

The Spirit Of Truth



by

James McBroom

TO THE READER.



This booklet is complement to two others, one, "The Beauty of the Lord," and the other, "The God of Glory." It was felt that after putting out a meditation upon God which necessarily led to the Father, and one on the Son, our glorious Lord, a word was called for on The Spirit. In this way, the three make a meditation upon GOD.

In the New Testament we have the revelation of God—Father, Son and Spirit—in the Son. It is there we learn that God is ONE (1 Timothy 2 : 5) yet THREE (Matthew 28 : 18, 19). One in Essence or Essential Being; Three in Person. In the Old Testament The Lord our God is one Lord (Deuteronomy 6 : 4, 5.) in contrast with Polytheism. In the New Testament HE is One in contrast with Tritheism. Revelation may far outstretch our creature thought, but never goes against, or clashes with it. We may apprehend but never comprehend. We learn, therefore, that "*God is One*," is different in sense from what He is *as Three*. The former being impersonal and expressive of Him in His Eternal Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence. "Heaven is My throne, earth is My footstool." The latter shows us that within that Essence or Substance there are three Subsistances or Persons in holy and intrinsic relation dwelling together in LOVE. This we also learn is the nature of God from Whom comes the counsels of eternity, and follow on through Scripture to see how each One in the Holy Trinity engages in relation to and with the Others in carrying into effect the one eternal plan.

This, then, is the subject of the three booklets: and the Holy Spirit being the One Who carries out the subjective work in our souls, we may expect to get with Him this rich, deep and blessed fulness of revelation.

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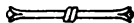
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MUCH is said in Holy Scripture concerning the knowledge of God, and nothing within the range of human thought can equal it. In two former booklets entitled “The God of Glory” and “The Beauty of the Lord,” we sought to dwell a little on God the Father in the one, and God the Son in the other. Seeing the Godhead subsists in Trinity, we felt something should be said on God the Holy Spirit, and we ask the reader to accompany us for a little, in a meditation on that blessed Person. It is to Him we are indebted for the Holy Scriptures ; the record of the revelation of Who God is ; and what He does, so that all we know, or can know is from Him. Moreover, it is by His operation in our souls, we are made capable of availing ourselves of the revelation He has given us.

The Holy Trinity is presented as Three in One. This, faith accepts, though it be beyond creature comprehension. There is much we believe even in our creature constitution which we cannot fully understand. While we are anxious to avoid negatives here, it may be said that in applying numerals, it is not three in the same way, or in the same sense as They are One—**Three Persons in one Essence.** This, though beyond us, is not out of bearing with sense, as are some of the delusions of the present day.

But if God is one in Essence, there are within that Essence, or Substance, three Persons, each standing in relation to the other as Father, Son and Spirit. Essence gives us an impersonal thought by which we can understand that He fills all space and permeates the universe with life, glory, and majesty. Eph. iv, 6. "Heaven is My throne." Psm. xi, 4. Acts vii, 49. As such there is one mind, purpose, will and plan, hence, what is true of One, is true of all Three. This explodes for ever what speculative theology has pre-supposed namely, a conflict within the Godhead. To raise a moral question like that would be equal to saying, that God can be at variance with Himself.

God is a Spirit, infinite, Eternal and unchangeable in His Being; full of power, holiness, justice, mercy, goodness and truth. In His natural attributes there is first His *eternity*. "Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God?" Hab. i, 12; *Inscrutability*. "Even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." Psm. xc, 2; *Omnipotence*. "With God all things are possible." Matt. xix, 26. "The blessed and only Potentate." 1 Tim. vi, 15; *Omnipresence*. "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me." Psm. cxxxix, 7-10.

The *moral* attributes are descriptive of His nature and character and come out fully in the working out of purpose in His time ways among men. Thus Righteousness and Holiness describe His character and spring from His nature which is love. 1 John iv, 8-14. This last is absolute and exists eternally as constantly reciprocated within the Godhead. He is also Light, but this is relative as standing in relation to darkness and is the exposure of sin, lawlessness and moral disorder.

In the very nature of things, what is true of One, is true of all Three as we have said, yet in the working out of the eternal plan, each takes His Own place in relation to the Others. **The Father** is He by whom every family in heaven and in earth is named; He worketh all things after the counsel of His

Own will ; He is above all, and through all and as to His children, is in you all. Eph. iii, 15 ; i, 11 ; iv, 6. **The Son creates.** John i, 3. Col. i, 16. Heb. i, 2 ; **Redeems.** Rom. iii, 24 ; Eph. i, 7. Col. i, 14 ; He is also the **Judge.** John v, 22. By creation He brought in the platform upon which the plan would be wrought out. He became Man to cleanse it and put it on the stable basis of redemption and finally, He will put down all that is offensive and rebellious against God. **The Spirit** performs the subjective work, working for glory and adornment. His part in creation was to garnish it. Job. xxvi, 13. His work in the saints is to array them in the beauty of Christ. Luke xv, 22. Col. iii, 12-14. To accomplish this, He uses the word of God. He takes up His abode in the believer and thus becomes the subjective power for spiritual **instinct ; intuition ; inspiration ; revelation ; and illumination.** In this way it is the Holy Spirit which qualifies the saints for service whether for conflict in the kingdom ; Levitical service in the testimony ; or worship in the sanctuary. He is the power which qualifies for all moral activities whether estimates, values or measures. See Note A, page 50.

In the counsels of eternity we have a scheme which is the necessity of the divine nature. It is neither dictatorial nor arbitrary. Nor can we say it is the result of a formal agreement between divine Persons. An agreement reached by consultation supposes the probability of a different conclusion. This could not be possible here. God being LOVE in nature, the definite plan is the moral necessity of Who and what He is. Although one in essence, He subsists in three glorious Persons, each having His own day in relation to the eternal plan or purpose. All the time ways of God in the Old Testament had these THREE DAYS IN VIEW. The first is the Spirit's day. It began at Pentecost and will terminate when the Lord takes the Assembly home. Then will begin the day of the Lord, an event which runs right through the millennial age, and which terminates in the beginning of the day of God which is eternity. All the dealings of God in the Old Testament are included in His time ways and while these days displayed Him before the eyes of all creation, in His nature, character and being,

He remained hid behind the veil. All therefore was probationary, testing man in his responsibility as an intelligent moral agent, while governmentally providing both the ground and the material for the fulfilment of His purpose. All was preparatory to the fulfilment of these counsels by the incarnation of the Son, Who, by His death at Calvary, His resurrection and ascension, laid the basis for the accomplishment of these counsels and made way for the coming of the Spirit to inaugurate the **new day**.

As we shall see, we are dependent on the Holy Spirit for all we know of God in His word, but through a misunderstanding or a mistranslation of John xvi, 13, it has been thought that the Spirit tells us nothing about Himself. Competent authorities tell us it ought to read thus, "He shall not speak *from* Himself." Compare this with John v, 19, "The Son can do nothing of Himself." Both texts shew the mutual activities of Father, Son and Spirit. From the above remarks—which were necessary to guard us from Tritheism on the one hand, which is three gods, or Sabellianism on the other hand, which is one god with three different names—we now proceed to dwell on the office and work of the Holy Spirit.

THE SPIRIT CONTROLLING ALL THINGS IN VIEW OF THE INCARNATION.

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Job. xxxiii, 4. "Hast Thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." Job. x, 10-11. Here we are taken back to that consultation in Eden when the Deity held consultation over the creation of man. "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." Zech. xii, 1. All this calls for careful attention, for while we do not read of any other section of the moral creation over which Deity deliberated before, neither do we read of any who were so created, that at a later time, they could be *re-created* and

thus become a new creation in Christ. This must have a distinct place in our thoughts if we are to understand the true character of the Spirit's day, and the blessings proper to it.

The first mention of one of the eternal Three, is in Gen. i, 2. The earth was waste and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. This was the beginning of a work which would turn chaos into cosmos ; a dreary waste into a scene of splendour. A work which will result in the whole earth being resplendent with glory. But as the material is servant to the moral, it adumbrates His work in the spiritual chaos of the soul of man. In this is seen God's triumph in the recovery of the creature of His predilection, and brings into view His resource in the Son of His love.

As created, man was richly endowed with capabilities for great things and it is well to note how these were developed in spite of the seduction and corruption of his moral nature. Certain works were accomplished which involved language, arithmetic, mechanics, etc. Cain built a city and trades began to be practised which called for lines, angles, cubes and squares. This development of primitive man must have been under the hand of his Creator. We are not left to inference here, for we are told that He who endowed him with such capabilities, imparted the strength, wisdom and understanding for their use. Exod. xxxv, 30-35. This is a sample view of man as created and developed under the hand of the Holy Spirit. What he might have become had he remained in obedience none can say, but we do know what he has become as in Christ as a vessel of glory for the delight, satisfaction and praise of God. Having come under the power of *sin* and *Satan* through the fall, his gifted qualifications have been used against a beneficent Creator to build up a gigantic system called world. A system governed by the lust of the *flesh*, the lust of the *eyes*, and the *pride* of life. Satan is its god ; it hates the Father and the Son ; it is already judged ; the execution thereof being at the door. In this way, *after* the fall, Cain built a city and named it after his son Enoch which means dedicated. Here, the trades and commerce began to flourish

with music and entertainment as an accompaniment. Nothing can meet the need of the heart of man but God, hence the call for music and the many false charms the enemy gets up—science; politics; travel; or religion with its sensuous musical programmes for his entertainment. Passing over some allusions to the Spirit, we come to a remarkable work of His in the desert of Israel's wanderings. This we select as shewing His control of man both in body and soul. Having heard of the triumph of Israel over the Egyptians, Balak the king of Moab hired Balaam to come and curse for him the people of God. It appears that Balaam was not entirely destitute of the knowledge of God, but sought to make gain by trafficking with evil spirits. The Holy Spirit is seen here both with the testimony and with the people of God; whatever their failure is, no enemy can curse them. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Rom. viii, 33. Balaam makes an attempt, with the result that he is forced to bless them altogether. The Holy Spirit so controlled both the mind and the vocal organs of the man, that he was compelled, against his will, to bless them. Moreover, such is the beauty of his language and the comprehensive bearing of his words, that his four little parables or poems will compare favourably with the richest strains of prophetic language in the whole book of God. If we take the lovely grandeur of the song of Moses and the people in Exod. xv; or listen to the felicity of his words in Deut. xxxii, xxxiii; or the dignity and pathos of the last words of David in 2 Sam. xxii, and again in Psm. xviii; then follow on to the sublime strains of praise, in 2 Sam. vii. 18-29; 1 Chron. xxix, 10-14., with all their thrill, they do not surpass the language which the Holy Spirit draws from the lips of this wicked man. Nor was it different with Caiaphas, the High Priest. John xi, 49-52. With Balaam it was an attempt to mix clean and unclean; holy and unholy, but with Caiaphas we see a man governed by hatred to the Lord Jesus, yet made to utter the precious truth of God.

When the people of God are obedient as in the days of Joshua, the Spirit is owned in His proper work, and victory is the result, but where they are disobedient and lapse into open failure, He is engaged with correction and recovery.

There is a marked contrast between the books of Joshua and Judges as to this. In the former, they took the land by conquest and the lot of each tribe was assigned to them by their leader Joshua. In the latter, after his death, they not only failed to take their possessions but fell into the sins of the Canaanites and brought upon themselves the sword of divine government. The Spirit of God came upon men again and again from Othniel to Samson. Judges. iii, 10; vi, 34; xi, 29; xiii, 25; xiv, 6; xv, 14. The most remarkable of all these was Samson. Both he and Jephthah were morally far below men like Joseph or Daniel but the Holy Spirit could use them as expressive of their generation. If Israel were low enough to produce a Samson, they got lower still to produce an Ahithophel, 2 Sam. xvi, 20-23. And down to the deepest depth of all to produce a Judas Iscariot.

Pre-eminently thus the Holy Spirit was at work ruling and over-ruling, in every circumstance guiding the march of all history forward towards one grand event—the incarnation of the Son. Whichever way we look at man, he is under the Spirit's control. Physically He controls the beating of the heart, the breathing of the lungs and the circulation of the blood in growth, waste and decay. As to the moral man, He is the power for both thoughts and feelings; temperaments and faculties; emotions and tastes, all are the fruit of His sovereign will and while each one must give an account for every word, thought, and deed, we must never forget that we can originate nothing but are dependent on Him for all.

The victory of Abram over the five kings, or of Moses over Pharaoh, or Israel over Amalek were by the Spirit. So also the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, but as history proceeds Israel has to learn that God is holy and no respecter of persons. They fall before Assyria, Babylon and ultimately into the hands of Rome where, through rejecting their Messiah, they are in bondage to this day.

There is however, a brighter side and it is comforting to trace the marks of His work in the men of the covenant, throughout the ages. The Spirit as a divine Person is behind the word *faith* in Heb. xi. It was by His power the

exploits of these witnesses were accomplished. The sacrifice of Abel ; the communion of Enoch ; the building of Noah were all potentially of Him. Abraham the pilgrim and friend of God ; Moses the legislator—the meekest man on earth ; Joseph the administrator ; Joshua the captain ; David the king—all was the fruit of sovereign power directed by the Spirit. The same is true of the exploits of the Judges ; the beautiful poetic strains of the Psalmists whether David, Solomon, Moses, Asaph, Ethnan or Habakkuk. The Lamentations of Jeremiah ; the weeping of captives in Babylon or Rachel weeping for her children. Each and every part had its place in sovereignty of wisdom, holiness and love, all going to shew that God the Holy Spirit is immanent in all history, the superintending force in every event whether in the unit or aggregate. At every moment both private thought and public opinion are the fruit of His sovereign will.

But besides His place in the sphere of holy government, the Spirit pervades the typical system. The *fire* of the Altar ; the *water* of the Laver ; the *oil* for cleansing the leper, sanctifying the Levites and consecrating the priests, spoke symbolically of the Spirit. He was the overseer of the ritual on the great day of atonement, as also the feasts of Jehovah. When we recall that it is He who gives the inspired account of the whole range of things in Creation ; Providence ; Government and Redemption, we get some impression of the Office and work of the Holy Spirit in co-relation with the Father and the Son.

THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE INCARNATION, ATONEMENT AND INAUGURATION OF THE NEW ETERNAL SYSTEM.

On the first page of the New Testament, the Holy Spirit comes before us as preparing a body for the Son. In prophetic language the Son had said, “The Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent Me.” Isa. xlviii, 16. The angel of the Lord said unto Joseph. “Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the

Holy Ghost." Matt, i. 20. Previous to that, Gabriel appeared unto the Virgin Mary and said. "And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke i, 31-35. In this the most profound of all miracles, the whole Trinity was engaged, and its repercussion was felt universally in heaven, earth and hell. Our Lord was sent, sealed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. He began His ministry from the Jordan, associating Himself with a remnant of His people in the Baptism of John. Here for the first time the whole Trinity are manifested and come within the cognisance of human sensibilities. The Son is owned by the Father and the Spirit rested on Him in the form of a dove. Observe, in following this out, that He was sent or driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan, and having bound the strong man there, He returned in the power of the Spirit to begin His itinerations through the land. Mark i, 12 ; Luke iv, 14. In this service He declared the heart of God. God had been glorified in Him when, for thirty years of private life, the beauty of a man shone under His eye. The words of Psm. xvi, are descriptive of the exercises of that time. He grew up before Jehovah as a tender plant and a root out of dry ground. There was nothing of an external nature to distinguish Him in the eyes of men. Isa. liii. In His public service which covered about a tenth of the time spent in private, all was marked by the unction of the Holy Spirit. What He said and what He did, all His words and works were the work of the whole THREE. Matt, xii. 28 ; John xiv, 10 ; Acts x, 38. This went on to the cross, where, through the eternal Spirit, He offered Himself without spot to God. Heb. ix, 14. During His ministry, certain ones had been brought back from the dead to life here again but His resurrection was the triumph of good over evil. It was the establishment of a *new creation* as part of divine purpose, and Scripture shews each member of the Holy Godhead at work in that mighty act. This intimacy and co-working of divine Persons still goes on as seen in His breathing into His disciples and saying

Receive the Holy Spirit. His last *charge* to them was given by the power of the Spirit and also His last *promise*. John xx, 22 ; Acts i, 2-5.

Being now on the verge of the Spirit's day, let us glance back to the outset of God's time ways and note how the march of events was preparing for the coming of the Son which was followed by the coming of the Spirit. Whether we take History, Prophecy, Providence or Government, all was preparing for the accomplishment of His eternal purpose in the Son. His ancient dealings with Israel in the law, both in the moral code and in the ceremonial observances ; the typical mysteries of the prophets, priests and kings—all was working towards the point we have now reached. The Son would be seen by the eye of faith, a Man in *heaven* in virtue of redemption and the Holy Spirit on *earth* in relation to the counsels of eternity. In the Gospels, Matthew goes back to Abraham and David, linking up the Son with *promise* and *royalty*. Mark presents Him as Jehovah the servant prophet. Luke takes us back to Eden, presenting the Son as the *Second Man* out of heaven. But John steps over the whole of history into eternity to shew the Son is **God**, come down to fulfil His eternal plan. Hence in this Gospel, man is treated as a lost sinner from the outset.

The two basic facts of the Gospel are, the exaltation of Christ in the rights of redemption, and the presence of the Holy Spirit on the earth. As it is said, a Man in heaven above is a new thing in divine dealings and the Spirit here to dwell in the believer a new thing as well. Instead of assuming a body as the Son did, He takes up His abode in the souls of believers and builds them together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Eph. ii, 22. In the Gospel God is working according to pattern and this shews that not only has He been revealed but in the exaltation of Christ He has a complete answer to the revelation. All this should be seen as accomplished in the ascension of Christ from Whom the Holy Spirit came down to continue the work of affecting God's Purpose.

We might speak of the pentecostal gift in many ways but it may be better to put it under three leading heads,

namely, the **Kingdom of God ; the House of God ;** and the **Body of Christ.** These three were formed simultaneously by the coming of the Spirit. Believers stand in relation to the first in an *individual* way : in relation to the second *collectively*; and relation to the third *corporately*—Jew and Gentile as a joint-body in Christ. That the heavens do rule, man had to learn in early days (Dan. iv, 26), but the kingdom of heaven is the Spirit's domain. The kingdom of God was here in the person of the Son, but before it could be established as the kingdom of heaven the King must Himself have gone there. This is the sphere of divine rule on the earth, where the Lordship of Christ is the bond and from which goes out the Gospel of the glory of Christ. Within that kingdom, God has His dwelling place and, while Christ is Lord in the kingdom, He is Head in the House. John viii, 35 ; Rom. xiv, 9 ; Heb. iii, 6. Needless to say, we are far from material things here. The kingdom being spiritual, it provides a bulwark for the house and in that way is protective of the holy things of God—the precious things of heaven. Within that House is presented the innermost treasure of all, namely the *mystery*, or secret, which was hid in God—the truth of the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ. Moreover, it must be seen that the saints form both the Church militant, and the kingdom as a generation of faith. By the Spirit's power they meet and defeat the opposing forces of evil, just as they form the House of God and stand in relation to His testimony in the world. In their relationship to Christ as members of His Body, they stand united to Him in *organic* union on the one hand, and as members one of another, one Body in Christ on the other.

THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

The Epistle to the Romans is an elaborate exposition of the Gospel of God. There we are told that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom. xiv, 17. In this Epistle there is an answer produced in the saints by the Spirit, corresponding to that which was accomplished in Christ for God at the cross.

Here the Blessed Lord died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. 1 Pet. iii, 18. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree that we might have full and free forgiveness, but, if we were to be brought into the joy of these things, the Holy Spirit must work *in us*. The work of the cross goes much deeper than the forgiveness of sins. It goes even to the fallen state in which we stood. It was there in the sinless One, God dealt judicially, and condemned sin 'in the flesh'. This was the end of man's responsible history and it is of solemn moment that we should notice that man's crowning act of guilt brought it about. What the Lord did brought out God's richest act of mercy but man's part brought out sin at its height. There, light and darkness; good and evil; life and death, came into awful conflict. The Lord's part was making atonement by bearing the judgment. Man's part was filling up his own guilt, while the Blessed God was judging and condemning the whole state in the Person of the sinless One—His own beloved Son—and giving to the whole creation a public expression of the awful, sinful, God-defying state of the creature, while the whole guilty state goes down in death and is left there. The resurrection bursts upon the scene and in the risen One, we behold Man in His new estate according to the thought of God from eternity to eternity.

Now while all this is objective and for the apprehension of faith, the Spirit's work is subjective. He came to work *in us* the deep thoughts of God, based upon the work the Son had accomplished and, as we have said, His work is according to pattern. Christ having set foot on earth, God will tolerate nothing less in testimony, hence the transfer of the soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit from Adam to Christ. The cross is the basis of His work in the human heart and the new birth is His work in every dispensation, but the formation of a new company in the nature, calling and relationship of the glorified Man, is that which necessitates that He should take up His abode in the soul. He does not dwell in man as *in the flesh*—a state already condemned—but in the soul as previously prepared by Him in the divine operation of new birth.

All this calls for careful consideration for, as an intelligent

moral agent, man cannot be transferred out of the condition of estrangement from God, and brought into intimate nearness like a mere material object. In the very nature of things soul history and progress in relation to the divine claims must be attended with pain. In the sovereign work of new birth when the Spirit says, "Let there be light," the effect is *repentance* and produces the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," as a result. Faith as the gift of God is now present and the Gospel is accepted which brings about conversion and the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins. This may come immediately after the initial work of new birth, which is the divine order, or it may well be some time after, and in many cases, where the truth is little known, souls are often left a long time struggling in a condition analagous to that detailed in Rom. vii. This interval may be seen in a case like Cornelius the centurion, a pious man who prayed to God, to whom was given a vision, followed by a visit from the Apostle Peter. Having received the Gospel he was sealed by the Holy Spirit. Acts x. The same thing may be seen in Saul in the three days he was without sight, after the Lord had met him on the Damascus road. Acts ix. Again, the twelve men at Ephesus who were in the Christian company but had not yet received the Spirit. Acts xix. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His, or he is not of Him. Rom. viii, 9. This brings us to the peculiar favour and blessedness of the indwelling Spirit. It is not that souls in the transitional state between new birth and sealing do not belong to Him. The Old Testament saints belong to Him; so also the disciples before the cross, but to be of Him is another matter. This can only be true of those within the baptism of the Holy Spirit. To be in Christ, free from condemnation and blessed with every spiritual blessing, is the portion only of those sealed by the Spirit of God. It is no question of denying that souls may be happy and in the hopes of heaven, for the Lord can meet them where they are, but deliverance from the law, the flesh or sin, cannot be the experience of souls in that state.

The pity is that so few seem to enter into what it is to be in the Spirit. Failing to see that God has not only dealt with

the sins but with the whole sinful state, many are left struggling with that state in themselves and do not know the way out. Robbed of the holy joy of deliverance in a new relationship of life and peace, pious souls spend their days in bondage to sin, the law and the flesh and the world, not having the holy freedom from these things which is their very birthright. It is here that the verses of Romans vii, mentioned above call for a few remarks. The exercise is personified in the Apostle and it simplifies matters if we distinguish between the concrete and the abstract. "I am carnal, sold under sin," v, 14., is the expression of one who has light from God. He may, or he may not, have received the Spirit but is in bondage to sin. He is now, so to speak, in the tunnel of introspection which, though dark at this point, leads to further light and eventually to an outlet of brightest sunshine. Next, through a process of reasoning, he is able to distinguish between himself and sin which dwelleth in him. This is a great step. It is really man before he fell in Eden and what he became after. Then the next step is still greater for, through a further process of reasoning, he can identify himself with the good. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." v. 22. Apprehending this, he can take account of sin in his nature as a foreign element which is irreconcilable and to which the law applies all its positive and negative commands. The law—which is holy—can only condemn this state. No discipline, education or reformation can help such a state. The law pronounces his condemnation and claims his death. This condemnation and death having been submitted to and borne by his substitute at the cross, he accepts that death as his in the faith of his soul and is now able to say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now he sees that although sin's law is still in the flesh, he himself is **in Christ** and free from condemnation. Ch. viii, 1. This is a needful experience if we are to know the blessedness of the christian calling. It is no imaginary thing, but a blessed reality. The abstract nature of this is to be observed. While appreciating what it is to be in Christ in a status and life which is of God and beyond responsibility, he is conscious that only the grace of God can keep him. "So then I myself with the mind serve God's law, but with the flesh sin's law." Rom. vii, 25. N.T.

This mixed condition that he is in, will go on till the end of the pathway, but though that is so, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death. viii, 2. The uniform working of life in the first Adam ever gravitates *downwards* in sin to death. The uniform working of the life of Christ the Last Adam was ever *upward*. In that the believer now is by the Holy Spirit. It is regrettable that many suffer real loss by refusing to face the exercise of Romans vii. On the other hand, how deplorable it is that it may be mentally acquired in such a way that we may be able to speak of the deep things of God, while our practical condition is morally akin to the man of the world.

Having arrived at the consciousness of being in Christ in holy freedom, we can take account of the ground trodden in relation to the Spirit. Free from the domination of sin and having yielded to the claims of law, we are now, in the words of Rom. vi, 14, "not under law but under grace." The place of the Spirit in all this is set forth in chapter viii. The Spirit is mentioned in that chapter no less than seventeen times. As a consequence, there are four statements in the chapter that call for consideration. "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell *in* you." v. 9. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are *in* Christ Jesus." v. 1. "If Christ be *in* you." v. 10. The flesh is descriptive of man's state as a creature. It is that which gives colour to all our thoughts, feelings, tastes and all that goes to make up life. The fall corrupted that, hence all is contaminated. By displacing flesh, the indwelling Spirit becomes our power for everything. So then, if we are *in* Christ before God for His pleasure, Christ is *in* us before men for testimony—the indwelling Spirit being the power for all.

In the light of this why do we hear so little of the knowledge of the Spirit? It is true that He is here on behalf of the Father and the Son and that He does not make Himself an object. He comes before us in an impersonal way by the use of the neuter pronoun "it" but He is God and we know Him as knowing God. In plain words, all we know of God is directly from Him and by Him. "Ye know Him"

was the word of our Lord to His disciples. John xiv, 17. Hereby we know the Spirit of God—every spirit which confesses Jesus Christ come in flesh is of God. Now God is Love. The Holy Spirit is God hence, He is Love. “Now I beseech you brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake and for **the love of the Spirit**, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.” Rom. xv. 30. How could He shed the love of God abroad in our hearts if He were not love? He is the Spirit of truth, John xiv, 17. The Spirit of power 2 Tim. ii, 7. Do we not gather from the words of the Lord Jesus that the Holy Spirit will tell us more of what He Himself is? “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.” John xvi, 7. In Him then we have the God of all comfort. “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.” Isa. lxvi. 13. “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.” 2 Cor. i, 3. Inasmuch as the Spirit is within us, we get made good to us and in us, all that God is, by God the Holy Spirit. But He can sympathise, yea, and intercede for us. “In like manner the Spirit joins also its help to our weaknesses; for we do not know what we should pray for as is fitting, but the Spirit itself makes intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Rom. viii, 26.

Then there is communion of the Holy Spirit. Think of the marvellous condescension He shews to come and dwell in such close proximity with evil, for we have to remind ourselves that, although transferred from Adam to Christ, the law of sin is still in our members. Doubtless, this was the cause of His appearance as cloven tongues of fire at Pentecost. He dwells in us in that which He Himself has formed in us by new birth and here it is, His communion with us. Surely in coming to our side, it is that He may bring us to His, in all the blessed consciousness of divine favour within the sacred enclosure of His own domain, where all things are of God. It is thus as the Spirit He enters into the closest intimacy with us in our spirits. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” Rom. viii, 16.

But the Spirit is sensitive. This we can understand, for *distance* is measured by *nearness* even in human relationships. The more refined the sensibilities are, the more susceptible we are to the chilling influences of man and the world. The Spirit can be grieved and may for the moment be inactive but He is also jealous. Love is always jealous. Many are the tragedies that follow it in human life. To the young men it is said, "Love not the world." How could the Holy Spirit go on ungrieved in us if we let our hearts go out to anything in this poor world which is not of God? "I The LORD thy God am a jealous God." Exod. xx, 5. The Spirit therefore can be **grieved**; **quenched**; **lied to** and even **blasphemed**.

Enough has been said we trust of the possession of the Spirit, to impress us with the simplicity and beauty of life lived practically under His sway. Some seem to think that walking in the Spirit—which is walking by faith—is impractical and produces austerity and a tendency to frown upon the enjoyments of daily life. A plea is sometimes made for the young in such words as, Do not be a kill-joy. Nothing could be more deceptive and harmful. Nature's joys are at their best ephemeral and leave us dissatisfied. Well we know they fade and decay but the joys of the Spirit are *pure*; *lasting*; *heavenly* and *eternal*. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. xiv. 17. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." Gal. v, 22, 23. This lovely passage falls into three beautiful clusters of Christ-like features, each containing three and all reflecting in a three-fold way. The first three are **Godward**; the next three **manward**; the last three **personal**. Can any one say there is either austerity, legality or mere sentiment in this? On the contrary, it can be said there are no more happy, joyous, genial people in this world. As led by the Spirit of God they are sons of God and true geniality is seen in them with the absence of all levity. Isaiah said, "Woe is me." vi, 5. Peter said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Luke v, 8. Paul said, "O wretched man that I am." Rom.

vii, 24. It is just there that this holy Person has deigned to take up His abode. Not in what we are as flesh of sin, but in what He has Himself prepared in His initial operation of new birth.

One other passage calls for a word before passing on. Being accused by the Corinthians of unfaithfulness to his promise, the apostle takes occasion by the charge to shew on the one hand his own transparency, and on the other to speak of the office of the Spirit in a three-fold way as the anointing, seal, and earnest of all that is yet to come. Christ is the embodiment of all the promises of God. Whoever else may vacillate, there is both stability and security in Him. "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God: Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Cor. i, 20-22. In accord with what has been already said, this passage supposes a previous work of the Spirit in the soul. These things come before us in a perfectly orderly way in the cleansing of the leper. Lev. xiv, 1-18. Washing with water prefigures *new birth*. Sprinkling with blood—*forgiveness of sins*. Anointing with oil—*the gift of the Spirit*. We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Eph. ii, 10. Here we come to spiritual instinct, intuition and intelligence. "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things and is truth, and is no lie, even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him." 1 John ii, 27. Spiritual instinct is a most precious reality but it must be regarded with care. It is one thing for a devout soul to do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, and not be able to give a text of scripture for it. It is quite another thing for people to act by what they call the inner light which they lay claim to, while ignoring the word of God. The act of Mary of Bethany when she broke her box of spikenard and anointed her Lord, has earned for her undying fame in the testimony. The Lord Himself vindicated her. But the claim of "Inner light," which we hear so much of to-day, is a mark of one of

the evils of the last days.

“Who also hath sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” It is clear that these different things are brought to pass in our hearts by one and the same act when the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in us. By putting the stamp of God upon us, the Spirit claims our persons for God. “Ye are not your own? for ye have been bought with a price: glorify now then God in your body.” 1 Cor. vi, 20. New Tran. “And has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” In this we have a token of the inheritance. Eph. i, 14. This means we are called to share with our Lord in all that He has acquired. All that range of universal glory and blessing which He takes up by double claim namely, Personal right, and the redemptive acquirement. In this way the Spirit is the pledge and the present enjoyment of the thing pledged, while we await the full result in the redemption of our bodies. He brings into the obedient heart the enjoyment of what is future, in communion with the Father and the Son. This leads to the peak of christian blessing, namely, **sonship**, and associates us with the Son before God in fulness of blessing. This we shall dwell upon in connection with our next point, namely, the House or Dwelling place of God. See note B at the close.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE HOUSE OF GOD.

It has ever been the desire of God to dwell with man and to secure this, redemption must first be accomplished. As before remarked, in the kingdom the saints are seen in their individual settings as *subjects*, with the name of the Lord as their bond. In the House of God, they are seen as *sons*. The House of God is the result of His own workmanship. Bearing in mind that we are as far as possible from material things here, the saints are said to be God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, and built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. A man's household is his family and he is known through them. In this way, God, as He has revealed Himself, is known

through His sons to-day. "This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell." Psm. cxxxii, 14. From that centre, the voice of God is heard. Acts xiii, 2-4. 1 Tim. iv, 1. Here, no disturbing element can come. God is its centre; there He rests in the blessing of His own, whose delight it is to worship and adore Him in the power of the Holy Spirit.

God's righteousness with glory bright,
Which with its radiance fills that sphere,
E'en Christ, of God the power and light,
Our title is that light to share.

In establishing that House, the middle wall had to be broken down between Jew and Gentile. All strife being gone, Jew and Gentile are brought nigh in **One New Man**, and are reconciled to God in one body by the cross; both having access by one Spirit unto the Father. A verse like this intensifies our interest as we dwell upon the Holy Spirit. It is that Person in the Godhead who has brought us out of the darkness and distance of our Adamic state and turned the dark tragedy of Calvary into the greatest triumph of God. This leads on to the city and the Household of God. Eph. ii, 11-22. Then to the building fitly framed together, which groweth into a holy temple in the Lord. Here, in the very heart of the precious things of heaven, we come to the habitation of God; the place where all these treasures are installed; the resting place of all that is of God; the evidences of past victories and the receptacle of much spoil. Well it may be so since—if we may use the language of the typical house—this Palace is not for man but for the Lord God. 1 Chron. xxix. 1. Amongst all this wealth, there is one treasure kept as a secret; a mystery hid in God. This is taken up parenthetically in Eph. iii. To this we shall return when dealing with the Holy Spirit in reference to our corporate relationships.

The Epistle to the Ephesians falls into two parts of three chapters each. The last three, being the hortatory part, may be read with the first Epistle to Timothy. The Spirit is mentioned thirteen times, or it may be twelve (see footnote to ch. v. 9. New Tran), and thus He comes before us six times in each of the two divisions of the Epistle. In

ch. iv, 1-14, we are seen in relation to one another and are exhorted to walk worthy of the calling in all lowliness, meekness and longsuffering ; using diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace ; both holding the truth and growing up in it in love. In the next section, iv, 17 to v, 21, we are exhorted how to conduct ourselves with regard to those that are without. Having been set before the face of God in richest blessing, we are to walk in love as dear children and reflect His light in the midst of the darkness for we are now made light in the Lord. In the next section, v, 22 to vi, 9, we are instructed as to our conduct in the home circle—the sphere of natural affections. *Subjection* on the part of wives ; *love* on the part of husbands ; *obedience* on the part of children. Then in the business circle, *faithfulness* on the part of servants and *righteousness* on the part of masters. Lastly from ch. vi, 10, it is the conflict with the spiritual forces of evil, the powers of darkness. In each of these sections we are in the hands of the Spirit and thus have power to stamp the colour and character of heaven on them all.

In 1 Timothy God's administration which is in faith is first brought before us and the standard is the gospel of the glory of the blessed God. Believers in the House of God is the theme, and that which binds the whole structure together is the mystery of piety in the incarnation of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The men are to pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and reasoning and the women to be marked by modesty of dress in the fear of God. In this way, a proper impression of God will be set forth in testimony. God is One, and the mediator between God and men One, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, the *testimony* to go forth in its own time. The rest of the Epistle gives instruction concerning oversight and ministry with directions concerning the distribution of alms to the needy and dependent. All these details are given us because God desires all to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. He does not want us to give a false impression of Him, for it is through His saints He puts Himself in touch with all. The Holy Spirit speaks of Himself here in this Epistle and, as dwelling in the saints, is the

immanent life and power of the whole spiritual structure.

The witness of the Spirit, both to the saints and through them, is brought out very plainly in the first Epistle of John. He is mentioned eight times and here we have a holy record of spiritual blessing which includes some of the wealth of heaven in the richest of christian blessing. The saints are viewed in House of God connection as the family of God. Seven times they are said to be born or begotten of God, and having thus the birth-right, their place of intimacy is assured in all the unreserved blessedness of the Father's love. In this circle of holy love there can be no distrust ; no distance ; no reserve, for the Father has found an outlet for His love in His children and to them in love's own circle He can unfold all that is in His heart. The Epistle opens with the saints being brought into company with the Apostles to enjoy with them communion with the Father and the Son. In that communion it is the delight of the Father to unfold to our hearts His own appreciation of His Son. And correspondingly, the Son delights to make known the Father in His goodness, grace, mercy, and His eternal counsel of love. So intimate is the relationship in both life and nature that we dwell in God. Divine love is our home and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. iv, 16. They are an entirely new generation ; they know that they have passed from death unto life because they love the brethren ; they know that they know God, because they keep His commandments ; they know they are in Him, because they keep His word and in that way, His love is perfected in them. This word dwell or abide reminds us that this is not a temporary retreat but the abiding home of the soul. Then the character of God their Father is seen in them for, not only do they love, they practise righteousness also. iii, 10 ; iv, 7. They know that the Son of God has come and has given them an understanding to know Him that is true, and they are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. They can say, if no one has seen God at any time, " We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." iv, 14. They have eternal life and they *know* it. v, 13. The very first characteristic of that life is to know the Father and His sent One, Jesus Christ. John

xvii, 3. They also know the Holy Spirit. 1 John iv, 2. This is not mere speculative theology but the word of God brought home to the heart by the living power of the indwelling Spirit. This is infinitely beyond the critical reasoning of the present day. Nor are the saints ignorant of the power and insidious working of evil all around them and their liability to fall into it if not constantly kept in the conscious enjoyment of these holy treasures. Although brought abstractly into all this range of blessing, they are yet in a bodily condition which is liable to both weakness and wilfulness. It is well to hold truth in balance and for that, let us look for a moment at the other aspect of our position.

“Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” Answer. “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.” (of distances) Isa. xxxiii, 14-17. That is the heavenly land. Observe in reference to this, Moses, Aaron and his two sons with seventy of the elders of Israel were called up to meet Jehovah in the mount. Moses alone was brought near in the cloud and the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud. Exod. xxiv, 9-18. Does this not teach us something of what it is to be brought to dwell in God? If sin is in question, God is a consuming fire. Heb. xii, 29. Does this bring home to us the necessity of the Cross where that fire fell upon the Holy One, judging and condemning our sinful state? So efficacious has that work been, that God has cleared us from all that was offensive to Himself. Consequently, He now brings us before Himself holy and without blame for His pleasure, fitted, not only to dwell in the love of God but in the God who is Love.

But dwelling in God is by dwelling in love. Care is needed here lest we wander into the by-paths of imagination and, like the mystic, lose ourselves in the ecstasy of folly.

The mystic is self-engrossed being occupied with his wants, wishes and desires. The intelligent believer is occupied with Christ and perfectly satisfied, his heart being filled with peace and joy as the result of being occupied with the object set before him by the Holy Spirit. There can be no real intimacy apart from the fulfilment of this condition, namely, he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. We rise then from the ways, work and counsels of God to God Himself. Beyond this we cannot get now, but in the company of the Holy Spirit we come forward into time on the way to an eternity of bliss where we shall ever dwell with and in God. But it is not only what we get in all this but what God has got for Himself in the fulfilment of His own eternal plan, in the triumph of that grace which has secured for Himself the creature of His choice.

But does it follow that every believer who has received the Spirit dwells in God? The Corinthians and Galatians are an example of the opposite. Even in this Epistle of John, if any man sin, or, if our heart condemn us. When we are dwelling in God, there is no inner conflict going on between the flesh and the Spirit. All is rest, peace and joy. And hereby we know that He abideth or dwelleth in us, by the Spirit which He has given us. 1 John iii, 24. But note. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us OF his Spirit." iv, 13. In the first of these passages the believer dwelling in God is the effect of *obedience* and is put first—all resting on the gift of the Spirit. In the second, while shewing the same mutuality of dwelling as the result of communion in nature and the circle of love in the activities of life, there is the addition of that little word OF in v. 13, which is important as raising the question of the Being and relationship of God and the Three who form the Holy Trinity. It is as if God gave us part of Himself. No man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him. 1 Cor. ii, 11. We all know there is a mysterious depth in a man known only to himself. But if that is so, what shall we say of God? If we are conscious of the impossibility of intruding into the inner enclosure of the being of a fellow mortal, what shall be said of God? To illustrate this,

someone has said, "I *could* not give you my spirit if I *would*, neither *would* I give you my spirit if I *could*. Why? Because you would know too much about me." This is exactly what God has done. He has given us His Spirit, His own Spirit, part of Himself that we may know Him. He desires to be known not only in His works, words, ways, covenants, purposes and counsels but **Himself** in all that He is in the deep moral fulness of love and glory. The Spirit which He has given us searcheth all things, yea, the deep things or rather the *depths* of God. 1 Cor. ii, 10. Nature in its ruined state cannot intrude here, nor creature capacity at its best understand the things of God. Into the inner consciousness of the depths of movements, tastes, joys and feelings of Him who created this vast universe and upholds it in all its unity, none dare venture. But when we learn that not only would He have us there, but He has undertaken, through His Son, to remove every hindrance that sin had occasioned and take us right into His own company in moral suitability to Himself; creating a capacity in us to know Him in the depths of His Being; to rejoice in Him and adore Him for ever more—what can we say? "I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." Psm. civ, 33.

This raises another question which calls for a word here. In the light of all this blessing, how far can it be said that the saints partake of Deity? Some have erred by failing to distinguish between the *Essential Being* and the *Moral Nature* of God. As begotten of God we have His life—eternal life; His nature—eternal love. We are made His righteousness in Christ and are partakers of His holiness, but if we partook of Deity we would cease to be creatures, and He would cease to be God.

It is here we learn the importance of having right thoughts of the incarnation. The distance between the creature and the Creator was twofold. First as a creature; then as fallen into sin. By becoming Man, the Son removed the first, bridging the distance. As to the second, He removed that also by His death, so that we might share the glory with Himself in proper conditions, according to God. In Him, Sonship and eternal relationship was brought into

Manhood, and made available for us by His atoning work upon the cross. Here, let it be said, we behold Him in a three-fold way. First, what He is in *Deity*—the glory we are going to behold. Second, what He is in *Manhood* as risen and glorified—to Whom we are united by His Spirit from on high. Third, what He is as a *Divine-Human-Person*—with Whom we are associated, as by adoption, before God for His pleasure. “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Gal. iv, 6.

In connection with the office and work of the Spirit in the company, we turn to John xiv, 16. The operations of the Spirit in the soul individually, had been brought out by our Lord in chapters ii; iv; vii. Just before His betrayal and apprehension, the Lord gathered His own around Himself, and in view of His departure and the break up it would cause, instructed them on the necessity of His going away and the coming of the Spirit as a consequence. He assures them that the coming of the Spirit was a necessity for *them* that they might have a capacity to take in and be led into the meaning of all that the Lord had said and done while He was among them. The result would be, they would be brought into a greater degree of intimacy with Himself than was possible while He was with them. In the most tender way, the Lord was detaching them from Judaism, the earth and earthly things by attaching them firmly to Himself as exalted in heaven, Part with Him there in a new faith system, every part of which would be instinct with life in the power of God the Spirit Who would be *in* them, making good what the Lord had taught them, thus creating a new capacity to fit them for the work that, as His disciples, lay before them. It was needful for them, as well as for Him, that He should go, for if He did not go the Comforter would not come. They were to learn that there was something beyond miracles, which would lead them to rejoice in the moral depths of His teaching. They were to be enlightened within by God the Spirit Whose immanence would flood their innermost being with the knowledge of God.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter,

that he may abide with you for ever ; the Spirit of truth ; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John xiv, 15-17. It is as if He said, My being here with you can but be transient ; He shall be with you for ever : all the things you have heard and seen during My ministry here ye cannot apprehend or appreciate for want of capacity, but when He is come He shall give you to understand, that never were creatures favoured like you have been. " But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." v. 26. Here we have illumination, on the ground of which they could say after He had gone—but not before—" We beheld His glory, the glory as of an only-begotten with a Father, full of grace and truth." The words, " He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you," includes the inspired record of the Gospels and the opening up of the holy grandeur of all they had been taught. He had spoken of Himself as the Son ; Son of God ; Son of Man ; Son of David. The Tabernacle, the Temple, the Law, the Testimony, all figured in His ministry. His parables explored the moral world and His miracles the world of nature—all was marked by a combination of *depth* and *simplicity*, that only the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth could unfold. But what of the present time ? If the Spirit alone can teach us the meaning of His life and service here, who shall tell us of where He is now and what He is doing ? Peter asked Him, " Lord, whither goest thou ?" Ch. xiii, 36. Thomas said, " Lord, we know not whither thou goest ; and how can we know the way?" Ch. xiv, 5. The Spirit is the answer to all this. " But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes forth from with the Father, *he* shall bear witness concerning me ; and ye too bear witness, because ye are with me from the beginning." Ch. xv, 26-27. New Tran. When He left them at His ascension, they stood bewildered till two men in white clothing said to them, " Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ?" Acts i, 11. Sometime later Peter wrote of Him, " Who is

gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God ; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." 1 Pet. iii, 22. How did Peter know this ? Flesh and blood could not reveal it. It was revealed by the Spirit, Who had come according to promise, that our Lord's whereabouts, His official glories and activities might be known by us, and that, by the same blessed Spirit, we might have the joy of communion with Him where He now is. We are told that Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, to-day and for ever. Heb. xiii, 8. The Holy Spirit makes Him known to us as He was 'yesterday' in the Gospels. John xiv. 26. He also shews us where He is and what He is doing 'to-day'. John xv, 26. This comes out in the Epistles. Thirdly, the Spirit shews us things to come. John xvi, 13. This is what the Lord will do 'to-morrow'. Thus we have in these three chapters the work of the Spirit concerning our Lord past, present, and future. At the present moment, He is gone far above all heavens ; He has been made Lord ; Head ; Priest, and is coming again to put down all evil and establish the rule of God over every part of creation. We know Him as **He is now**. The Lord of Glory ; the Head of every man ; the Head of the Body the Assembly ; the great Priest over the House of God ; the Minister of the Sanctuary ; the Mediator of the better covenant. And well we know that He is about to come forth and call His own home to be with Himself for ever.

But chapter xvi goes further and shews the coming of the Spirit to His people as a vessel prepared by the Lord Himself to receive Him—with the bearing of His pressure on the world and its prince. While He comes to the disciples, the first effect of His presence is to bring demonstration to the world of its guilt in the death of the Lord Jesus. After telling them that it was profitable for them that He should go away, He used the words *to you* twice. As dwelling in them, He would bring demonstration to the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. "Of sin, because they believe not on me ; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more ; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." Ch. xvi, 9-11. It is not to be taken that the activities of the Holy Spirit were in any way towards

the world or its prince. His presence here in the Assembly, in the working out of the plan of the Godhead, is a challenge to a system which refused the Son ; and that challenge works out in a threefold way. Observe that He names the three factors, sin, righteousness and judgment twice. The second time He qualifies these three things by bringing in three other actors in the arena ; Himself ; the world, and Satan. He had before said, " Now is the judgment of this world : now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Ch. xii, 31. Here, that solemn sentence in its eternal, irrevocable character is confirmed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The very thing which appeared to be a complete victory for the world and its god, is seen to be their complete overthrow. The sin here is, they believe not on Him. This the sin, beyond all other sins—the sin of hating the Father and the Son. Ch. xv. 22-24. Righteousness here is what is right. What could be more fitting, in the nature of things, than His exaltation to the Father's right hand ? And note here, it is an act of His own volition, " I go to my Father." Judgment can be the only result, for this world, led on by the Devil, joined issue with God over the Son incarnate and this is the result for both to all eternity.

Following this, the Lord opens out the work of the Spirit as come down from the Father and the Son, in His normal working in the company. Three things the Lord outlines here. First, " He shall guide you into all the truth." This must be taken as the new faith system established in resurrection, of which all scripture speaks. Directly, or indirectly, all scripture has in view a new creation into which sin and death can never come. Whether it be history, prophecy, typology, or doctrine, the words employed and the things concerned are from the Holy Spirit. Mental activity has wrought much mischief by intruding into the mysteries of the faith but ignoring the guide. Is there any wonder that the flock is robbed of food ? The saints are starved and the precious things of heaven undervalued or unknown. " He shall guide you into all truth," might be illustrated by the Epistle to the Hebrews. Chapters one to two present the Person of our Lord, first in His Deity and then in His Manhood. In three and four we get the

House, the Word, and the Throne. In chapters five to seven, the *new* Priest. In chapter eight—the new covenant; in nine—the new sanctuary; in ten—the new worshipping company. This is all an answer to the typical system set up by the same Spirit in an earlier day, as taught us in Exodus and Leviticus. The second thing the Spirit would do would be to shew them things to come. He alone can unlock the chambers of the Old Testament, dispensational, Messianic or moral, and link all together as leading sectors in the great circle of truth. How could the different ages or dispensations be known apart from Him? Who could have known the parenthetic gap in the ages, in which Israel is cut off and the Assembly brought in as the vessel of eternal purpose? Or who could have understood the seventy weeks of Daniel apart from Him? In the book of the Acts, He has linked up the *past* dispensation with the *present*, and in the book of Revelation, He has linked up the *present* with the *future*. In that book too, He shews the connecting link with *eternity*—God's eternal day. In this way, "He shall shew you things to come." "He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." This is the third and last point here of the ministry of the Spirit and it leads from the things to the Persons and Their relations in trinity, both in essential Being and in co-equality of interests. We shall leave that till we have dealt with the office and work of the Spirit in our corporate relationship. This brings in the truth of the Mystery—the Assembly as the Body of Christ; the secret which was hid in God but is now made known unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE ASSEMBLY AS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

In approaching this part of the truth, it is necessary to keep in mind what we have seen as to being "In Christ." Nothing of an inferior nature could be united to Him, and the saints stand in the same constitutional and organic connection with Him, as the human body to the moral being within it. So close indeed is this link, that the Church is included in the term "The Christ." "As the body is

one—the human body—and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, **so also is the Christ.**” 1 Cor. xii, 12. cf. Gen. v, 2, where both the man and the woman are called Adam. “For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” 1 Cor. xii, 13. There may be an obscure allusion here to the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper as some have thought, but the truth itself clearly stated is that work of the Spirit in which there can be no failure, where all is of God. We have already seen the Headship of Christ in a *racial* way, but this is much more intimate, shewing the Assembly substantially and organically the expression of Christ the Head of His Body. 1 Cor. xii, 12-13. But, while that is true, we do not get the Head of the Body here. The Epistle being corrective, the Body of Christ is presented here in its local setting and is thus but a microcosm of the whole. It is seen as the vessel of the Spirit in view of ministry, hence, His sovereignty is asserted. vv. 8-11.

We have already seen in Ephesians ii, the saints as the family of God and His dwelling place too. God being there, all His treasures are there—the precious things of heaven. This simply means, that the blessings spoken of are wrought into the hearts of His own by the Spirit. From all the blessings enumerated there, the Spirit selects one, namely, the Body, and in a long parenthesis occupying the whole of Ch. iii, opens it out as the secret, or Mystery, which had been hid in God through the ages. Remark that the Body is not exactly the Mystery here, nor is it the Lord Himself; it is Christ and the saints as one organic entity. In this chapter, Paul speaks of the administration which had been given to him, towards the saints. By *revelation* the Mystery had been made known to him, which in other generations had not been made known to the sons of men. It was that the nations should be joint-heirs, and a joint-body, and joint-partakers of His promises in Christ Jesus, by the Gospel, of which he had become minister. Note here that the Gospel, namely, that by which we have made the transfer from Adam to Christ as taught in Rom. viii, is the way in

to this wonderful blessing, spoken of here as the Mystery and explained to be Jew and Gentile one body in Christ. To Paul was committed both the ministry of the *Gospel* and the ministry of the *Mystery*. Col. i, 23-26. The Gospel contains the unsearchable riches of the Christ. Eph. iii, 8. The Mystery, that in which God has set forth His manifold wisdom, before the heavenly intelligences, is the Church, the Body of Christ. This we are told was the motive for creation. v. 9-10. The Mystery was hidden throughout the ages in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, in order that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God. That is, the variegated or many coloured wisdom of God, according to the purpose of the ages, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. This truth the Apostle tells us, completes the word of God. Col. i, 25. Not only that part of truth which must come out before the inspired volume could be closed, but that sector in the great circle of revealed truth which gives completeness to the whole. Creation; Government; Providence; History; Prophecy; Typology; things moral and spiritual; all were known, but like the keystone to an arch, the Mystery being made known gave completion, symmetry, beauty and order to all. It will be said that in the life and death of our Lord, God was fully revealed. True, but He said to His own, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." John xvi, 12. The Spirit's coming not only gave them capacity to understand but also expanded the truth to the unfolding of the whole counsel of God.

But the Assembly, in virtue of being the Body of Christ, is also His Bride. This takes our thoughts back to the beginning and shews the link between the beginning and the end of Revelation. Adam was alone and it was not good, so the LORD God made for him a help meet. But before she could be presented to him, she must be taken out of him. For that the deep sleep—which so aptly prefigures the death of Christ—was a necessity. In taking up the inheritance which God gave him, she was associated with him in his dominion. This leads to the institution of marriage which gives the true thought of union. Two persons are united

together in holy wedlock, but in the body it is no question of being united. Each member is part of the one Body and in proper healthy conditions, all work together in perfect unity. Speaking of this in Eph. v, the Apostle says this is a great mystery but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

The administration of the Mystery works out in various ways. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians it is viewed as the vessel of the Spirit *locally*: He distributing gift, according to His sovereign will, for the manifestation of Himself in the Church as come together, before they had the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Colossians, it is the Body *universally* as composed of all saints in the baptism of the Spirit at any time on earth. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, it is the *whole* vast Assembly as composed of all the saints from Pentecost till the coming of the Lord. In Corinthians, the truth was given as a correction of *clericalism* on the one side or *radicalism* on the other. In the wisdom of God He permitted this disorder and so has furnished us with this corrective instruction for all time. In Colossians, this truth was given to counteract the dreams of the Gnostics, a class which rose up early in opposition to the truth. In Ephesians, apart from anything which called for correction, we have a treatise on the eternal counsel of God. In Colossians, the Head and the Body form one entity but in Ephesians, as we have seen, we pass from the thought of the Body to that of the Bride, that is, two entities.

Now we see the place the Holy Spirit had in all this. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians He is mentioned twenty-four times, and ten of them are in Ch. xii. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Spirit is mentioned thirteen times. In the Epistle to the Colossians, the Spirit is mentioned only *once*. This will readily be understood if we reflect that the divine side of our Lord's Person is in view in Colossians. In Ephesians, it is the risen glorified Man that is in view but in Colossians it is God the Son, the Creator. While the Spirit gives the Subject, and the inspired account, He wisely and Divinely stands aside that we may be led into the knowledge of the greatness and

glory of Christ. For much the same reason the Spirit is not mentioned in the Book of Leviticus.

As the Bride of Christ, the Assembly is now being prepared for the marriage. Christ gave Himself for it. He will yet present it to Himself not having spot or wrinkle. Not a mark either of defilement or old age but holy and without blemish. This is the same word as in Eph. i, 4. The actual presentation is shewn us in Rev. xix, 7-9. Here we have the marriage of the Lamb. After this, John is called to view the Bride the Lamb's wife. Rev. xxi, 9. Here, the figure is changed and he beholds a city descending from God out of heaven, having the glory of God. We have here the climax of the work of the Spirit in that vast throng; a company in which each Person of the Godhead will take a peculiar delight, because this company stands in relation to the Son. In this company, He who was the Man of sorrows but is now the Man of joy, will see of the travail of His soul, and will be satisfied. The last view we get of the Bride, is when she comes down from God out of heaven, a thousand years later. Rev. xxi, 2. Here the figure is changed again and when called to see the holy city, John sees her prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Previously, she had come out for display and administration which goes on throughout the Millennial age, but here she is all for Himself. "Thine eye in that bright glorious day, shall with supreme delight, Thy fair and glorious Bride survey, unblemished in Thy sight." Display having been ended, the new Adam and the new Eve go on into an eternity of bliss. Rev. xxi, 1-5. Meanwhile the Spirit is forming in devoted hearts bridal affections for Christ, which cause them to join with Him in saying, "Come, Lord Jesus." "And the Spirit and the Bride say Come." Rev. xxii, 17.

We now turn to the special and peculiar work of the Spirit as we are promised in John xvi. "He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." v. 14. His glory — that is, the glory of the Son — is great in God's salvation. Psm. xxi. It is the work of the Spirit to shew us that glory. But here in John xvi. 15, we are led in beyond that to His glory within the sacred circle of the Holy Trinity.

In seeking an answer to the question, What are the "things that are mine?" we must distinguish between Godhead and Manhood in the Person of our Lord, and view Him abstractly on the divine side as co-equal with the Father and co-possessor of all things. In His official capacity as Administrator, all things are given by the Father into His hands and all things are put under His feet. In order that this may be carried out, all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. But here we distinguish between the glory of His Person and the offices He fills; the difference between delegated authority and proprietorship, and this leads to the wealth of God. O depth of **wealth**, **wisdom** and **knowledge** of God! The material universe being the product of His power, is a witness of His wealth, wisdom and knowledge. Look then a moment at these things.

THE WEALTH OF GOD.

The heavenly bodies in their numbers, distances, and rapidity of movement; the sea and all that swim therein and the ships that float on its surface; the land with all its rivers, lakes, mountains and hills. Then there is man, with all his monumental works of ingenuity, device and splendour; all are His. A remarkable text comes before us here. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." 1 Cor. iii, 22, 23. We are His both in body and in soul. "All *souls* are mine." Ezek. xviii, 4. "Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. vi, 20. "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." Psm. 50, 10. As to material wealth, according to man's estimate, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts." Hag. ii, 8. In the light of this, where is the millionaire to-day or the man who pulls down his barns to build greater saying, "There will I bestow my goods?" Can we wonder when the true provider says to him "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." And what of the man clothed in fine linen and purple, who fared sumptuously every day, while the afflicted beggar

lay at his gate seeking the crumbs. The love of money is the root of all evil and it has filled the earth with wars, famines and many other evils which have turned the fair creation of God into an inferno of diabolical intrigue, despite the graciousness and beneficent goodness of God, the author and provider of all.

But if greed and selfishness mark us in nature with material things, it is not so with the things of the Spirit. The moment a person gets converted he becomes anxious for others to share with him in the good things. These things are heavenly, spiritual and eternal as elements of the life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; reciprocated between them long before creation; native to Deity; inherent in the divine nature and subsisting in incorruptible and unfading beauty. But while love and glory ever flowed evenly there, we can understand that the Incarnation would give as it were, renewed impetus to that love. For instance, there was no call for the Father's voice to be heard in pre-incarnate days saying, "This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." The love, joy and peace that ever was there, continued in undisturbed delight both causeless and innate but now, when the Son has stooped to Manhood, there is a fresh cause, a new motive, and a ground for comparison. The Son is the channel through which all that is native to Godhead flows to man. "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you." Then, He is the object of His Father's love in His path of obedience. This love, He shares with His disciples. There is now a company on earth sharing the Father's love through Him Who was its ineffable Object in His own rights but came near to men to make it available for them. Although this was divinely perfect and of surpassing beauty, it had an end in view. The end in view being the Cross there is thus yet a fresh impetus given to the Father's love. "Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life." Loved as the darling of the Father's heart in eternity; loved as the devoted and dependent Man on earth; loved more deeply still at the Cross—He brings His own in to share with Him the inner intimacies of that same love. This is a deep that knows no sounding; an ocean without a shore. It fills

and satisfies the heart while ever leading us on to new wonders and fresh glories. Our God is a giving God. He gives to all men liberally and upbraideth not. Jehovah of hosts said to Israel, "Prove me now herewith, if I open not to you the windows of heaven and pour you out such a blessing that ye will not be able to contain it." Mal. iii, 10. This is superabundance of blessing. "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you," said the Son, and, the Holy Spirit distributes to every man severally as *He will*. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Such thoughts are suggested by the words, "He shall take of the things that are mine, and shew them unto you." It is not merely a question of ink and paper, but the soul being led through the various departments of Godhead wealth, into the innermost knowledge of all that God *is* and *has*, that good, better, and best, may be valued by us in the power of the Spirit of God. This produces a holy discrimination which fills the soul with delight; calling each one to see the tinsel of this passing show of vanity in the world, and leading us to the deepest praise, worship and adoration. It is here the Giver begins to get. What He gets, yea, what He seeks, is the overflow, and surely we can say, "Of thine own have we given thee."

THE DEPTH OF GOD'S WISDOM.

When the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written, the world had reached a very advanced state of wisdom. But it was the wisdom of men who were ignorant of the wisdom of God, and in their blindness, crucified the Lord of Glory. There were many schools of philosophy, not only among the Jews but also in Greece and Rome. In this state of ferment, this new company—the Assembly—had its beginning, and like a mighty wave swept aside decadent *Judaism*, Roman *imperialism*, and Grecian *philosophy*. As these powers began to wane in apostolic days, a new school arose which spread over the whole ground of the testimony from Syria to Gaul. This was a class that sought to mix certain parts of Christianity with the reasonings of the schools of Greece, Rome and Judaism as well. Their

knowledge of divine revelation was speculative and they were known as Gnostics, or in other words—the people who know. To such people, the preaching of the cross was foolishness. But the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Bring in faith and philosophy must go. Put the prefix *con* before *science* and you get *conscience*, which takes us from intellectual to moral ground; from speculative dreaming, to stand before divine holiness as naked sinners. What then? “Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” Isa. vi, 5. So the apostle writes by the Spirit, “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” 1 Cor. ii, 7, 8. Moses was schooled in all the wisdom of Egypt but when he had become great he refused its rank, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to have the temporary pleasures of sin. He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. Heb. xi, 24-26. Yet, before he could begin the work of his life, he must spend forty years in the backside of the desert, educated by God Himself. Joseph is also a fine example of this. He was destined to teach the statesmen of Egypt how to rule and, in preparation for this, he had to be sold for a bondman. “They afflicted his feet with fetters; his soul came into irons.” Psm. cv, 18. New Trans. Daniel and his companions refused Babylon’s food and were ten times better than all the scribes and magicians in learning and skill, so that in matters of knowledge and wisdom, the king found them better than all others who were in his land. In this way, wisdom is justified of all her children. “Thus saith Jehovah: let not the wise glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty glory in his might; let not the rich glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am Jehovah, who exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith Jehovah.” Jer. ix, 23, 24.

But with our God, His wisdom is controlled by His love in everything. That order is seen in the symmetry, order and beauty of the creation. Everything created reflects Him, so that the whole earth is filled with His glory. The apple tree produces apples and not oranges; wheat produces wheat and not barley. So it is in the moral sphere. If good for good may be seen on earth, evil for good is of the pit, but good for evil is of God, and from heaven. How exquisitely blended is all this. His wisdom ever waketh; He not only plans and works for our good, but He actually takes account of and uses the creature's worst act for that creature's blessing. Many examples of this might be given, but one will suffice. The crucifixion of His Son was man's worst act but God used it to bring in for man His very best. By it, God in righteousness and holy love comes out in forgiveness and richest blessing to the culprit. We see a beautiful picture of this in Genesis xxxvii, where, the sons of Israel, in treachery to their brother, put him in the very place where he would be their greatest benefactor. What more can we say? By His wisdom, our Lord—who is God over all—met, and silenced all opposition, condemning the leaders of the people from their own lips. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things that thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her." Prov. iii, 13-18. Wisdom hath builded her house and she invites all to her feast. Prov. ix, 1. But there are conditions. "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright. With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury." 2 Sam. xxii, 26, 27. To be initiated into wisdom's secrets (Job. xi), and endowed with her treasures we must be trustworthy. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under

their feet, and turn again and rend you," Matt. vii, 6. Wisdom longs to divulge her secrets and share her treasures with us, but can we be trusted to appreciate and value them? "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: that I may cause those that love me to inherit **substance**; and I will fill their treasures." Prov. viii, 20, 21. "**O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.**" Rom. xi, 33.

THE DEPTH OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

Like His wealth and wisdom, this is infinite. He both knows and fore-knows; He is both Prescient and Omniscient. His knowledge is linked with His Omnipresence as related to the dimensions of space—above; beneath; around; and with the three variants of time—past; present; and future. This also links with His Omnipotence, for to know what will take place at a future time necessitates that all is under His control. He telleth the number of the stars and numbers the hairs of our heads. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall he not be correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?" Psm. xciv, 9, 10. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Rom. viii, 29. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Heb. iv, 13. But see how it works out in God incarnate—the Man of the Gospels. He saw Nathanael under the fig tree, John i, 48. "Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," John xxi, 17. He knew the movements of heaven, earth and hell. Luke x, 18; xvi, 23-31. His eye was upon the fish in the sea and He sent one to Peter with the money in its mouth to meet the pressing need, Matt. xvii, 27. "For the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." 1 Chron. xxviii, 9. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, etc." Matt. xv, 19. He foreknows and foretells. He told them that Jerusalem would fall to the Romans in desolation, distress and wrath. Luke xxi, 20-24. This came to pass

forty years after the Cross. Many other things did He foretell which are about to be fulfilled. Here again is a depth that knows no sounding.

It raises this question, How far do we know God? We are to grow by the true knowledge of God. What solemnly concerns us, is not abstract truth, nor a range of speculative dogma, but the thoughts of God. He shews Himself to us, not only that we may know, but, what is more than this, that we may *do*, and above all that we may *be*. No part of truth has quite accomplished God's end when we have understood it only. Every divine impression is meant to form us like Himself that we may live in conscious conformity to His will. He has given us of His Spirit that we might *know*; that everything that could cause unrest might be *removed*; that every moral question might be *settled*; and that we might be in holy *intimacy* with Himself. This links the wealth, wisdom and knowledge of God with His love; and as responsive to that love, we are made conscious that every blessed feature of His character and attributes comes under the sway of that love which is the nature of God; and like the thimble in the ocean, we dwell in God because we dwell in love.

In this way, we have much more than the wealth, wisdom and knowledge of God. We might go on indeed to speak of the depth of His justice, holiness, goodness and truth, and we see them all focussed for expression, in the ministry of our Lord. Enough has been said surely to challenge our hearts, as to how far we have been led, under the control of the Holy Spirit, to gaze into the invisible, yea, into the depths of God. "All, all within, beneath, around, above, speak but of Thee and tell me what I am, the happiest of the happy, O Thou peerless One!" Pause a moment here. It is said that if the sun were a hollow body, the earth could traverse its circuit within its depth, with an immensity of space between itself and the inner surface of the great luminary. But all illustrations fail here, since all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.

One more scriptural illustration may be cited because of its significance, for beauty and adornment in the *physical*

scenery and its rich and manifold instruction in the *moral* sphere. The heavens have been garnished in all their deep grandeur of gorgeous adornment by His Spirit. The same blessed Person who stamps the beauty of the Lord our God upon His saints. Job. xxvi, 13; Psm. xc, 17; cxlix, 4. The rainbow—which is mentioned four times in scripture—is part of this garnishing. It forms a link between the material and the moral and in this way, it is an evidence of divine glory. Its appearance is a welcome announcement that the storm is past and creation may again bask in the clear sunshine. So we sing of Calvary—"The storm that bowed Thy blessed head, is hushed forever now." Four times then is the rainbow mentioned in scripture and it proclaims the DEPTH of the faithfulness of God. "And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth, and it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh." Gen. ix, 11-15.

In its unity and variety of colour, the Rainbow adumbrates the manifold wisdom of God. The word translated manifold is many-coloured or variegated. Thus we have in the various tints, seen in combination, that which sets forth the glory of God and the wisdom of God. Seven is the perfect number and all seven colours are combined in the rainbow. They are, Crimson; Amber; Gold; Emerald; Blue; Purple; and Violet. This is the perfection of beauty. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined." Psm. 50, 2, The word translated here as "beauty" is sometimes translated "glory." Thus for the words translated, "Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness," we have "Worship Jehovah in holy splendour." Psm.

xxix, 2. New Tran. Science has told us that the seven colours can be reduced to three, thus constituting a perfect picture of the glorious Trinity from Whom everything emanates. The various glories suggested by these colours, were manifested by the Son in Incarnation and now, by the Spirit, are to be made known, through the Assembly, to the principalities and powers in heavenly places. This leads to the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. As before said, three Godward; three manward; and three personal. Surely these are graces to decorate ourselves with; garments of undecaying beauty to be dressed in; things indeed against which there is no law. See Note E. The Rainbow, on page 55.

Now all this is seen in fuller relief in the Epistle of James iii, 13-18. "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." This is the wisdom that knows not God and crucified the Lord of glory. "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first **pure**, then **peaceable**, **gentle**, and easy to be **intreated**, full of **mercy** and good **fruits**, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." Here then we have the answer to the colours of the Rainbow as set forth in the moral realm. As the combination of colours in the Rainbow bespeaks the beauty and adorning of the material creation in the hands of the Holy Spirit, so we have here in detail the varied tints of moral colouring, in the moral realm which, by the operations of that same Spirit, reflect the wisdom of God as revealed in grace, glory and eternal counsel by, or through the Assembly, to the unseen ranges of heavenly intelligences above.

"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? On the top of high places by the way, at the cross-paths she taketh her stand. Beside the gates,

at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors, she crieth aloud. Unto you, men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man : O ye simple, understand prudence ; and ye foolish, understand sense. Hear, for I will speak excellent things, and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my palate shall meditate truth, and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness ; there is nothing tortuous or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. Receive my instruction, and not silver ; and knowledge rather than choice gold : for wisdom is better than rubies, and all things that may be desired are not equal to it." Prov. viii, 1-11. New Trans.

Someone will say, All this is beautiful, but where can it be seen? It is admitted that failure abounds on every hand, but nevertheless, there are those who in simplicity and obscurity respond to God in sweet appreciation of what He has done *for* them and *in* them, and what He is *to* them in Christ by the Spirit. To deny this is to ignore the Spirit's work so blessedly in evidence to-day in many. It also ignores the truth that, whatever the failure, at any moment in the history of the testimony, God secures an answer to all that He has given, by the Spirit. For this, obedience is called for. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." 1 Sam. xv, 22. Neither is there any vacillating or uncertainty. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." John vii, 17.

Obedience leads to delight, and as taught by the Spirit there is enrichment. This has often transported simple, unlettered men beyond the greatest thinkers of the day who have refused the teaching of the Spirit. Moreover, growth in the knowledge of scripture leads to advance in the knowledge of God and this is growth which widens the outlook on life. Since the books of nature and revelation are from the same blessed Source, the individual, however simple and unlearned, acquires a working knowledge of things, and an outlook on life, which leaves far behind leaders of thought who limit themselves to the passing things of the day.

He that created the universe and combines the whole sphere of nature, upholds and rules public opinion as well, but He has also inspired and given us a written revelation of Himself. This is the circle of truth of which, as the Spirit of truth, He is the guardian, and into which He delights to lead us. O depth of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge!

And now a word as promised on the subject of the blessing of sons. By associating us with Himself before the Father in His own calling, life, and acceptance, the Son, as firstborn among many brethren, has brought us into the highest of all blessings. He has connected this, the House and family character, as so blessedly put before us in the Epistle to the Ephesians, with the House of God, where all its spiritual wealth is brought before us. With this in mind, we pass from the treasures of John xvi, "The things that are mine," into the sacred enclosure of chapter xvii, and with holy and sacred feelings, listen to the words which flow from our adorable Lord, concerning the most sacred of all the treasures of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here the Son, standing in time, gazes back into a *past* eternity and forward into a *coming* eternity of bliss, crystalising all in one eternal NOW, (vv. 5, 24.). On the verge of that dark hour which must forever stand alone in the history of this world, He speaks (surveying all that He has accomplished and as anticipating death and resurrection v. 4;) of what He has given them vv. 8; 14; 22; of what He is going to do for them vv. 2; 19; of what He desires for them v. 17; and above all, of that oneness of life and nature which was theirs v. 23, which was seen for a time in practical expression in Acts ii-iv. If this outward unity has broken down—He would in His love bring them right home and in such a way, that the world that had hated them on His account would yet see them in the same glory *with* Himself, and loved with the *same* love wherewith He was loved by the Father. All this is surpassed by the desire that what, as creatures, we can never share, we might behold—His own eternal glory in co-equality with the Father and the Spirit in all that constitutes Deity in its holy relationships, and all brought into manifestation in Him, a Man. The meetness, preciousness and mutuality of it floods the

soul with speechless delight as, by the Spirit, we sit before Him. Note the connection with the THINGS that are mine in Ch. xiv with what is here in Ch. xvii. "I do not demand concerning the world, but concerning those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine (**and all that is mine is thine, and (all) that is thine mine,**) and I am glorified in them." vv. 9. 10. The mutuality of possession supplies the double motive for all being kept while in the world. Though His, they belong also to the Father and both His and the Father's glory are concerned in their being kept. No petition of His can be denied and so they **shall** be kept by the guardianship of the Holy Spirit—that blessed one who supplies us with the grand doxology of Jude 24, 25. "But to Him that is able to keep you without stumbling, and to set (you) with exultation blameless before His glory, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, (be) glory, majesty, might, and authority, from before the whole age, and now, and to all the ages. Amen." New Tran.

The holy domain of the Spirit is thus opened up before the heart, where all things are of God and where Christ is everything and in all. This is the Spirit's realm, these the Spirit's things, and all made known by Spirit chosen words. "But we have received . . . the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the *things* which have been freely given to us of God: which *things* we speak, not in *words* taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, communicating *spiritual things* by *spiritual means*." 1 Cor. ii, 12, 13. In this way the youngest and the most simple are led on and are at home with the oldest and the most deeply taught; all finding themselves at home in that which is heavenly and eternal, apart altogether from that which is earthly and ~~natural~~ ^{as belonging to a new creation in Christ Jesus.} With this, the highest and the richest of all blessing in view, the great Apostle can only pray. "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father (of our Lord Jesus Christ) of whom every family in (the) heavens and on earth is named, in order that he may give you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man; that the Christ may dwell, through faith, in your hearts, being rooted and founded in love, in order that

ye may be fully able to apprehend with all the saints what (is) the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of the Christ which surpasses knowledge: that ye may be filled (even) to all the fulness of God." Eph. iii, 14-19. New Tran.

A word of caution is called for. The corruption of the best is the worst corruption of all. In Christianity we have God's very best. The fatted calf; the best robe; the Holiest of all. These, in figurative speech shew this. But the simple literary statements of Holy Scripture, concerning the Father and the Son, and the counsels of God concerning the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son, and the coming of the Spirit—all shew the depth and fulness of divine revelation and the wealth of blessing for man to-day. The House of God—the domain of the Spirit—and a new creation in Christ Jesus entered into by faith are clearly the marks of the Spirit's day. All this is beyond human nature, and the moment we touch the super-natural there is danger. Forseeing this, the Lord has given us a written revelation in His word of Himself and of His doings. Thus the believer is protected from every hostile element by the word of God, the gift of the Spirit, and divinely bequeathed faith. By these the believer can be preserved from many rocks and shoals which have been the cause of many sad and melancholy wrecks. Unhappily with some, natural temperament has been allowed to play a part, but happy are they who, through communion with the Lord, have recourse to a self-knowledge which distrusts self and all human ability. Critical minds would level all down to man's thoughts, exclude the Spirit and dishonour God and thus the blessing is lost. This is the leaven that has been at work till the outer systems have become an inflated mass. Then again, there is the sensational or sentimental temperament, which is a danger in the other extreme. It is by these things that Mysticism, Pantheism and many other wild and fantastic theories have deluded their victims and many well-meaning souls have been deceived. Both classes may be seen in the Sadducees and the Pharisees or Rationalists and Ritualists. The former is the modernist of to-day, and the latter is seen in the resurrection by Satanic power

of the ancient pagan mysteries, seen to-day in such things as Millennial Dawn ; Christian Science ; Spiritism, etc.

Well indeed it is for those who know the blessedness of being in Christ, a new creation, and enjoying the wealth, wisdom and knowledge of God by dwelling in Him. " And we have known and have believed the love which God has to us. God is love, and he that *abides* in love *abides* in God, and God in him." 1 John iv, 16. New Tran. " The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit (be) with you all."

Amen.

J. McBROOM.

NOTE A.

The babes or young converts of 1 John ii, 13, 18-27, are an example of *instinct* by the Holy Spirit. They have an **unction** from the Holy One and know all things. In this way they are fitted to meet the apostasy whether of Judaism or Christianity. The *intuition* of the Spirit is seen in Mary when she broke her box of ointment and anointed her Lord for His burial. The *inspiration* of the Spirit is seen in the recording of Holy Scriptures ; in the addresses of the Apostles to their persecutors ; and in their words of salvation to the multitudes. **Revelation** must be distinguished from *inspiration* though both are by the Holy Spirit. In the former we have what is positive and from God ; in the latter the Spirit's record of history which includes both good and evil in recording the words and works of nature and the doings of evil men. **Illumination** is a beautiful word, describing how the Spirit enlightens our souls by His communications, so that the believer in His hands, becomes a reflex of Christ here among men. Luke xi, 35, 36, Phil. ii, 15. 1 John ii, 6.

Nature in its different departments of order and beauty is the work of the Holy Spirit. The seasons come and go ; suitable food is provided for all ; time for labour and for rest ; strength and energy expended—rest and recuperation in return, but all in view of the moral realm, God, Christ and new creation and eternity. His control of the moral and physical realms in combination, is a theme for reflection and profound thanksgiving. In our natural conditions it is said, "In Him we live and move and have our being." He controls the heart, the circulation of the blood, the lungs to breathe and the brain to think. Here we pass from the physical to the mental and moral. Thought, with its flights in a fraction of a second to the ends of the earth and even to heaven or to hell, is a mysterious continuance. The Spirit is the power of our thoughts but *we* are responsible for reactions. Here we must distinguish carefully, for He who searches the depth of God, penetrates in us to the dividing of the soul and spirit, of joints and marrow and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. He is the power of speech but *we* must guard the tongue. One man may rob or kill another and he is indebted to the Holy Spirit for strength to do it but the deed is from a motive, springing from an evil source, which calls into action the pangs of a guilty conscience.

NOTE B.

THE KINGDOM.

The kingdom of God and of Heaven is a sphere on earth where the rule of God is maintained. It is not heaven nor in heaven as some have thought. Since it had to be set up here by the Spirit, it must be different from the rule of the heavens spoken of by the prophet, Daniel iv, 26, which is true from the beginning of time. Romans xiv, 17 explains it. Negatively—it is not meat and drink, i.e., not concerned with temporal things. Positively—it is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. It is a sphere of good and blessing where grace reigns through

righteousness in contrast with the world where sin reigns. Three things mark it. The Lordship of Christ; the will of God which is salvation; and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Thus the whole Trinity is at work on behalf of guilty man. The saints are subjects of divine grace and fitted to stand as good soldiers of Jesus Christ in the conflict which rages with the fallen hosts who have their head-quarters in the heavenlies. They are also consistent with the testimony of God's grace which is the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God. In fidelity to their Lord, the rejected King, they stand for His inheritance during His absence and are provided with the whole armour of God, in a power that is not carnal but mighty through God. It is true that this kingdom is spoken of as a lodging place for mere christian profession, and by the working of man's mind, to the exclusion of the Spirit, it has become an inflated mass. Luke xiii, 18-21. But it must be remembered that, though people get much of the light and beneficence of heaven in this land by a nominal profession of christianity, the real entrance into the kingdom of God is by being born again. John iii, 5. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xviii, 3. It began at Pentecost and goes on till all things are brought into subjection to God by the Man of His purpose; all enemies put down and even death itself destroyed. 1 Cor. xv, 2-28. The kingdom is confined to the Assembly during the reign of grace but when that company is summoned to be at home with the Lord, the testimony will pass into other hands by the resumption of divine dealings with Israel the covenant people. Judgments of various kinds both providential and governmental shall then be executed, in view of the kingdom being established on the earth in full regal display. Matt. xiii, 30, 41, 48. xxv, 31-46. The kingdom to-day is a bulwark for the House of God and all the treasures that are there—the precious things of heaven. As the warriors in Israel stood for the protection of the Tabernacle, the Priests, the Levites and the wives and children, so the church militant stands in the conflict for the maintenance of all that is of God. The place of the Holy Spirit in all this can be gathered from the place where the conflict is described and the way He is mentioned there twice. "And the sword of the

Spirit, which is the word of God : Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." Eph. vi, 17-19.

NOTE C.

THE HOUSE OF GOD.

It is important to see that the House of God is presented in a twofold way. First, as God's own workmanship by which He prepares a dwelling place for Himself by the Spirit. Eph. ii, 10, 22, This is seen in such scriptures as Matt. xvi, 18. 1 Pet. ii, 5. "This is my rest, here will I dwell, for I have desired it." Psm. cxxxii, 14. Secondly, it is seen here in relation to man's responsibility and his workmanship where failure has come in. 1 Cor. iii, 9-17. This, like the wheat and tares of the kingdom, shews the way man has intruded into the holy things of God, ignoring the Spirit with the result that all is lowered and debased. If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. 1 Cor. iii, 17. Judgment must begin at the House of God. 1 Pet. iv, 17. We are dealing however with the dwelling place of God as composed of all within the baptism of the Spirit, built of living stone, and instinct with life—the life of the family of God. It is protected by the kingdom as a bulwark and within its compartments or chambers are installed the precious things of heaven. We have looked at these heavenly treasures in Eph. ii, iii, as wrought into the souls of the saints by the Spirit, for the pleasure of God. The beauty and felicity of typical language greatly helps us here, for the *Palace* is not for man but for the LORD God. Note the men who had charge of the treasure and what the treasures are as combining together to express the assemblage of glories that combine and shine in the Person of Christ. There were chief men among the brethren. One was a wise counsellor, others were princes of the sanctuary

and others again, princes of God. 1 Chron. xxiv, 5 ; xxvi, 14. New Tran. Such men would be entrusted with the manifold mysteries of God. cf. 1 Cor. iv, 1. They had charge of the chambers or storehouses and all the treasures of the House of God. These consisted of the vessels of service ; the fine flour ; the wine ; the oil ; the frankincense with the spices. Then above all this there were the dedicated things 1 Chron. xxvii, 27-30 ; xxvi, 24-28. These dedicated things were the evidences of past victories, the spoils won in battle and set apart for God and the glory of His dwelling place. But if the pattern of heavenly things was set up in a panorama of splendour and glory, what shall be said of the things themselves that are set up in a glory that excels? The new order of things we are brought into to-day is heavenly and eternal. It is a faith system, and no one can read the Epistles of the New Testament intelligently without coming into contact with the princes of God to whom were entrusted the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices. Nor can one fail to see as taught of God, that these things bespeak the features of the Man, Christ Jesus, in a scene of undecaying and incorruptible splendour, permeated by the Spirit of God and where Christ is ALL and in ALL. And, by the Holy Spirit, these features are *inwrought* in the saints to-day.

NOTE D.

THE BODY OF CHRIST.

The truth of the Body of Christ leads into the innermost treasures of the House and heart of God. Unlike the Kingdom and the House, it does not admit on the part of man either responsibility or break-down. Both the Kingdom and the House form part of the time ways of God and will go on in this world after the Church is taken to her home in heaven, but the mystery hid in God throughout the ages—fruit of God's eternal purpose—the Church, the Body of Christ, is unique and stands alone. It is of Himself

in such a way as to be substantially and organically, Christ. "So also is the Christ." 1 Cor. xii, 12. New Tran. The Church as the Bride of Christ is a further thought and nothing inferior to Him can be *united* to Him. How then is this grand conception of our God brought into effect? and how can those who were far from God and living in sin be brought near, so near as to be part of Christ Himself? The answer is, that as Eve was taken out of Adam when he was in a deep sleep, so the Church is taken out of Christ in death by the Holy Spirit, who undertakes the subjective work of God. As we have seen, this blessed Person formed the body prepared for the Son in which He glorified God in Redemption. The same blessed Spirit also forms His Body the Church. This is done by forming in the believer a new moral being which, in the language of Scripture is "Christ formed *in* you." Gal. iv, 19; i, 15, 16; ii, 20. From this is developed the truth that the Church is the Bride of Christ. It is not as members of His Body that we, His saints are united to Him. As such we are in Him, part of Himself. It was as taken out of Adam that Eve was united to him. So, to be united to Christ supposes the nuptial bond which unites the Bride to the Bridegroom as the fulness or complement of Him who fills all in all. Hence it is that when we come to Ephesians v, where marriage is spoken of, the Spirit passes from what the Church is as His Body, to what she is as His bride—the object of His heart.

NOTE E.

THE RAINBOW.

It is interesting and instructive to note the connection of the Rainbow with the rain drops, as seen in the water-works of nature. It illustrates the various glories of Christ as *reflected* by His saints on earth. Jehovah said to His servant Job, "Hath the rain a father?" as if to shew that the mighty God fathers even a drop of rain. Millions of tons of water rise from the oceans each day by evaporation and are held in vapours in the clouds, till nature's ruler

has need for them to water His garden. These clouds carry it as vapour, till it is transformed to liquid again, to be poured out on the earth as from God's bottles in view of combining with the sunshine to bring forth bread for the sower. The result is that countless myriads of drops of water are held in the clouds in such a way that when the sun shines forth, they become reflectors of His substance. It is not that one drop sparkles with one colour of the sun and other drops with other colours but that each drop becomes a microscopic picture of the whole so that all the colours of the great governing centre are reflected, that we who cannot look into the sun with the naked eye, may behold his beauty on the principle of reflection. Here then we have the beauty of moral design. As the saints share in the light of the Son of God holding the Head, His life circulates through their souls in such a way as to constitute them reflectors of His glory, so that the aggregate becomes like a beautiful Rainbow expression of the Heavenly One. See how this is put before us by the Spirit, in Colossians iii, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of **mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering ; Forbearing one another and forgiving one another**, if any man have a quarrel against any : even as Christ forgave you, **so also do ye.**" vv, 12, 13. The source of these seven graces is Christ and if we put them on, they are bound to make their presence seen and felt, so that like the rain drops reflecting the sun's colours, we are reflectors of Him. But such things might be more or less imitated by an amiable disposition, so it is added. "To all these (add) LOVE which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ preside in your hearts, to which also you have been called in one body, and be thankful." Col. iii, 14, 15. New Tran. In this way the saints are brought into the Kingdom of the Son of God's Love, and decorated by the Spirit with inwrought tapestry of skilful work as forming the House of God; the beauties and graces of Christ so wrought in them by the Spirit, that they *reflect* Him here. Thus they are the actual possessors of the precious things of heaven.

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