

THE RESURRECTION,

THE

FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.

MANY have, perhaps, been able, in looking at the Church's hope in Christ, to see the importance of the doctrine of the resurrection; but the more we search the Scriptures, the more we perceive, in this doctrine, the fundamental truth of the Gospel—that truth which gives to redemption its character, and to all other truths their real power. For instance, who does not know that Christianity has its root and its foundation in that solemn and all-important event, the death of our blessed Saviour? But if it had been possible that death could have held the Saviour in his power, death, instead of being the foundation of joy and the certainty of salvation, would have been the source of a black despair which nothing could have dissipated.

It is the resurrection which throws its bright beams even into the dark tomb of Christ, the tomb of the only righteous One, and the trophy of the apparent victory of the prince of this world. It is the resurrection which explains the reason of that momentary submission to the power of the devil and subjection to the necessary judgment of God. We see also how this truth characterizes the preaching of the Apostles. We read (Acts iv.) that the priests were "grieved that they preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." "This Jesus," said they, "hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses;" and when they were about to choose some one to fill the vacancy which the crime and death of Judas had made in the number of the Apostles, Peter, standing up in the midst of them, declared that the resurrection ought to be the solemn subject of their testimony. "Wherefore," said he, "of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was

taken up from us, must one be a witness with us of his resurrection." And not to multiply passages, St. Paul says, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins:" (1 Cor. xv.) and the whole chapter shows us the importance of the resurrection of believers, as well as that of Christ Himself—two truths indissolubly united and developed in the New Testament. And it is a remarkable thing, amidst the subtleties and resources of Satan, that as he opposed the pretended righteousness of the Pharisees to the perfect and divine righteousness of Christ our Saviour, so had he prepared the incredulity of the Sadducees to oppose this fundamental doctrine of the resurrection, preached by the Apostles who were witnesses of it. (Acts v. 17.)

It is by this doctrine of the resurrection, and by the glory which shall follow the resurrection itself, that the *foundations* and the *hopes* of the christian faith are bound together; and by the same doctrine it is that justification and that which is the power of the christian life—sanctification,* are necessarily united.

It is commonly said that the resurrection of Christ is the proof of the truth of the christian religion, and the demonstration that the work of Christ in His death was accomplished. That is indeed a truth for infidels. If we would prove the truth of Christianity to those who do not believe, the fact of the resurrection is the pivot, so to speak, on which the evidence of its truth turns. God gave it for this end. But for Christians, for those who already believe in the blessed Saviour, for those whose hope is already founded on the certainty of the Word, and who desire to find the power of that Word in their regenerate souls, the resurrection, as set forth in the Scriptures, contains much more.

The misery of the Church, and one of the consequences of her long slumber, has been to be satisfied with having, by the grace of God, recovered, as far as it is indeed the case, the

* The believer is sanctified through and in Christ; and it is his actual sanctification which is the source of all practical holiness. He is holy, and therefore is to be "holy in all manner of conversation." This principle, that God has sanctified us and that therefore we are to be holy in spirit and ways, has ever been the same. God has separated from existing evil to Himself, and then given a variety of directions to keep the so separated person in practical separation. See, as to Israel's sanctification, Lev. xx. 24—26. Sanctification now is God's separation of individuals from the world unto Himself in Christ, so that those so separated are "not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world." They are in Him as risen and sanctified in the power of a new life, if this be real in them.

truth of the completeness of the work of Christ. There Christians are too often apt to stop, or rather *in the hope* of having a part in it. We little think of searching the Word to discover the riches contained in it, to find the revelation of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, the portion and heritage of every regenerated soul.

Sometimes this indolence of the flesh excuses itself under the name of Wisdom, which would avoid speculative knowledge; sometimes even under an outward activity which has little real power, because it is *habit* and *duty*, (or at least it is the consequence of habit and duty,) and not the expression of the *life* of a soul constrained by the love of Christ acting powerfully in it. It is not thus with lively Christians: they hunger and thirst after God. And where shall they find that which shall satisfy their desires, if not in Christ, and in all the glory which is His, in the goodness and power He has shown forth, and which alone can satisfy the souls of His believing people?

St. Paul had none of those thoughts, wise as they may seem according to the flesh, when he spoke of the doctrine in question. He regarded all things as loss in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, for whom he had suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but dung, so that he might win Christ and be found in Him, not having his own righteousness, which was of the law, but that which was of faith in Christ, the righteousness of God by faith; that he might know Jesus Christ, and the power of His resurrection from among the dead. One thing he did, forgetting the things which were behind and reaching forth to those which were before, he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii.)

He found, then, in the resurrection, not only the evidence of the foundations of his faith (Rom. i. 4) and the proof of the accomplishment of the satisfaction for sin, (1 Cor. xv. 17,) but much more still. The resurrection was, to this Apostle of the faith as well as to St. Peter, the object and source of a living hope, the power of the life within. He sought to know the *power* of the resurrection. He suffered the loss of all things, if by any means he might attain unto it. If the Church has lost her life, her spiritual power, it is not by concealing from herself that which acted with such energy on the soul of the Apostle Paul, which presented itself as the dawn of blessing to the mind of Peter, that she can hope to recover it. Beloved brethren, let us then seek the truth on this point and examine the blessed Word of our God, that we

may be instructed on these powerful objects of faith; and may the Spirit of God guide us into all truth, according to His gracious promise—a promise He never fails to fulfil: let us then expect its accomplishment.

I said that the *foundation* and the *hopes* of the Christian faith are bound up together in this truth. The 15th chapter of the 1st Corinthians clearly shows the resurrection to be the object of christian hope. As it regards ourselves, the same chapter teaches us that it is also its foundation. “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.”

With regard to the person of Christ, (the fundamental truth of the whole of Christianity,) we find that He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by resurrection from the dead. (Rom. i. 4.) In the same Epistle we read, “who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” (iv. 25.) In the 8th chapter of the same Epistle we find that the glory of the risen Christ is the object of our hope. “He has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.” (ver. 29.) What can be more beautiful, more striking! The manner in which these are brought together is very clear. The Church sees Christ glorified at the right hand of God. There she sees the evidence that all has been accomplished for her, and that a righteousness belongs to her in the person of Christ, which will not defile even the throne of God. But in this glory she also sees the result of that righteousness. (See Phil. ii. 6—10.) She sees in the person of Christ the glory consequent upon it; that is to say, the glory which belongs also to the Church herself, as participating in this righteousness, by union with Christ. “The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.” Here we have the true sense of Gal. v. 5. “We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” We do not wait for righteousness, we have it already in Christ by faith. Such is specially the position of the Church. Justified by faith, but seeing in Christ not only this righteousness accomplished, but also the glory, and, so to speak, the recompence consequent upon it, we, as justified, as filled with the Spirit through which we thus behold Christ, the Spirit whose presence is the seal of that righteousness, we wait for the glory as that which belongs to us, as that which is due to the righteousness in which we participate.

The use which St. Paul makes of this truth as regards the justification of the sinner, is very remarkable; and we shall see that, by laying the resurrection as the foundation of justifica-

tion by faith, that justification is inseparably united to sanctification. In the end of the 3rd chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle had spoken of the blood of Christ, as the thing which God had proposed as the object of justifying faith. In the 4th chapter he continues the subject; and, speaking of the justification of Abraham, he proves that he was justified by faith: but the subject of his faith was, that his seed should equal the stars in number. How could such a truth as this become the subject of a justifying faith? We have the Apostle's answer: "he considered not his own body now dead," "being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, He was able also to perform; and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness; and not to him only, but to us also, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Faith, then, in the power of "God, who quickeneth the dead," was the faith that justified Abraham. St. Peter gives the same character to justifying faith. "You," says he, "who by him do believe in God that raised Him up from the dead." (1 Pet. i. 21.)

The Church sees Christ dead for the sins that she had committed: this is the end of all that she had done, as descended from the first Adam; of all that the members do, as having in them, by extraction from him, the nature of the first Adam. The amazing love of the Saviour led Him to put Himself in the place of the Church, and to become her substitute in meeting the pains of death, the just judgment of the most Holy God, and the sufferings consequent upon His wrath; a judgment which He felt in all its power, (because He was Himself holy,) even according to the power of God; wrath of which He felt all the weight, all the horror, because He loved according to the love of God. He, I say, having given Himself unto death for that object, giving up the ghost, bowed beneath the weight of our sins. Satan, the prince of this world, who had the power of death, though finding nothing in Christ to give him power over Him, rejoiced in his victory over the only just One, the only hope of the world, saying, by the mouth of his servants, "Aha! Aha!" and death boasted of having swallowed its only noble victim. But its joy was short; the triumph of the prince of darkness was but the display of his defeat. He had had to meet, not men captive in his power, in the first Adam, but the Captain of our salvation. He had had to enter into combat with Him—he had had to put forth all his power, all his strength, against Him who had taken our cause in hand. But Christ had submitted Himself to the justice of God, not to those

who persecuted Him whom God had stricken. The devil outwardly carried out the sentence, because he had the power of death over us by the judgment of God; but the sentence itself was God's justice against us; and God's justice was satisfied, and Satan's power destroyed. "Through death, he destroyed him who had the power of death." (Heb. ii. 14.)

The resurrection shone upon the world, like the rising of the sun. Faith alone beheld it, the faith of those whose eyes were opened to see the great and sure result of the combat, the consequences of this judgment of God—the faith of those whom God had chosen to give testimony to the complete victory of Him, who alone had undertaken, who alone could undertake the combat; to give testimony, I say, to a world whose blinding by Satan was clearly demonstrated. The victory was gained by Christ alone; but the Church, as the object of it, participates in all its results. It is very much to lower the position of the Church, merely to say she is blessed by Christ, blessed of God. She is blessed *with* Christ; she is the companion of His glory, the co-heir of all the promises. She has fellowship with Him who blesses; she enters into the joy of her Lord: partaker of the divine nature, she feels derivatively, and in communion with Him who is its source, the joy, the delight which the God of love finds in blessing, because He is love itself. How is it, then, that the Church participates here below in the victory of Christ, and in the fruits of that victory? It is by union with Him, who has been to every one of her members a quickening Spirit, and has quickened them and united them to Himself as members of His body.

Christ is their life, and they are rendered partakers, in virtue of their union with Him, of all the consequences of *what* He has done, of all that is in Him as risen, of all the favour in which He stands before God—a life and union which make them the objects of the satisfaction which God takes in Him, and which will make them, when the time is come, *participators* in all the glory to which He is heir, and in which He will be manifested. The Church is looked at by God, and consequently by faith also, as dead with Christ: her sins being put upon Him, the remembrance of them before God is buried in the grave of Christ. As the just God, He remembers them no more: to do so would be not to estimate aright the blood of Christ, not to be just towards Him. "He is faithful and just to forgive us."

The blood of Christ, and not our sins, is before the eyes of God. He esteems us as bought with the price of His blood.

But the saints are also looked at as risen with Christ, living before the Father in the life of Christ, chastized by the Father (who loves them perfectly as He loves the Son Himself) when they turn aside from the ways which please Him, ways suitable to such a life, to such a union. "I am the vine," said Jesus; "my Father is the husbandman." God righteously regards us in Christ, as perfect before Him as Christ Himself is perfect—our sins gone in the cross. In love He chastens us as being in Christ, when we do not walk in His ways according to the power of the risen Christ, as inheritors of the glory which He inherited in resurrection.

The Scriptures speak thus on the subject: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." (Col. i. 12, 13.)

"Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col. ii. 12—15.) The victory of Satan over the first Adam rendered him master of his possessions and of his inheritance: "The creature is subject to vanity." The victory of the second Adam over Satan spoiled him of all that which he had taken from the first Adam.

God, in the loving-kindness and wisdom of his counsels, has not yet manifested the results; but the victory is fully gained. The Church knows it—at least she ought to know it. The consequences to us are these: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. iii. 1—4.) The prayer of the Apostle for the Ephesians on the same subject, runs thus:—"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling," the calling of the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, (He is called the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, because Christ is regarded as head of the

Church and as man,) “and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” And when we “were dead in sins,” continues the Spirit by the mouth of the Apostle, “he hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. i. 2.) The saints, then, are regarded by God as risen with Christ, and consequently as perfectly justified from all their sins. They are clean, according to the cleanness with which Christ appears before God, being presented to God in Him and with Him. But how does the saint actually now participate in blessings so great? It is by partaking of that life, in the power of which Christ is risen. Thus it is, then, that by the doctrine of the resurrection, as it is set forth in the Scriptures, justification and sanctification become necessarily united; thus it is that I share in the righteousness of God, by being quickened with the life in which Christ was raised from the dead, coming up out of the grave all our trespasses being forgiven. But this life is the life of holiness here below. It is the source of holiness in us: it is holiness itself, the life of God in us. It is in this that we have the will to belong to God, acknowledging the grace which has redeemed us, and convinced that our life is not of us but of God. It is in the power of this life that we seek the things which are above, which are in Christ and which are His, that our affections are carried out towards God; and in this consists true sanctification, the old man being judged as dead, because Christ has died on account of it. “The body is dead on account of sin”—that is its only fruit—“the spirit is life because of righteousness.” Christ then, in giving us the life, which is a new and holy nature in us, makes us partakers of all that He has done for us as risen from the dead, and of all His acceptance before the Father of glory.

Moreover, we cannot rightly estimate sin but by the resurrection, and for this reason, it is the doctrine of the resurrection, and of our being raised with Christ, which teaches us that we were

dead in sin. Otherwise it would perhaps be a healing, an amelioration of man such as he is, a preservation from death by the help of Christ, a troubling of the waters, that we might plunge into them ourselves and be healed. In this way it is, that the natural man looks at the extent of sin, as the Jews, and Martha and Mary expressed it, when they said, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died?"

But if we have been raised with Christ, it is because we were *dead* in our sins. The doctrine of our entire misery, our complete fall, flows from, and (so to speak) springs out of, this truth: and the blessing is proportionate; for death is passed, and everything that belongs to the old man is dead, through faith, with Him. We have another life quite new, in which we live, saying, "We are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh."

There is another consequence, namely, the feeling of the entire favour of God attached to the idea of being a son; "the grace in which we stand." Having entered by the cross, we stand in the favour of God in the holy place; having received, not the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption, we cry, "Abba Father!" Our participation in the resurrection is our being born of God. As delivered from our sins, because Christ was delivered for them, we stand before God as His children, His accepted ones, His holy ones. Love was manifested towards us, in that Christ came to die for us on the earth. Love is accomplished towards us in that we are in Him, such as He is before God, even in this world, because we are united to Him by the Spirit He has given us. Our filial relation to the Father, as being purified from sin, clothed with the robe of righteousness, a relation which gives joy to the soul, flows from this doctrine. He has given us the privilege to become children of God—not servants, but children. Here then are some sweet results from this truth, which exist even here; our union with Christ is the foundation: we may follow these results, even as regards our body, into the glory. The resurrection of Christ is the first-fruits, that of the saints the harvest. There is an intimate connexion between the resurrection of the saints and the resurrection of Christ, on account of the union of the Church with Him, because of the one Spirit which is the Spirit of Christ, and which dwells in Him and in all the members of His body.

It is not thus with regard to the wicked, although it is the power of Christ which raises them; yet it is not because

of union with Him, nor by His Spirit dwelling in them; for the Spirit does not dwell in them: therefore actual resurrection is a thing which belongs to the saints, as the full accomplishment, in result, of their union with Christ, not as a necessary preliminary to their judgment; indeed Christ has already been judged for them and suffered the penalty of all their sins.

The resurrection of the saints is the consequence of their having passed through the judgment of their sins in Christ, not the preliminary to their judgment by Christ.

It is the reception by Christ of the Church, who suffered with Him, that she might be in the glory with Him in His kingdom. As in John xiv., "In my Father's house are many mansions," Christ is not gone there to be alone: "If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This is the judgment of the Church at the return of Christ. They are manifested before His judgment seat, but already glorified. This does not deny a difference of glory among the saints, that some will be on His right hand and others on His left in His kingdom; it only shews that the resurrection of the saints is the result of the accomplishment of their judgment in Christ, and the full completeness of the life which she already possesses as risen with Him, the effect of the union of the saints with Him, as dwelt in by the same Spirit. It is necessary that when Christ is manifested, the bodies of those who are His should also enjoy the privileges of the kingdom, as part of that which He has purchased; thus delivering them completely and finally from the power of Satan and of death. "If the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead," says the Apostle to the Romans, "dwell in you, he who raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in you;"—a passage which evidently reveals to us, that the resurrection of the saints is a consequence of the resurrection of Christ; that, in fact, the resurrection of the Church is a consequence of the interest which God takes in her, as He does in Christ her Head. We shall see then that many passages manifest this special place of the saints in the resurrection, and that the Scriptures speak of the resurrection of the Church as a thing entirely distinct from the resurrection of the wicked. In this manner, St. Paul, in a passage already quoted, says, (Phil. iii.,) "if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead." (ἐξανάστασιν.) Also in 1 Cor. xv., "Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they

that are Christ's at his coming." In the 20th chapter of St. Luke we find, in one of our Lord's discourses on this subject, that the existence of the relation between God and Abraham necessarily supposed the resurrection, not merely the life of his separated spirit. Many other passages declare also this truth, and moreover that this resurrection was a thing which belonged exclusively to the children of God. He speaks of "those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain the resurrection from the dead." How are they found worthy to obtain the resurrection, if the resurrection is a thing common to the saints and to the world; in a word, if the saints and the world are raised together? The Lord adds, "Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." See how the power of the resurrection is identified with this privilege of being children of God. The subject is treated of in a connected manner in John v. 21: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all should honour the Son even as they honour the Father Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life and shall not come into the judgment, but is passed from death unto life The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection *of life*; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection *of judgment*." Here are two great means of upholding and of vindicating the glory of the humbled Son. He quickens—He judges. He quickens and the Father quickens also. He alone judges—the Father judges no man.

The saints are quickened in order to have fellowship with the Father and the Son. Christ, in judgment, claims and maintains His glory, and His right over all those who have neglected Him, or who were opposed to His glory, in order that all, even the wicked, should honour the Son as they honour the Father.

To this end we find that there are two resurrections; the resurrection unto life, that is to say, the fulfilment of His work in the quickening of the saints, applying to their bodies the power of the resurrection, which had already been applied to their souls, when they were regenerated, and the resurrection unto judgment, in order that those who have done evil should be judged. I do not here speak of the interval; but I

merely say that there are two resurrections, which are different, as well in their objects and character, as in the persons who will take part in them. I will just remark, by the way, that the expression on which those who object to the interpretation which supposes an interval of time between these two resurrections rest their opinions, has in no respect the force which they attach to it. The Lord says, "The hour is coming." 'See,' say they, 'a proof that the resurrection of the just and the unjust will take place at the same time,' forgetting that the Lord uses the same word in the 25th verse to specify the time of His ministry, and, at the least, 1800 years of a new period which commenced at His resurrection.

These two characters of the two resurrections, of which I have spoken, are very important, and distinguish in every sense these two events. The one, that of the saints who have suffered with Christ, being the application to our bodies of the power of the life of Christ, who has saved us in order to accomplish His word toward us—resurrection being the redemption of the body, and the consequence of what Christ did when He saved us from the judgment; the other, the vindicating His glory in judgment, and the exercise of the justice of the living God against all those who have sinned. The first resurrection consequently is that which we anxiously wait for, to the end that we may be with Him, and, when Christ appears, we may also appear with Him in glory—an epoch which the whole creation is expecting. See Rom. viii. 19, where it is called "the manifestation of the sons of God," "the glorious liberty of the children of God." There is a passage in the Scripture which has struck me much on this subject, and which conveys a special instruction on the difference there is between viewing the resurrection as an event common to the Church and the world, or as a privilege which belongs separately to the Church in consequence of the power of the life which is in Christ. I speak of the 11th chapter of St. John. Jesus says to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Here is real faith, a truth she had well learnt. She was not a Sadducee. This is the faith of the Church generally; "he will rise again at the last day." Without doubt. The same thing might be said of the most wicked man. "Jesus said unto her, I *am* the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?—that is, the power of Jesus when present, the power which He will manifest when

He comes again. "She saith unto him, Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Here again is a good confession; those who are saved doubtless believe it also. But here, in fact, the faith of the greatest part of the Church stops. "And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee." *Why did she do this?* why so much haste to quit Jesus, that good Comforter, and to call her sister? Was there not the secret consciousness that she could not hold converse with Jesus on subjects such as these? She believed Him to be the Son of God; but "I am the resurrection and the life" was something too deep for her; her heart was not at ease in the company of Jesus speaking thus. And have we nothing similar to this? Are not the sweetest, the most blessed privileges of the Church, too often the things which send the children of God away? They are not at their ease when Christ speaks of such things. They must go and seek some Mary. It is a call for some other person than for them. What were the different characters of these two women, both loved of the Lord? "A woman named Martha received Him into her house; and she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving." The heart of Martha was not at ease, through her want of communion with Jesus, and could not enter into the most blessed and encouraging truths in the things which the heart of Jesus, full of consoling power, poured forth to relieve the miseries by which it was broken. To understand them was beyond the habits of Martha's mind; and saying all that she could say in answer to Jesus, she goes to seek some one who, her conscience tells her, is more capable of understanding that which had just proceeded from the heart of Jesus—more capable of maintaining communion with Him and of sustaining a conversation which was painful to herself, because her spiritual understanding *was unequal to it*. How often is Martha's state called wisdom? How often are the things with which the heart of Jesus overflows—the revelations of our blessing—designated things likely to trouble the Church, perhaps even regarded as reveries. How often does the Church persist in remaining in darkness, fleeing from Jesus and His goodness, to conceal from herself her incapacity of communion with Him in these things—satisfied with herself, because she can make the confession of Martha, because she can say with her, "Yea, Lord, thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the

world!" "I am rich, I have need of nothing." Poor Church—yes, poor, every one of us! May the love of Jesus shine upon thee! O may He give thee such confidence in His love that thou mayest never tire of drawing from His heart those sweet truths which are enclosed therein—truths which attach the soul to Him and which give strength of soul to walk in the world, separated in heart unto Him—truths which give power to that secret communion with Him which will make us faithful in His absence, joyful in His presence, calm in soul in the midst of all the misery of a world ruined by death, hastening to run towards Him when we hear these sweet words, "The Master is come and calleth for thee." Be it so, O Jesus our Lord. Deign, O deign to look upon thy Church, thy poor Church, who loves thee and whom thou lovest. If she is weak, O strengthen her: if she has turned aside, O God, she loves thee. Bring her, O bring her back to thyself, even to thyself—her blessedness and her joy, her eternal joy, her Saviour and her strength. Bring her near to thee. Where can she find that which shall renew her strength, if not in thee, who art the resurrection and the life?

One thing only remains to finish the sketch which I have attempted to make of this important subject. I well know that, far from having exhausted, I have but slightly touched upon it.

With respect to the dispensations of God, the resurrection is the fundamental subject of the word of God, since sin and death entered into the world, and sin reigns unto death. If sin reigns unto death, then resurrection only can be the victory over it; and it is a complete and final victory. For he that is dead is free or justified from sin: "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him." (Rom. vi. 7—9.) Throughout the Scriptures we find this truth more or less fully disclosed—the foundation of every hope *and* of all moral judgment (see Ps. xvii., xlix. Isa. xxxviii.) And even the restoration of the Jewish people is described as a resurrection (see Ezek. xxxvii.; Isa xxvi.) There is the source of joy, as in Ps. xvi., Job xix. And it was a truth so positive—a notion so necessary to the thoughts of God and of His righteous ones, that when God said, "I am the God of Abraham," the Lord explains it as shewing that Abraham was to be raised; for "God is not the God of the dead but of the living." (Matt. xxii. 32.) I said that one thing only remained. It is generally thought that the 20th chapter of

the Revelation is the only support which the word of God gives to the notion of a separate resurrection of the Church. We have already seen that this idea is connected with all the truths in the word of God.

That the saints will rise when Christ comes, is a thing acknowledged, as we have seen. (1 Cor. xv. 23; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 15—17.) In the Apocalypse, xix., xx. we get the details; there we see that the resurrection of the saints will precede, by a thousand years, the resurrection of the rest of the dead, in order that they who have suffered with Christ, should also reign with Him when He takes the kingdom, and that they should appear with Him in glory when He appears who is their life. This is the important and striking completion of this great truth—a completion which crowns with results so important, a truth, which having its root in the lower parts of the earth, that is, in the grave of Christ, drawing its strength from the life of God, stretches out its branches, and lifts its glorious head towards heaven, covering with its spreading boughs all the inhabitants of a blest earth—the tree of life, from which are gathered the fruits of all the promises of God.

Christian, do you know the power of the resurrection of Christ? Are your thoughts those of one who is risen with Him, set on things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God? Is your salvation a thing accomplished for your soul, so that in the perfect confidence of a new life before God, you can, under the conduct of the good Shepherd, as sheep known of the Lord, go in and out and find good pasture in the fields of His delight? Are you, as being raised up with Him, dead to sin, dead to the pleasures, to the greatness, to the fading glory of a world which crucified the Lord of glory? Do the things of the world exercise no longer an influence over your thoughts—over your life; those things which, as far as man was concerned, caused the death of Jesus? Do you not desire to be something in the world? Ah! you do not hold yourselves for dead; the darkness which surrounded the cross is still upon your hearts; you do not breathe the fresh air of the resurrection of Jesus, of the presence of your God. Oh, dull and senseless people of God!—people ignorant of your real treasures, of your real liberty! Yes, to be alive with Christ is to be dead to all that the flesh desires.

But if the risen life of Christ, the joy of the light of His presence, the divine and tender love, of which Jesus is the expression and the object, beam on you—if the beauty of

holiness in the heavenly places—if the universal and perfect homage rendered to God by hearts which never tire, whose adorations serve but to renew their strength—if all things full of the glory of God, giving occasion to praises whose source never dries up and whose subjects never fail—if these things please you, then mortify your members which are upon the earth. “Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels the general assembly, and to the Church of the first-born who are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” And think you that the honours, the glory, the greatness, the pleasures, the lusts of this world, of which Satan is the prince, can enter there? The gate is too narrow—the gate of death, the death of a crucified and rejected Christ—the gate of death, which, if it be deliverance from the guilt of sin, is also deliverance from its yoke. By that gate sin enters not—there must be left all that pertains to the flesh. Those are things which cannot be hid with Christ in God: they have played their part by crucifying Him on earth.

The friendship of the world is enmity with God.—Christian, do you believe this? It is a new life which enters into those holy places, where all things are new, in order to be the joy and enjoyment of a risen people. Christian, Christian, death has written its sentence on all things here: by cherishing them you only fill his hand. The resurrection of Christ gives you a right to bury them, and to bury death itself with them in the grave, the grave of Christ; that “whether we live we may live unto God,” inheritors with Him, in a new life, of all the promises. Remember, that if you are saved, you are risen with Christ. May He, from whom all grace and every perfect gift proceeds, grant you this!

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