted out heaven with the span; yet the apostle in concluding his pæan of joy to the Philippians says, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus," not "in creation," as might have been concluded from the foregoing recital of the magnitude of His operations therein. The acme of God's glory is in Christ Jesus. Great as the glory of God in creation undoubtedly is, it is strictly limited in scope and duration, and will ultimately be displaced by a new universe with righteousness permeating its entire fabric. Material creation cannot contain the things of the Spirit ("things of Mine" John 16, 14-16).

To the soul delivered from the thralldom of sin there is opened up a new sphere of objects, the centre and periphery of which is in Christ Jesus. That sphere is beyond responsibility and experience altogether. The Ephesian epistle, which deals markedly with what is in Christ Jesus, occupies us with the sphere as the result of what God

planned for His own glory in eternity, before there was either responsibility or experience. "He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1, 4), as seen in the perfection of Christ "holy and without blame before Him, in love." According to the revelation in Ephesians, we have been brought unto both Christ's place and relationship. From the text in the foregoing paragraph we have stated how God saw us in the counsels of His own love. But the scripture goes on to say that we have redemption also in Christ, because that provided the righteous basis for the accomplishment of God's purpose. Moreover, there is an inheritance suited to the dignity of His calling. When the dispensations of time have run their course, He will head up all things in heaven and on earth in Christ, who has been the object of all His ways in the dispensations. In Christ, we have been made heirs of the whole inheritance of glory, having been predestinated to it "according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

To complete the glorious position and outlook of the Christian, he is sealed with the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of our inheritance, *i.e.*, a qualitative sample of the glory to come. So that the Holy Spirit's taking up residence in us and with us is evidence that we are invested with an inner glory no less real although unseen and which enables us to be in the sphere of responsibility in measure as a continuation of Christ. His life was taken from the earth, but His generation is being declared in the Spirit's day. So that although the sphere "in Christ Jesus" is relative to what is outside responsibility, there is a definite reflection in our ways here, as the Holy Spirit makes progress in forming Christ in our souls. People will then take knowledge of us (as they did of the apostles in the record of Acts 4) that we have been with Jesus. The consummation of all His ways with us will be in the day of display when the redemption glory in which grace has placed us will transcend every possible glory in the realm of matter and energy.

THE WILL OF GOD.

Algernon Swinburne, the greatest master of metre in English literature, once wrote:—

“ Space is thought’s, and the wonders thereof, and the secret of space;
Is thought not more than the thunders and lightnings? shall thought give place? ”

When he wrote these words, he was doubtless thinking what a great and wonderful being he was. “ Thought ” was akin to his thought. That his words would ever be a poetical expression of scientific ideas as to created things was very far from his mind. Yet the new theory of Relativity has revolutionised the conceptions of scientists. Matter and energy, the “ foundation stones of the universe,” according to the picturesque language of the nineteenth century materialists, are no longer esteemed as real entities. Everything is cradled in thought. ‘ But whose thought ? ’ is a legitimate question to ask. Certainly not Swinburne’s, and just as surely not that of any other man; but as certainly that of God. The thought or will of God is the only real entity in the universe. So well might the poet break forth in a pæan of praise:—

O God! the thought was Thine!
(Thine only it could be)
Fruit of the wisdom, love divine,
Peculiar unto Thee;

The poet had specially in mind, the origin of the sphere of spiritual bliss, but the lines apply with equal emphasis to the origin of material things. Constancy and consistency are essential features in the will of God. So the writer of the Hebrews speaks of the “ immutability of His counsel.” (Heb. 6, 17). The apostle James refers to “ the Father of

lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (Jas. 1, 17). The apostle Paul writes of "the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (Eph. 1, 11).

Immutability or unchangeableness is in contrast to "change which marks the flow of time," and to "changeableness" which marks the character of mankind. The lusts or desires of man are wrapped up in change or the fashions of the world. In the physical sphere, the form of creation is subject to slow change. So that there is sober truth in the apparently fanciful expression of the poet:—

" The hills are shadows."

Ultimately when the firmament itself will have served its purpose, it will pass away. "The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together" (Rev. 6, 14) are the words of prophetic vision. As to consistency, only "God is faithful." (1 Cor. 1, 9). It is a matter of commonplace observation that man in his best estate is unreliable. So that vows are essentially made to be broken. Expediency dominates everything. In the fulfilment of collective responsibility, even Christians have rendered invalid the most pretentious claims. Finding themselves in untenable positions, they did not scruple to extricate themselves from the positions at the expense of consistency. Only God could "confirm by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." (Heb. 6, 18). There is one course impossible to God, and that is His actions should belie His character.

The will of God and the will of man are two great principles in the moral sphere and they are diametrically opposed to each other. We read of Christ that He loved righteousness (*i.e.*, what is according to the former principle), and hated lawlessness (*i.e.*, what is according to the latter principle). In the volume of God's purpose it was written of Him, "Lo, I

come to do Thy will, O God.” (Heb. 10, 9). The sequel to His coming was a path of unvarying and perfect obedience to the will of God. The prophetic Scripture could speak of Him as “setting His face like a flint.” (Isa. 50, 7). So in conformity to His Father’s will He steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem. (Luke 9, 51). No ulterior consideration could turn Him aside. Even Peter’s well-meant remonstrance to turn Him aside from that straight course brought His drastic denunciation as proceeding from Satan. (Matt. 16).

In the days immediately following the Flood, man’s self-will culminated in the erection of the tower of Babel whose top should reach unto heaven. Their idea was not only to render themselves safe from any future flood, but to tap the resources of heaven and so render them independent of God and to establish the name of man in opposition to the name of God. The inception of a process or principle always presents the features of subsequent development. So the features of Babel are essentially the features evinced by the modern age. How aptly and tersely is every modern tendency foretold and summarised in Scripture:—“Nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.” (Gen. 11, 6). Man’s will is unrestrained. However, as in the plains of Shinar, so nowadays, man’s effort to render himself independent of God will come to nothing. When the Lord comes, all that man has built will be tumbled over just like a four and a half inch brick wall erected without mortar would do when pushed.

These two principles thus control everything. We must either be here for the lusts or desires of men or for the will or good pleasure of God. We are saved that we may be for the will of God. Grace has come into action that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12, 2). It is impossible to receive the grace of God and to lack the desire to see the character of God shining

out in Christians while sojourning in this world. But the will of man is not quiescent and moreover is impelled by all the forces of evil emanating from a common centre in Satan, "the prince of the power of the air." Hence all who are in the line of God's will must meet opposition and thus suffer. In this connection, the apostle Peter opens up a beautiful train of thought in the following passage:—"For it is better, if the will of God be so (lit. 'wills') that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil doing." (I Pet. 3, 17). In support of this course, the apostle adduces the best evidence, *viz.*:—"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust." If the only Just one suffered for the unjust, then there is an excellent precedent why we should suffer for well-doing without remonstrance if that procedure happens to be in the will of God.

"Christ having suffered for us in flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind for he that has suffered in flesh has done with sin, no longer to live the rest of his time in flesh to men's lusts, but to God's will." (I Pet. 4, 1, 2, New Translation). Christ took flesh (the "body prepared" of Heb. 10) in which to suffer. Notwithstanding the perfection and holiness of that body, Scripture is explicit in description and His whole pathway in flesh was marked by suffering. He was indeed the "Man of Sorrows"! We should be careful to distinguish the usages of the term "flesh." Clearly in the above connection the term refers to the material structure of the body and not to the moral principle opposed to the Spirit as set forth in Romans 8, 4. Suffering is the antithesis of self-gratification. We should suffer instead of allowing self-indulgence. We are exhorted to arm ourselves with the same mind as Christ who did not His own will, but gave a perfect transcription of the will of God. Through grace we are on that line and our superlative privilege is to give a practical demonstration of the will of God. That should be the governing principle of our lives.

THE ANTIDOTE TO INTELLECTUALISM.

We may well have every sympathy with Christian parents whose minds are torn between two considerations. On the one hand they wish to give their children all the benefits which education confers as to this life, and on the other hand they are apprehensive as to the detriment which may befall the souls of the young people in the process. The seminaries of learning have now openly thrown overboard every vestige of belief in the Bible as the Word of God, and most philosophers have turned away after Theosophy, New Theology and similar empty speculations. There is an increasing call from young Christians for a lead as to their conduct in relation to the strong current of modern thought. We can only refer them to the despised old Book, in the perusal of which we are not astonished to find a complete solution of the problem, thus testifying to its prophetic character as a lamp shining in a very dark place to give certain guidance, and the darker the place, the brighter the light appears to be. The light of philosophy is very much like the *ignis fatuus* or "will-o'-the-wisp" which vanishes before one can fix its place. At one period we are given the assured results of philosophic research and lo, ten years later the whole system is changed.

In reading the Epistle to the Colossians we cannot fail to observe the striking parallelism between the conditions obtaining in the first century and those existing in the twentieth century. There is nothing essentially new under the sun, history is constantly repeating itself. Before considering the main features of the epistle it may be well to review the conditions which called for its being written. The circumstances which prompted the apostle to pen the Epistle to the Colossians were briefly as follows:—Epaphras, a Colossian who had been the agent in founding the Church at Colosse, had brought news of a heresy which was mainly philosophic. His zeal for the apostle led him to become his fellow-prisoner. The Colossian heresy circled

round a subtle error, Gnosticism, a false mysticism, to which only the privileged few could be initiated. It accounted for evil and creation. God is good, matter is evil, God and the universe must then be connected by a descending series of angelic orders (principalities and powers), and the consequent dethronement of the Son of God, with the accompanying worship of angels. (Ch. 2, 18).

The practical outcome of such speculation was one or other of two conditions of life, either : (1) Rigid Asceticism, "touch not, taste not, etc." If matter is evil, then abstain from contact with it, or (2) Unbridled Licence. If matter is evil then it can be abused with impunity. The apostle met the "intellectual exclusiveness" by showing that the gospel is for all. (Ch. 1, 23, 28). He met the "mystic speculation" by proclaiming the deity of Christ. (a) Who contains the fulness of Godhead. He did not share this with successive angelic orders, no matter how high in dignity these might be. (Ch. 1, 19; 2, 9). (b) Who created and sustains all things, even angels. (Ch. 1, 16). (c) Who is head of the natural as of the spiritual creation. (Ch. 1, 17, 18). (d) Who is in vital union with His Church as Head to the Body. (Ch. 2, 19). He met the "ascetic rigour" by proclaiming the Christian's living association with Christ risen. (Ch. 2, 17). The Jewish rules, although devised by God, were only a shadow of coming things. (Ch. 2, 22); while these Colossian rules were of human device, and thus worthy of far less credence. He went further and took up the very terms of the philosophers giving them a Christian significance, *e.g.*, (pleroma) fulness, (epignosis) knowledge, (sophia) wisdom, (musterion) mystery, (teleios) perfect, etc.

Even the casual reader must have observed the striking resemblance between the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. There are few literal identities, but there are numerous parallel passages with characteristic expressions. The truth, common to both, however, is treated with a wider

scope in the Ephesians, but there is a personal touch in the salutations in a specific letter to a local company which is lacking in an encyclical letter like that to the Ephesians. The main difference between the aspects of truth unfolded in the epistles is that to the Colossians the central idea presented is the majesty of the Head of the Body, the Church. To the Ephesians the aspect which is emphasized is the unity of the Church of which Christ is the Head. In the Colossian epistle there are but few references to the latter, while the Ephesian epistle contains a magnificent description of the Church in the eternal counsels, *e.g.*, "the union of Jew and Gentile in one body," "the habitation of God through the Spirit," and so on. In the Ephesian epistle, the saints are viewed as in Christ for blessing, and the obverse side of the truth presented in Colossians is that Christ is in us for the display of His character as set forth in the words "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This is not in an individual sense although each manifests the features of Christ according to the inworking of divine grace; the body of Christ (composed of all saints) is necessary for God's complete reproduction of the heavenly Christ in testimony in this world.

The Colossian epistle has seven structural elements which blend into one harmonious whole. The first twelve verses form the introduction. The next ten verses, forming the second section, present the glories of the person of Christ in language which is unsurpassed for majesty and range in all Scripture. There is first a sevenfold presentation of His essential glory in His Eternal Being which shines forth like a constellation of stars of first magnitude in the hemisphere. These are mainly in relation to created things. They are:—

1. "Son of the Father's Love." In pre-creation as during creation, He was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him. (Prov. 8, 22).

2. "Image of the Invisible God." No man hath seen God at any time. The Son hath rendered Him visible.

Adam was created in the image of God and was thus, in measure, the representation of the invisible God. In I Cor. 15, those who are heavenly in constitution and origin, do not yet bear "the image of the heavenly," because, when that is effected, all that they are as heavenly will be displayed to the universe. The Second Man from heaven is, in the final sense, "the image of the invisible God."

3. "First-born of Creation." This is not in point of chronological order, but in respect of pre-eminence. This usage is illustrated in the Old Testament in various types, *e.g.*, Manasseh was Joseph's elder son, but the Scriptural record is, "Ephraim is my first-born." Again, of Solomon (although he was one of David's younger sons) it was said, "I will make him my first-born higher than the kings of the earth"—although this passage awaited its complete fulfilment in One who was greater than Solomon. Thus, in right, dignity and power, Christ has precedence over all.

4. "He is before all things." He could say, "Before Abraham was, I am." (Not "I was" but the term which peculiarly marked Him as Jehovah).

5. "All things were created by Him."

6. "All things subsist in Him."

7. "All things were created for Him."

These passages tersely state that He is the Preceder, Author, Sustainer, and Purpose of every created thing. In verses 18-22, there shines out another sevenfold presentation of His glories, but composed of those which have come to Him in resurrection. It is necessary that in this hemisphere of display also He should have undisputed pre-eminence. They are briefly as follows:—

1. "Head of the Body," the Church, which takes inception from Christ's death and resurrection.

2. "The beginning of the new creation of God."

3. "First-born from the dead."

4. "All fulness is pleased to dwell in Him." Thus He is not a mere emission of radio-activity from the God-head.

5. "He has made peace by the blood of His Cross," which is the central feature of His redemption glory.

6. "By Him all things will *yet* be reconciled." The earnest expectation of creation waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. . . . The creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. (Rom. 8, 19, 21).

7. "But even now He *has* reconciled *us* in the body of His flesh, through death." That implies the removal of discord and establishment of harmony, this has been consummated in the new man and in one body, after the removal of the old man from God's sight. In the death of Christ, the love of God has been revealed which has displaced the enmity towards God from our hearts. So that in the hemisphere of redemption, the display of glory is as perfect as it is in the hemisphere of creation, and there is the reinforced interest, that whereas creation is mainly relative to things, redemption has its focus on persons.

The third section deals with the dual ministry of these glories with reference (a) To the gospel. (Ch. 1, 23), (b) To the Church. (Ch. 1, 25).

The fourth section deals with the essential presentation of the mystery as the central truth of Christianity, round which all others revolve, *viz.*, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Ch. 1, 27). The sense is not collective, not "*among*" you (as some commentators read), but "*in*" you. There is a corporate display of Christ's character.

The fifth section of the epistle shows the complete position of the saints as related to Christ, and thus they do not require supplementary knowledge from the philosophy and vain deceit of men. The sixth section shows that the perfect understanding and relationship of the saints to Christ entail certain responsibilities—responsibilities which should and will be maintained as the truth is apprehended. The concluding section, comprising the larger part of the last chapter, expresses the apostle's loving care for those bound

up with him in the bundle of eternal life. Thus we find that even as the antidote to intellectualism in the first century was a further knowledge of Christ, so in the twentieth century the only influence which will render us immune from the diseases which are apt to be contracted through contact with philosophy, is the warmth of soul which flows from communication with Christ in glory. However improbable the Christian revelation may appear to the philosophic mind, faith substantiates things as yet future, and establishes the unseen on an irrefragable basis in the soul of the one who knows God in Christ.

THE MAJESTY OF HIS NAME.

Many Christians present their petitions in the name "Jesus"—"in Jesus' name." One would not seek to hinder earnest souls, but the practice is unscriptural. Holy Writ is very guarded in securing due honour to the majesty of His name.

How careful the apostle Paul was in his salutation, and he speaks of the "Lord Jesus Christ"! We never read of the Lord being addressed on earth as Jesus. His exalted position in the glory calls for greater deference.

Earthly dignity cannot be ignored with impunity. It is related that Beau Brummel, the bosom-friend of King George IV. of Britain, when Prince Regent, over 100 years ago, foolishly wagered that he would address the prince by his Christian name. Using that name, he asked the prince to ring the bell. When the page appeared the prince was equal to the occasion, issuing an order to show Beau Brummel out, and the latter never entered his presence again. If the puny majesty of this world calls for such scrupulous recognition, how much more important it is that we should duly acknowledge the greatness of the name of the Majesty in the heavens above!

ULTRA-VIOLET RAYS.

When sunlight is passed through a wedge of glass, it is refracted or bent out of the straight line in which it was travelling away from the edge towards the broader portion of the wedge and is separated into its coloured constituents, the nature of which may be determined by receiving the image on a white screen. This image consists of coloured bands ranging through every hue in the rainbow from red to violet. The solar spectrum is the term applied to this multi-coloured image. There are other constituent elements in sunlight which are not rendered visible in the spectrum by this simple experiment, and since these are more refrangible than the visible portions of the spectrum, they are called the ultra-violet rays. The presence of the ultra-violet rays may be shown by placing a strip of white card, which has been painted thickly with a paste of sulphate of quinine moistened with dilute sulphuric acid, beyond the violet end of the spectrum. The surface of the card will emit a bluish glow or light of peculiar quality, constituting the phenomenon of fluorescence. One day while pondering over this experiment I was struck with the analogy which holds between the behaviour of the little strip of pasted card and the normal state which should characterise every Christian. The light of the glory of God shining from the face of Jesus Christ is streaming down into this dark world, yet not a ray is visible to the eye of the natural man. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1, 18).

God was exhibited on earth in the person of Christ who left the palace of the glory and came down into this sin-stricken unprofitable earth, though never ceasing to dwell in the Father's bosom, nor losing for one moment the perfect sense and enjoyment of the Father's love. He veiled his glory in the form of a man, declaring God by His life for thirty-three years. While throughout the last three years constituting his public ministry, God was still further

declared by his words and deeds, to the most enlightened religious people existent on the earth at the time; so that people could not but admit that never man spake like Him. Yet men did not recognise in Him God manifest in the flesh. The light shone in the darkness, but the darkness did not comprehend it. (John 1, 5). The natural man being darkness could not understand light from God. The eyes of men are not one whit sharper to recognise God now than they were 2000 years ago; in spite of all the learning of modern philosophers and their searchings after the essence or nature of God by the examination of the wrinkles in their own minds; in spite of all the vaunted greatness of the human mind, so tritely expressed in the aphorism of the late Sir William Hamilton, one of the greatest of 19th century philosophers.

“ On earth there is nothing great but man
In man there is nothing great but mind.”

The mind of man is still as dark as ever with reference to the knowledge of God and divine things. Ignorance of God caused the Athenian philosophers in the days of the Apostle Paul to erect an altar to the *Unknown* God. The same ignorance still shrouds the minds of their progeny in the present day. But it is not the wish of God that in this day of grace He should be concealed in clouds and thick darkness as in the former dispensation. He wishes to be known. He wishes to be seen, even if man cannot pierce His nature by the strivings of his mind. But those who have been brought to God and who have been made the recipients by His abounding grace of the power to recognise divine things; whose eyes have been endowed with spiritual perception; whose hearts let in the rays of heavenly light, are no more the sons of darkness but the sons of the light. Their proper function in this world is to render visible some of the glory and excellencies of Christ to the eyes of those who are still strangers to the grace of God. “ No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.” (I. John 4.)

A CONTRAST IN TWO SETS OF THREE V'S.

On the facade of the great church of St. Stephen in Budapest, there is an inscription taken from the Latin Bible, *viz.*, *Ego Sum Via, Veritas et Vita, i.e.*, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." (John 14, 6). These are three words with the initial letter V which are highly significant, because of the One who uttered them.

Caius Julius Caesar, probably the greatest man of ancient history, lived in the century immediately before Christ. He was famous for the success of his lightning attacks in war. After one of these in the province of Pontus in Asia Minor he sent the following laconic report to his Senate in Rome, also in three words with the initial letter V., *viz.*, *Veni, Vidi, Vici, i.e.*, "I came, I saw, I conquered." The authenticity of that statement has been disputed, but it has earned celebrity and at any rate was aptly descriptive of the general procedure of one of the most extraordinary of men. It was relative to man's way on the earth, admirably summarised by Scripture in the expression in John's epistle, *viz.*, "the lust (or desire) of the flesh, the lust (or desire) of the eye, and the pride of life." Caesar desired to have the province. On arriving there he saw that it was worth having and he took it by force and the pride of life was manifest in his despatch.

Man's covetousness is insatiable. The more he gets, the more he desires to have. But there is no permanency in the hold that he takes in seizing the bit of the world he has coveted. Three years after Caesar sent that memorable message he was stabbed to death by his most intimate associates who all owed their perferment to the grace of their chief. Such is the ingratitude of man in his natural state! But Scripture is emphatic about the transient nature of man's possessions. The world passes away, and the lust thereof, but he that does the will of God abides forever. (1 John 2, 17). The world itself is slipping away so that there is no use trying to seize something in the hand which will be found on opening the hand to have evaporated.

Nobody is anxious to acquire land on the edge of the cliffs of North Suffolk because it is gradually slipping over the edge into the sea. Sweeping as that consideration undoubtedly is, the second in the text is more so. The lust or desire for the world is passing away too! If we have not yet reached that point in the experimental assessment of values, we are very shortly going to be face to face with the contingency. When everything pertaining to the world fades into oblivion and we have to face eternity. The Lord Himself in His ministry stated the problem in the words "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" That is the only property which is indissolubly his own. The only permanency is in doing the will of God. So that even the will of a Caesar vanishes in course of a very brief period of time. A dictator can do nothing more than he is permitted to do by a higher power, and he has not long to exercise his authority!

What a comfort it is to turn from the dictum of the greatest of mankind boasting of his power to the quiet statement of the Lord to His disciples in the upper room on the night of His betrayal. The Latin translator of the text did not miss the import of the passage in rendering "I am," as emphatic. That was the same proclamation from the burning bush to Moses by the self-existent Jehovah, the One who had life in Himself, the author of life and the life-giver. That gives character to the statement. Three disciples gave expression to the thoughts which were perplexing the company. (1) Thomas was concerned about "the Way." Primarily the way lay through the death of the cross. But the specific import of the passage is that He was personally the way. He had attached the disciples to Himself and so detached them from the world. He would conduct them spiritually to the Father, so that they might know God (in Whom they believed) as Father.

(2) Then Philip was concerned about the problem as to how they were to see the Father. They had been for 3½

years intimately associated with the Lord and yet they had not apprehended that He was the complete revelation of God as Father, *i.e.*, the Truth. Not merely had He stated things as they really were, often to the intense discomfort and discomfiture of His enemies, but He was in an intrinsic way the perfect exhibition of One Who was foreign to the best of mankind by nature and Whom nobody had seen. Even an excellent man like Nicodemus had not understood the Truth!

(3) Judas (not Iscariot) was concerned about "the Life" in his question "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world?" Jesus answered "If a man love Me he will keep My word and My Father will love him and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him." (John 14, 22, 23). His words were public testimony to the Father. That there should be the introduction of divine persons to dwell within a man would necessarily be supernatural! That was the intimation of a new kind of life which would keep a man in the light of the new revelation, *i.e.*, the truth of the revelation of God as Father. The law revealed God to man but it took the Son of God who dwelt in His heart of intimate counsels and love to reveal God as Father to man.

In the language of the 10th Chapter of the Hebrews we find in consequence of God having come out, a new and living way (*i.e.*, continually "fresh," incapable of getting stale) had been constituted whereby man could have liberty to enter the inmost shrine of the presence of God, the Holiest, where God the Father is adored. If God had not come out, we could not have gone in. The Comforter, the Holy Ghost "whom the Father will send in My name, he shall teach you all things." (John 14, 26). The spirit of Truth is the living spirit of the revelation of God, the Father. So that gives the answer to the question of Judas. The Holy Spirit would manifest the Lord so that the disciples would be enabled to do greater things than they

had seen. But these things would not be essentially different in character from what they had seen in Christ while here. His words and His acts testified the character of God, His Father. After His ascension, the disciples in the power of the Spirit would carry on the same kind of work but in greater volume, due to the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit.

THE VICTORY OF FAITH.

“ See! I am with you always unto the end of the world (age).” (Matt. 28, 20, German translation).

“ Our faith is the victory which overcomes the world.” (1 John 5, 4, German translation).

“ But, of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.” (1 Thess. 5, 1).

In the year 1938, I stood in one of the largest squares in Berlin looking up at the Dom Kirche, the large Lutheran Church. As I contemplated the gross secularism of that great city of four million people which had officially repudiated God, I was somewhat depressed. Presently, my eye lighted on the two texts (first mentioned above) displayed conspicuously on the facade of the church. My depression was instantly dispelled! One would seek to transmit the impression conveyed. The Apostle in writing to the Thessalonians referred to the times (*i.e.*, the duration) and the seasons (*i.e.*, the characteristics of the period until the Lord's return), He did not require to occupy time in the matter of detail, because they had an accurate understanding of the significance of both the duration and characteristics of the period. The first text on the Berlin church directs attention to the duration of the age. There has not been a moment in the whole period when the Christian could not count on the Lord's presence with him because in the moment before the Lord ascended, He said “ See! I am

with you alway," *i.e.*, unbroken continuity. Then the second text occupies us with the characteristics. Our faith is the means of victory over the world in its multitudinous phases, but yet partaking of one character, *i.e.*, shutting God out. The world may shut God out in a straightforward way as exemplified in Germany, or it may do so in the subtler way in vogue in this country. But whatever may be the phase of its action there is only one agency on which the Christian can rely to overcome it, *i.e.*, his personal faith.

Six hundred years before the first advent of Christ as described by Habakkuk, the prophet, times were very bad. Wickedness was at a premium and righteousness at a discount in human affairs. The Chaldean invasion was a far more terrible scourge than Hitlerism or any other of the dictatorial enemies which afflict civilisation to-day. Habakkuk was greatly perturbed at the apparent triumph of evil over good. He cried to the Lord for enlightenment. He got a wonderful view of the day of the Lord and of the true path for His people in the intervening period and so came to know the secret of how to be an overcomer in very adverse circumstances, *viz.*, "the just shall live by his personal faith!" However, before God can bring affairs to a climax, His people must be dissociated from pride and constrained to walk in His ways, while the nations must fill up their cup of sin and apostasy and become ready for judgment. Although primarily the prophecy of Habakkuk relates to the immediate judgment on the Israelites, it undoubtedly also looks on to the future, *i.e.*, after the church will have been caught up to heaven. God will then work in the hearts of the scattered children of Israel bringing them to repentance and ultimately back to the promised land. Then they will cry out to the Lord as they will see the rising flood tide of evil and the power of the enemy. That God should allow their oppression is an enigma to reason, but they will learn that their hard discipline is in view of lasting blessing! God is about to intervene to accomplish the work of estab-

lishing a universe of blessing filled and ruled by Christ, that for which He has been working through all the ages.

In all this there is a lesson for the Christian in the interval of grace between the two dispensations to which reference has been made. In spite of the unfaithfulness, the strife and the anti-christian doctrines propagated in what bears Christ's name, faith connects our hearts with the world to come, where everything that has breath will praise the Lord. There is a striking parallel between the days of Habakkuk and our own day. Secular matters dominate everything on the surface, and what purports to be of God is too often mixed up with worldliness in all its phases. There is a general apathy as to the claims of Christ. The divisions amongst God's people are a sad contradiction to the harmony which is normally associated with His name.

True Christianity involves a heavenly calling, but that has its bearing on earthly relationships, so that we should be walking in all lowliness (as to ourselves) and meekness (as to others), with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, using diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Eph. 4, 2-3). But we need not be cast down, because God is about to intervene and the enemy will be utterly defeated. Faith connects us with a brighter day, in spite of all around which would seem to cast a blight upon our hope. The conclusion of the prophecy of Habakkuk is a magnificent hymn of praise, consequent on the prayer "O! Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years." He could rejoice in the Lord, in the God of His salvation. His feet were like those of the hind springing forward to the age of glory and joy, although there was complete failure of crops and flocks and everything on which the heart could naturally rest. The prophecy ends on the top note of praise with reference to the chief singer on his stringed instruments (Neginoth) as a contrast to the prayer in the beginning of the chapter upon Shigionoth which was a wind instrument of variable tunes implying a good deal of blowing with little music.

THE CREATURE THAT TURNS UP THE EYE.

The Shorter Catechism commences with the proposition: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." It was God's purpose in creating man that in contrast to other animals, man alone should have aspirations heavenwards. It is striking that heathen mythology should have been imbued with the same idea. Indeed, the derivation of *anthropos*, the Greek word meaning "man" signifies "the one who turns up the eye" (*ana* upwards, *tropo* I turn, *ops* the eye). Man has failed signally to fulfil the end which God had in view in creating him. At the beginning in Eden, Adam dishonoured God by listening to the serpent's insinuation to his wife and so far from enjoying God he, filled with fear, hid himself behind the trees of the garden. Man's signal failure has, however, never altered God's unwavering purpose. But in order that His purpose should be effected it was necessary that His Son should assume manhood. When that event took place, there was for the first time on earth a man who could truly lift up the eye to God and who could glorify God and enjoy Him perfectly. For the first time also there was an object on earth which could claim the whole attention of heaven. "What is man that Thou art mindful of Him? . . . Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honour" (Ps. viii. 4, 5). In consequence of His perfect obedience and His having by the grace of God tasted death for every man, He is bringing many sons to glory. (Heb. ii. 9, 10). They have been endowed with capacity to glorify and enjoy God and they can now turn up the eye to Him. But if the Christian can turn up his eye to God he also finds that his eye meets the eye of God and in that eye he can read guidance for the pathway. "I will guide thee with Mine eye." (Ps. xxxii., 8). When the good sheep-dog is far away from the shepherd, his movements must be controlled by the hand or by whistle. But

when he is working at short range he is controlled by the shepherd's eye. It is a matter of common observation how much better he does his work at close quarters than at long range. So in order that we may be guided by the eye of God we must not seek to roam afar, we must be at short range and have the eyes of our understanding turned heavenwards.

THE SINGLE EYE.

“If thine eye be single thy whole body will be light.” (Matt. 6, 22).

This scripture apparently involves a paradox, *i.e.*, an impossible conclusion, because the retina of a man with a single eye receives and transmits the sensation of half the light received by the brain of a person of normal vision. The meaning of a word is, however, best obtained by considering its usage, and Scripture is always its own best commentator. The word translated “single” occurs only in this passage and in the corresponding one in Luke, but the similar noun *aplotees* occurs eight times and is translated variously as follows:—

Thrice as “simplicity.” (Rom. 12, 8; 2 Cor. 1, 12; 2 Cor. 11, 3).

Twice as “singleness of heart.” (Eph. 6, 5; Col. 3, 22).

Twice as “liberality.” (2 Cor. 8, 2; 2 Cor. 9, 13).

Once as “bountifulness.” (2 Cor. 9, 11).

It means literally “one-foldedness” or “simplex structure.” We are all familiar with the annoying experience of seeing objects distorted through a common sheet glass window. Light travels slower in glass than in air and in passing through the thicker parts of the glass is retarded so that the wave front of the light becomes bent and clear vision is impossible. The Scriptural meaning of the word is then that there should be no ulterior motive or duplicity

in the Christian's action, indeed, he should be what is commonly termed "transparently honest." The perfect example in this as in every other respect was presented in the Lord Jesus Christ and what was true in Him while He was here, should now be true in the Christian.

In Second Corinthians, Chaps. 8 and 9, the word is used three times in connection with the Christian's stewardship of material resources, in this connection Ananias and Sapphira are seen at the outset of the era showing the "duplex" eye in their apparent generosity. That the Christian should be transparently honest in his ordinary business may be taken as a *sine qua non*, because judged even from temporal considerations, honesty is the best policy and business confidence once shaken cannot be again rendered stable, and the Christian has a higher object than what is dictated by time and sense. Where the duplex eye has been most in evidence amongst Christians is, however, in connection with their association or fellowship one with another, and it is in this that the greatest dishonour has been attached to the name of the Lord. The enemy has taken advantage of the characteristic to separate the people of God, and every division has been consummated by the most shameful duplicity.

It is strange that men of proved uprightness in worldly matters should have evinced such untrustworthy character in relation to their spiritual stewardship, which is vastly more important because position in ecclesiastical circles can only last for a few years, while the kingdom of God will be permanent, and our position in the latter will be determined by our faithfulness to His interests in His absence. The day is coming when the light of the presence of Christ will be perfectly displayed. An indication of which was given on the Mount of Transfiguration. However, at present He is absent, the Church has failed and is no longer available for guidance. How then can we as individuals be guided right? "The entrance of thy word

giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple.” (Ps. 119, 130). The common idea of “simple” is “weak-minded” and ignorant, but the Word of God puts no premium on ignorance or sloth. How often the apostle adjures his readers “I would not have you to be ignorant!” The scriptural idea of simplicity is “one-folded” moral texture. The honest man is the one who has spiritual illumination by the Word of God and who is thus guided right. The Word penetrates deep into the recesses of the heart and reveals perfect grace.

The apostle John opened his epistle in the light of the beginning of Christianity, and not in the light of the candle of human tradition, and he judged everything by the former. He investigated the darkness arising from Satan’s lie in Eden that there was a spot on God’s honesty and he boldly refuted the insinuation of 4000 years standing by proclaiming that “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.”

He than measured profession of fellowship and refused to recognise man’s claim to fix the standard “If we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” In the second chapter, profession is subjected to certain infallible tests. Prominent amongst these is “the light.” He that saith (profession) he is in the light (verse 9), *i.e.*, the light from the Word of God, must manifest the characteristics of the light. The central ray of light from God is His love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which manifests itself by the illuminated one loving his brother, and the one who hates his brother merely evinces the fact that he has not been illuminated by the Word of God, no matter what specious pretension may be advanced in support of his contention that he is in the light of God’s revelation. May we be found viewing things through the single or simplex eye so as to obtain the correct perspective and act rightly for our blessed Lord in His absence.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

“Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.” (Heb. 12, 1, 2). This expression is frequently held to mean that the Christian pathway is viewed as a Marathon race and that the cloud refers to our departed friends, like a dense mass of spectators in a grandstand, viewing our progress. It is held that their presence admitting of our running under their eye, subject to their verdict, and their being absorbed in the interest of our efforts should prove a wonderful stimulus to our running successfully. The above statement may be the expression of a beautiful sentiment to many people, but Scripture does not entitle us to conclude that the saints with Christ are conversant with our life here, and that they are fascinated by the interest of it. It is quite true that the Christian pathway is a very real Marathon race, in which we have need of patience and perseverance, and we need all the encouragement possible to press on, but in adducing such encouragement we must not do violence to the body of Scriptural evidence.

There are two ways in which the Greek word *martyres* may be taken, (1) as spectators or eye-witnesses, (2) as those who bear testimony by words and actions. The context will usually show the specific meaning of a Scripture passage and obviously in this case it is the latter interpretation which is valid, as there is no real interruption of the argument by the arbitrary chapter division of the subject. The beginning of Chapter 12 is a corollary of Chapter 11. The witnesses are necessarily composed of the long list of those whose brilliant acts of faith had been recapitulated in Chapter 11. Their example was the strongest witness or testimony that faith was no new principle peculiar to the Christian era. But it had always been the principle of life for the people of God in every dispensation. So 700 years previously Habakkuk enunciated the matter tersely in his prophecy in the statement “The just shall live by his faith.”

It is quite true that Habakkuk's view of the matter was very limited, but God was behind the statement. An old servant of the Lord used to say "There is no one behind God." So however limited might be the view of the prophet, the statement itself was perfect.

In consequence of such encouragement then "Let us lay aside every weight." We must distinguish between "weight" and "sin." A matter which may be quite proper in our ordinary life may be well calculated to prove a hindrance to our making efficient progress in the Christian pathway. Just as a successful runner must divest himself of clothing and undue weight of body, the Christian may have to discard social status, cultural associations, life of ease, esteem of friends, wealth, etc., that he may be able to run to the glory of God. "And the sin which doth so easily beset us." That has no reference to the specific defect, commonly spoken of as a "besetting sin." The expression "which doth so easily beset" is the translation of one unique Greek word *euperistatos* which does not occur anywhere else, and it means "well surrounded" or "standing round about," *i.e.*, like bystanders hindering progress in running, *e.g.*, if in a town we wish to get to a railway station in order to catch a train, with little time on hand, and we have the option, we shall not run down the main street in preference to a by-lane because the bystanders in the former will hinder our progress. So the reference is to the negative quality of sin as a hindrance rather than as to its positive defect. Thus sin is viewed as an entanglement rather than an antagonist. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." That is the character sustained by the one who runs. The process may mean a good deal of affliction, and is thus akin to faith, which is the present dynamic agency operating so that hope is developed. The Apostle wished for the Roman Christians that the God of hope might fill them with all joy and peace in believing (faith in its dynamic aspect) that they might overflow in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. (Rom. 15, 13).

But the Christian does not run merely under the stimulus of the achievements of the Old Testament worthies, he is encouraged by the present view looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of faith. Literally it is "looking away" from the present circumstances to contemplate Jesus. In the 1611 version of the New Testament, the translators spoiled the sense of the passage by inserting a word thus of "our" faith. The word "our" is not in the original, the sentence cannot therefore mean that as Author He originated faith in us and as Finisher sustains it and brings to a perfect issue, true as that may be. But He was the only one who began a pathway of faith and perfectly exemplified the principle, finishing the whole Marathon race without defect or halt. Each of the Old Testament worthies cited did his little bit of straight running amidst much which might be tortuous in his life. But in Heb. 11, God concentrates attention only on what will form links in the chain of faith. "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The idea of Author and Finisher is expanded in this passage. What controlled Him in His path on earth and the patient endurance of the Cross was the reward, *i.e.*, the joy which is now His at the right hand of God. He sees of the travail of His soul and derives infinite satisfaction therefrom.

THE ACCURACY OF BIBLICAL SCIENCE.

The scientific accuracy of the Bible has been so frequently challenged and ridiculed, that the apologists have become very weak in defence or altogether silent. During the 1600 years which elapsed from Moses, the first, to John, the last of the Biblical writers, many erroneous systems of science were propounded. Yet Scripture shows no evidence that the writers were under the influence of any of these systems. "Holy men of God" spake as they were moved (or carried along) by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1, 21). When the fantastic theories of the ancient philosophers are subjected

to modern analysis they will not bear a moment's examination. Let us compare the natural philosophy of Job with that of Plato or Aristotle. The blunders of the latter are often grotesque, but the wisdom of Job has stood the test of time. Yet the vagaries of Plato are considered fit studies for the ablest minds of Oxford and Jena, while the Bible is relegated to the nursery.

The ancients believed that the earth was supported on the shoulders of a hypothetical giant, named Atlas. The balancing of the earth in space and its maintenance in an orbit by gravitation was known to Job, 1000 years before Socrates. God "hangeth the earth upon nothing" (Job 26, 7) was his inspired reference. While Egyptian philosophy was propounding the "flat earth" theory, Isaiah was found stating that God sits upon the circle of the earth and sets a compass or decrees a circle on the face of the deep, thus proclaiming the spheroidal shape of the earth. The Psalmist tells us that "His going forth is from the end of the heaven." (Ps. 19, 6). The refined astronomical measurement of the 19th century has revealed the fact that the solar system is moving through space towards a point in the constellation Hercules.

The apostle James uses the astronomical term "parallax" to set forth the unchangeable character of God. Parallax is the apparent change of place of a body viewed from different points. By sufficiently extending our base of observation even the most distant parts of the universe will appear to shift, but this is not so with God, He manifests no "parallax" or variableness, neither shadow of turning (*tropées apokiasma*) which is obviously derived by analogy with the shadow arising from the apparent turning of the sun at the solstice. The noonday shadow of an upright stick is shortest at the summer solstice. The tides are due to the differential attraction of the moon and sun. These are negligible in the Mediterranean, the only sea known to the ancients. Yet Job was enlightened to say "He that compasseth the waters with bounds until the day and night come to an end,"

(Job 26, 10) and again "Hither shalt thou come and no further and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. (Job 38, 11). He stated what he could never have seen nor even heard from mortal lips.

But the examples need not be all selected from the astronomical sphere. Boastful modern philosophy has often laughed at Solomon's ignorance of chemistry when he spoke of the action of vinegar upon nitre in Proverbs 25. For nitre does not effervesce when acid is poured thereon. But the fault does not lie with the origin but in the medium of transmission. The estimable Westminster theologians although great linguists knew nothing of chemistry and were misled by the form of words. The Hebrew word used by Solomon was *nether* corresponding to *nitron* in the Greek which really describes sodium carbonate (our familiar "washing soda") the source of all effervescence on a modern commercial scale. The proper use of the word is well shown in Jeremiah, "For though thou wash thee with nitre and take thee much sope." (Jer. 2, 20).

Who but a Divine Person could have revealed to the Psalmist such meteorological data as the following? "He causeth lightning for the rain" and again "He causeth the vapours to ascend from the end of the earth." (Ps. 135, 7). These are scientific facts which were only discovered nearly 3000 years later by scientists. "All the rivers run into the sea yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come thither they return again." (Eccl. 1, 7). Even Solomon's acute observations could not have led him to know that evaporation is equal to the rainfall. The direction and speed of the wind depends on the differential pressure of the atmosphere at different places. This fact is beautifully expressed by Job with the reasons relating to electrical phenomena in regulating the rainfall. (Job 28, 23-27).

There were no volcanoes in the land of Israel or in the neighbouring countries yet we find the following records of the Spirit's dictation. "He looketh on the earth and it

trembleth, He touched the hills and they spake." (Ps. 104, 32). "Who removeth the mountains and they know not: who overturneth them in His anger." (Job 9, 5). There were no mines or deep borings in Mesopotamia yet Job could leave on record that "under the earth is turned up as if it were fire." Modern investigation shows that for every 54 feet descent one degree Fahrenheit rise in temperature is observed. Although easy to supply further examples it will suffice to say that while the textbooks of science are changing twice every generation and as a philosopher aptly said "the curiosity of to-day may be the common-place of to-morrow," Scripture remains securely established and sees human cosmogonies framed and displaced by more feasible propositions. All are illustrative of the Scriptural declaration "They shall perish: but Thou remainest—they shalt be changed, but Thou art the same and Thy years shall not fail." (Heb. 1, 11-12).

THE PRIDE OF LIFE.

Man delights in exhibition. The testimony is simply to be lowly in heart. This is not a natural habit of the mind. In seeking to avoid display one may easily make an idol of apparent humility. There is the humility of flesh as well as the pride of flesh and they come both under the category of pride. To make an exertion to appear humble is to be proud. God resists the proud (Jas. 4, 6); He knows them afar off (Ps. 138, 6); A proud heart is sin (Prov. 21, 4). The proud heart never gets near to His sanctuary. God has respect only to the lowly! Moreover pride of life is a hindrance to seeking after God (Ps. 10, 4). "The pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2, 16). The world is passing; even so must the pride of life as a constituent element of the world be passing. Its consummation will meet its end in the day of the Lord (Is. 2, 12). May God preserve us from either of the extremes and from the "in-be-tween" of the pride of life!

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