

GOD'S GLORIOUS GOSPEL

BY H. D'A. C.

STOW HILL BIBLE AND TRACT DEPOT,
22, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4.

CONTENTS

1. THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.
2. THE GOSPEL OF THE CHRIST.
3. THE GREATNESS OF THE GOSPEL OF GOD.
4. THE KINDNESS OF GOD.
5. GOD'S DELIGHT IN MEN.
6. THE TRIUMPHAL DEPARTURE OF THE SON
OF GOD.
7. GOD'S MARVELLOUS GRACE; OR, THE CHIEF
OF SINNERS.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

- “When I see **THE BLOOD**, I will pass over you.”—**EXODUS** xii. 13.
- “The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is **THE BLOOD WHICH MAKETH ATONEMENT** for the soul. For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof. . . . **THE LIFE OF ALL FLESH IS THE BLOOD** thereof.”—**LEVITICUS** xvii. 11, 14.
- “Redeemed . . . with **THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained (foreknown) before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe on God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.”—**I PETER** i. 18-21.
- “The **BLOOD** of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”—**I JOHN** i. 7.

I DESIRE to write a few lines on this exceedingly precious theme—**THE BLOOD, THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST**. Every believer is cleansed by it from all sin, and the church of God has been purchased at this costly price—“the blood of his own (Son)” (**Acts** xx. 28, **N. Tr.**).

Scripture speaks of it as **PRECIOUS** blood, and so do all true Christians, but perhaps many little understand what the blood really means, and why it is so precious. The truth is: **THE BLOOD IS THE LIFE**. Jesus gave His life for us! His blood speaks of that life given up for us. As we

read in Matthew xx. 28, "The Son of man came not to be ministered to but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." To understand the value of His blood, we must consider the value of His life, and also the glory of His Person. What a life was His! The lives of all men that ever lived if valued all together would be as nothing in comparison with the life of Jesus. What real value is there in the life of a sinner? What does God get from it? What gain does he bring to God? God is not in all his thoughts. He lives for himself, not for God. From his infancy to his death, he brings no pleasure to God, for he does his own will and leaves God out. How, then, can his life be precious to God? He is "unprofitable" (Rom. iii. 12). God gains nothing from him during his life, and nothing when he dies. How can one call his blood precious, if his life was not precious? Nor could his blood atone for his soul, nor for the soul of another. **ONLY THE BLOOD OF JESUS CAN MAKE ATONEMENT FOR OUR SOULS.** His life was altogether different from ours.

After 4000 years of human history, in which men lived and died without God, with the exception of those who were converted, came at last into this world **A MAN OUT OF HEAVEN**, God's own dear Son! Oh! What a contrast He was from all who had come before! At last God had a Man down here in flesh and blood who was His constant delight. In outward appearance He was like men around Him, but in life quite different. He was absolutely without sin, always holy and righteous and infinitely blessed. From His infancy upwards He was here entirely for the pleasure of God. God

was in all His thoughts. Every thought was right and pure and holy, every word the same and every act. Never did He conceive an evil thought, and never had He to repent of anything sinful and wrong. What a sight for all heaven it was—One who was really Man, but who, unlike us, ever did the will of God and lived to please Him !

At His baptism and just before He began His wonderful public ministry, the heaven opened upon Him and the Spirit descended upon Him in a bodily shape like a dove, and the Father's voice was heard giving testimony to what His life had been and to the pleasure it had given to God : "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." No man was ever honoured like that, nor could be, for every other man was a sinner and needed a Saviour, **THE LIVES OF ALL MEN PUT TOGETHER HAD NOT THE VALUE THAT HIS LIFE HAD !** His blood, therefore, is more valuable than the blood of all men. Its value is infinite, and only His blood can make atonement.

Then think a moment of His public service. What a service of love it was ! He manifested in it a sympathy and love for man never seen in any man before. He served the most wretched and sinful. He encouraged them to repent and turn to God, who was ready to forgive all who did so. He manifested the kindness and love of God to man. What alleviation, too, He brought from sickness and suffering ! He would enter a city, heal on every hand, and leave not a sick person in it, for we read, "He healed all their sick." Disciples followed Him and hung upon His words from day to day,

for no one ever spoke like Jesus. Women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities accompanied Him in His blessed service, forgetting their own interests and ministering to Him of their substance. Publicans and sinners would listen to Him who would listen to no one else, such was His grace, and loving interest in men whom others thought to be hopelessly lost. Wherever He went He made God known in His kindness and love to man.

He did all this in the presence of heartless religious people who prided themselves in their imagined goodness and righteousness and knew not God, and opposed and despised God's greatest Servant, His own dear Son! What a world! Even in its best character, its religious, it is utterly opposed to God revealed in grace, in His beloved Son!

Soon the sorrowful and astounding news was spread on every hand: HE IS DEAD! They have crucified Him! What a shock that must have been to those who loved Him! I could understand some of His disciples, who were not present, saying: Impossible! He was far too blessed to die! Surely God would never allow Him to die? But the sorrowful report was soon confirmed; He was really dead, and a cruel soldier had pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water, proving that He had been dead some time. Perhaps you say: But why did God allow it? Could He not have prevented it? Yes, indeed He could, but, in His great love to us, He would not, and Jesus did not wish it, for HE CAME TO DIE. Otherwise Jesus would have been alone in glory. But God wanted MANY SONS, and Jesus wanted

MANY BRETHREN, and this was impossible unless Jesus died for us and bore our sins. Yea, He did more, for in His own death He brought our sinful life to an end in judgment in the sight of God.

The human life of Jesus, as He had it in flesh and blood, was really ended, it was given up in sacrifice for us! Never again will God have His dear Son in a condition of flesh and blood, never again will He be lower than angels. He was once, for He took part in flesh and blood, though, of course, with Him it was not sinful flesh, for He was absolutely holy, and He did so in order to die for us. Is it not wonderful that God could give His only-begotten Son for us?

What a terrible demand upon God that must have been, to give up One who every day brought Him such pleasure! At last God had a Man, and that Man His own dear Son who gave Him constant, yea, infinite delight. What perfect dependence and confidence in God there was in Jesus as He lay down to sleep on the mountain side, having nowhere to lay His head! What a life of prayer was His and of holy intercourse with God! Is it possible that God could ever allow such a blessed life to terminate? Will He never again see His Son asleep on the mountain, or in a boat in perfect confidence in His Father's love and care? NEVER. But did He not rise again the third day? Yes, indeed He did, thank God, and to die no more. But He was no longer in flesh and blood. The blood was shed. He spoke of Himself when risen as having "flesh and bones," not "flesh and blood."

He rose again in the power of life, in a new and

higher order of manhood according to God's eternal counsels before the world was, in a life that is not dependent upon blood or a breath, but which in its nature is eternal. He is no longer in a condition of human life which is "lower than angels," He is far above them, as He personally always was, and soon we shall be, too—that is, all we who "look for the Saviour, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." His precious human life as once seen in the days of His flesh was given up as an atoning sacrifice, and Christ after the flesh will never be seen again. The Scripture clearly says, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth KNOW WE HIM NO MORE."

Never again will God see His own dear Son walking on this earth, breathing the breath of human life, for that life has gone, and gone in sacrifice for us who believe in Him. What a sacrifice! Who can tell its value? for He sacrificed HIMSELF. All the value of His human and spotless life and the glory of His Person gives character to that holy sacrifice.

When Christ was under the judgment of God on the cross, God saw us there, who believe in Him, under that judgment in the Person of His dear Son, for He died in our stead and bore our sins, and suffered the Just for the unjust. In His death God saw our death and our total end as sinners when Christ's holy human life came to an end in death. Now in Christ risen from the dead and glorified, God brings us, who believe in Him, into His own presence without a cloud and without a stain, without any charge of sin against us, but holy and

without blame before Him in love. Never again will He regard us as sinners. The precious blood of Jesus has cleansed us for ever in the eye of God.

Though God has no longer His dear Son in flesh and blood, He has Him again in a new and far better way in His risen and glorified condition, and He is no longer alone, but associated with all those whom He has redeemed at the cost of His precious blood. **THUS GOD HAS GAINED IMMENSELY BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON.** For though He has no longer His dear Son here on earth in flesh and blood—**HE HAS HIM IN GLORY** and **HE IS THE VERY SAME JESUS**, though in a higher and more glorious condition of life in which He is the Head and Centre of a vast host of redeemed ones, redeemed by His blood, who will soon join in the universal song—Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!

Yet no beautiful grace has been lost by the death of Jesus; He has brought all His blessed and beautiful grace through into resurrection. He is the same Jesus, though changed and glorified, and soon our bodies, too, will be changed and made like unto His.

It is true He gave up His life, in which He so glorified God, and fully glorified Him in doing so, but He has taken it again in a new and blessed way in which we can be with Him for ever as His brethren and as God's sons! This could never have been if He had not given His blood for us.

The Jewish sacrifices had long typified the death of Jesus. But there was no blood like His, and "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." The contrast is very

great, as we read in Hebrews ix. 13, 14 : “ For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer . . . sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh (i.e., in an outward way) ; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ? ”

Notice carefully that it says : **HE OFFERED HIMSELF**, and He did so “ **THROUGH THE ETERNAL SPIRIT** ” ; in the power of the Holy Spirit He offered an offering of such infinite value—**HIMSELF**. The same chapter speaks of Him as having appeared in the end of the world or age, to put away sin by **THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF**. Who but God Himself could estimate the value of such an offering ? for it was God’s own dear Son who was here in flesh, in human life, and no less a Person than He, offered Himself !

Why, then, should anyone doubt the value of that sacrifice or delay to shelter beneath the efficacy of His atoning blood ?

We get help as to the blood from the history of the children of Israel as recorded in Exodus xii. On that terrible night in Egypt when God was about to destroy all the firstborn in the land, He saved His own people Israel in a wonderful way. Every household was told to take a lamb without blemish and without spot, a male of the first year, and to keep it in the house four days, from the 10th of the first month till the 14th. Then it was to be slain, and its blood sprinkled on the two side posts of the houses and upon the upper doorpost, and God said : “ And the blood shall be to you for

a token upon the houses where ye are ; and WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD, I WILL PASS OVER YOU, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

Was not this a wonderful salvation for the people of God ! But WHAT DID THOSE FOUR DAYS MEAN in which the little lamb was in the house ? During this time the whole house, even the little children, had full opportunity of noticing how spotless the lamb was, and how harmless and inoffensive, and so tender and gentle ! How the children must have delighted in it ! But on the fourth day of its being in their house the father would have to tell his eldest boy that he was going to slay the little lamb that day !

I can think of that firstborn son replying : " Oh no, father, you surely will not slay it, for it is the delight of the house, and so spotless and gentle and tender. It has done us no harm, but has only given us pleasure. Why do you want to slay it, father ? " But the father would have to reply : " But if I don't slay it, God will slay you this night when He slays all the firstborn in the land, and He has provided this simple way of escape." How quickly, then, would the son rejoin : " Oh, father, then slay the lamb and sprinkle the blood on the door posts."

With what peace and comfort would that family rest in that night of judgment and feed on the roast lamb that had been slain and whose blood prevented God from entering in to destroy ! That spotless lamb is a beautiful figure of Christ as the Lamb of God, by whose precious blood all who trust in Him are redeemed and safe from the

judgment of God which awaits the unsaved. Now we see the meaning of those four days. They were days of testimony to what the lamb was like. So God has given us **THE FOUR EVANGELISTS** who give adequate testimony to the Lamb of God and to His beautiful and spotless life.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, before relating His death, devote most of their pages to telling us of His wonderful life and service, and of the grace and love manifested in Him, the meek and lowly One, who was so gentle and full of tenderness and sympathy and so inoffensive, that it could be said this man has done nothing amiss. John also in every page brings out the glory of His Person, for He was God's only-begotten Son. How astonishing, then, that One so blessed and so glorious should actually die and give up a life that was infinitely precious! How all true Christians love to sing that He died for them, and with the apostle Paul to say, He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.

How could we wish that He was still here in that lowly human life and had never died, when we know it was the giving up of that beautiful and infinitely valuable life that has made atonement. In His death the man (myself) who was sinful and beyond any possibility of improvement, and only deserving of judgment, passed away in judgment in the death of Jesus, and will never be seen again. Christ "after the flesh" will never be known or seen again as such. He died and in His death we died, too, but in Christ risen and glorified we have a place of eternal favour and love in the presence of God. What a God! and what a Saviour!

It is impossible to over-estimate the value of the

blood of Jesus, if we at all enter into the value to God of His holy and beautiful human life and the glory of His Person as the "only-begotten Son of God." That such a One should die for us, and give up as an atoning sacrifice His precious life, must involve the greatest possible consequences. The Gospel can be preached to every creature throughout the whole world, and the greatest possible blessing belongs to all who receive it.

How unspeakably great was the love of God to send His dear Son into such a world of wickedness, and then after Jesus had pleased Him and glorified Him far beyond all others, to give Him up for us all! What amazing love on the part of God to give His Son, and what precious love on the part of Jesus to give His blessed life for us, and what infinite grace on the part of the eternal Spirit, the Holy Ghost, through whom He offered Himself in our behalf to God, a sacrifice of infinite value, infinitely greater than anything ever known! Jesus alone was the precious Sufferer, but all three Persons in the Godhead had their part in it. It was God who gave Him, it was His Son who died, it was through the eternal Spirit that Jesus offered this holy offering, Himself!

What part, dear reader, have you in all this? Your only part is to believe what God has done, and put your whole trust in Him who died for you, and whose precious blood has infinite value, and cleanseth us who believe in Him from all sin. It is due to God, and due to Christ, that you should at once avail yourself of His atoning sacrifice and definitely come to Jesus now, and commit yourself to Him for ever. If you do so, you will find He

wants you far more than you want Him, that He could not and will not refuse you, for He paid the greatest possible price, His precious blood, to have you, and redeem you and fit you to be with Himself for ever in eternal glory.

You simply must not, on any account whatever, refuse such a Saviour, or delay to come to Him. Remember that "DEATH HAS PASSED UPON ALL MEN, for that all have sinned." Our lives were forfeited because of sin, but HIS LIFE WAS NOT FORFEITED, IT WAS GIVEN FOR US! He was no sinner, no sin was in Him, He knew no sin, but, thank God, He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," but Jesus was not amenable to either death or judgment, yet, thank God, He went under the judgment of God for us, and died in our behalf! He who did so has "abolished" or brought to nothing "death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel."

He who went into death had the power and right to make it null and void for all who believe, Jesus was too great a Person to be vanquished by death. HE HAS ANNULLED DEATH FOR ALL WHO TRUST IN HIM. By His death He completely vanquished death and robbed it of its sting, and proved Himself victorious by rising again. For all who trust in Him DEATH IS NO MORE!

Will you not, then, come to Him in faith, and thank Him that, when He died, you died, and that in His judgment God saw your judgment, and that when His spotless human life was given up in

sacrifice, it was for you, so that when His life was given up, and came to an utter end in judgment, it was *your* life He brought to an end, and if you believe, you can say He died for *me*. In His death the man under judgment (myself or yourself) went in judgment from the eye of God, and God is satisfied. Will not you be too?

Believing in Him who died for you and rose again, you are completely sheltered by His blood from the judgment of God. You will delight to think how, in the giving up of His life, your life as a sinner came to an end in judgment, and you will enter into the meaning of those words of the apostle Paul: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I (or no longer I) but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

One word more as to **THE HOLY CLAIM OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS** on all who believe. We read, "He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." The claims of His blood are very great. If His blood means that He has brought our sinful life to an end in judgment, would it be right for us to continue that life of sin and shame, of pride and vanity?

HIS BLOOD SPEAKS LOUDLY TO US. It says, as it were, "Your life was ended and judged for ever on Calvary's Cross; then, don't continue it, but live to God." Does not the apostle Peter exhort us "no longer to live the rest of our life to the lusts of men, but to the will of God"? He

says too, "The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, etc." The apostle Paul, too, says: "Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body."

Loud, then, indeed, is the demand of the blood of Jesus, that we should discontinue our lives of lust and pride, and live for the pleasure of God. It, as it were, says: "If Jesus died for you, then you have died"; and perhaps we reply, "Yes, thank God." Can we not, then, hear the Lord replying, "Then don't revive the life of sin, but walk in the Spirit which has been given to you." Walking in that Spirit, it is impossible to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Our life of sin has been forfeited and has gone, so far as the judgment of it is concerned, in the death of Jesus; how unrighteous, then, if we seek to continue that life which cost Jesus His precious blood, to bring to an end!

The claims of His blood are upon us every day, that we should constantly live to Him who died for us, and rose again, and who now in heaven ever lives to make intercession for us, and thus save us right through till we are with Him in glory.

May we, with all His redeemed ones, appreciate more and more the precious blood of Jesus and ever recognize its holy claims upon us!

"NOTHING but the precious blood
Can give lasting peace with God,
For the soul so dark, so stained with sin, so dead,
There is nothing can atone,
But the blood of Christ alone,
Blood which Christ in love for guilty sinners shed.

* " Trusting in that precious blood,
There is perfect peace with God ;
Saved for glory, wondrous story,
Saved through Jesus' precious blood.

" On the ground of that shed blood,
All believers come to God,
Boldly enter e'en the Holiest of all ;
Spotless stand before the throne,
Through the blood which doth atone,
And at Jesus' feet in praise and worship fall.*

" In that Robe of spotless white,
They are perfect in His sight ;
And, in Christ, become the Righteousness of God ;
' They have boldness in ' that day,'
For as Christ is, so are they,
And their sins were fully met by Jesus' blood.*

" Soon will come that glorious day,
When with joy Christ will display,
That the saints and He are ever joined in one ;
When in brilliancy and light,
They will share His glory bright,
And will sit with Christ Himself upon the throne."*

H. D'A. C.

THE GOSPEL OF THE CHRIST

LUKE iv. 16-22, 29-31 ; xxiii, 35-43 ; xxiv. 26-27,
46-48 ; ACTS ii. 36-44.

WHAT I desire, dear friends, to bring before you is Christ, because it is Christ who is the glad tidings of God for man.

This world was in utter darkness, and had got far from God, when God SHONE FORTH IN A MAN, AND THAT MAN HIS OWN SON. The gospel, I say, is Christ, and it is glorious in the extreme, there is not one weak point in it. The only glad tidings for the human race is Christ—the Anointed One—the Man anointed of God, His own dear Son. There was just one Man who came into this world from God and brought light and blessing here. That one Man was Christ. When He came, He brought in revival in a wonderful way. He appeared at a moment when the world was dying out, and no man could be found to bring in revival. During the first four thousand years, from the fall of Adam till the birth of Christ, no man had ever arisen who had the power to save from sin and death. By this time all hope in man had gone ; the nations were sunk in darkness and degradation, and the Jews, lifted up with pride, sought by external religion to hide the exceeding wickedness of their hearts, and establish their own righteousness.

God, from the moment of man's fall in the garden of Eden, promised a Saviour. God made man for

His pleasure, and He must have man. He cannot be baffled by Satan, nor can He be disappointed in having for Himself what He has set His heart upon. In the very garden of Eden, in the presence of Adam and Eve, God as it were preached the gospel, for He announced that the seed of the woman should crush the head of the serpent and that the serpent should crush His heel. That meant that if sin and death had come in by the woman, a woman should give birth to One who would crush the serpent's head and deliver man. Four thousand years passed by, and at last Christ appeared, born in a miraculous way, "the seed of the woman" according to promise.

Then the time came for His ministry, and in the fourth chapter of Luke we find Him in the synagogue at Nazareth. He stood up to read, and read that glorious passage in Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor," etc. And the gospel was there, at that very moment, in their midst, embodied in a Man! HE HIMSELF WAS THE GOSPEL, for He was the Christ. Jesus is God's glad tidings to men, and He was anointed for that very purpose—to evangelize the poor.

Who are the poor? They are the poor *in spirit*, and there seem to be very few of them to-day. Many who are outwardly poor ignore the gospel and are too proud to own their need of Christ. They fancy themselves too rich in their own goodness and works of righteousness to need a Saviour. They take no notice of the fact that, without God and without Christ, there is positively no hope for any human being, and that "by the deeds of the

law there shall no flesh be justified." We are living in very evil days, when an enormous number of people are giving up Christianity. But though they have the profession of Christianity, they never really had Christ. Alas! many young people are affected by what is around, for they find people on all sides putting Christ, as it were, into a corner, ignoring Him, and many maintaining that there is nothing in Christianity worth looking at. Now what I desire to impress upon you is, that instead of there being nothing in Christianity, everything is in it, or rather in Him.

Christ was accustomed to go to the synagogue in Nazareth in His childhood, and now He gets up to read that Scripture written some seven hundred years before, but never fulfilled till that day: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

At those words we read, "He closed the book, and gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." It might not have looked like it, if we go by outward appearances, but it was true that the long promised anointed Man was there in their midst. And God made no mistake, He anointed the right Man. **AGAIN, HE HAS ONLY ANOINTED ONE MAN TO BE THE GOSPEL FOR THE POOR.** He has not anointed two Christs.

No one else was equal to the work that Christ had to do. God does not make it difficult for us to choose, for He has only offered us one Christ, and He has distinguished Him from every other man that ever lived.

If there are any difficulties in your mind as to Jesus being the Christ, it is not the fault of God. Christianity is the plainest thing that has ever been presented to the mind and heart of man. It is plain not only for the scholar and the great, but even for the simplest child. The seeming difficulty that the One who was anointed came in humiliation and in poverty is no real difficulty at all. Christ could not possibly have accepted any position in this world, for the world was opposed morally to all that He was. He had nothing to say to its pride and lust. Also He took a position here on earth where the poorest could get at Him. It is much more difficult to get access to the rich and great than it is to the poor; a poor man anyone can approach, and Christ put Himself within reach of all. The poorest could take knowledge of Him, and all sorts of people took notice of Him, but the more He was examined and tested, the more it became evident that He was truly the Christ. Nothing questionable or wrong could be found in Him or in His testimony; His spirit and ways, His words and actions, all proved He was the Anointed of God.

Christ came into the world in a way no other man did, or could, and purposely so, for it was God's way of bringing salvation to us. He came from heaven. It was God's Son who became Man. A man who is like ourselves would be of no use to us,

because he is a sinner, and was born a sinner. We needed a Man out of heaven. Christ coming as He did, though truly man, was morally different altogether from every other man. He was altogether alone in this. He was not one of us, if He had been He would have been a sinner, but He was so born that we could never say He was one of us. He took part in flesh and blood, He was here amongst us in flesh, in human condition, but it was not sinful flesh. He was born of a virgin through the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus it was brought about that the Son became Man.

But it was not till He was about thirty years of age that He came out into public life and service. Till then He had lived in private. It was then that He was anointed, and specially marked out by God by the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, coming and abiding upon Him. It was just after Jesus had joined that little company of people who had been baptized of John, confessing their sins—the first right thing for them to do.

A humble and unobtrusive Man comes to that baptism—Jesus. He waits till they have all been baptized and then He approaches to be baptized also. John thereupon said: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" But Jesus replied: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." It became Jesus to do God's will, and He would own these poor people who confessed their unfitness for the kingdom of Christ, and He was baptized after them. Then at that moment the Spirit descended upon Him, and there was an announcement clear and distinct from heaven: "This is my beloved

Son in whom I am well pleased." The voice thus distinguished Him from every other man, and made it plain that far from being a sinner, Christ was God's beloved Son, and that all through those years spent in privacy He had been the delight of God, and had pleased God.

At His very birth the heavenly host had said: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good pleasure in men." Where then was God's good pleasure? Only in one Man—in Christ; but now, God's pleasure is extended, and takes in all who believe the gospel, who come to Christ, who receive His Spirit, and walk in His steps.

THE COMING OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD WAS A GREAT AND GLORIOUS MOMENT. It was God after four thousand years, intervening in mercy, but He promised the Saviour at the very beginning of that time, when He gave the testimony that the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head. And He carried on that testimony to Christ during the whole of those four thousand years, bringing more and more out about Christ, until at last Christ came. He waited till the world had had every opportunity of saving themselves and redeeming man from the terrible condition of sin and death into which he had fallen, and when all hope of man redeeming himself was gone, God sent His Son.

It may be you have never thought how low man has fallen, and that you are on your way to death and judgment. Perhaps you are deceived by the world which ignores death and would make you think that there are ten thousand things to be got here. But there is really nothing to be got here

but a grave. God had given man ample opportunity of removing death and judgment if he could, but none could do it, and matters got worse and worse till when Christ was born there was nothing but the darkness of heathenism on the one hand, and the pride of the Jew on the other.

The Jews had the Bible, but were lifted up with pride and fancied superiority to the heathen, and yet they knew not God, and the heathen had long been worshipping demons and every kind of lust which the heart of man could conceive. In the midst of all that darkness God shone forth in Christ, and a Man who had never sinned is found joining the company of those who were baptized of John, confessing their sins. But God could not let it be supposed that Jesus was a sinner, so the heavens opened and a voice from heaven marked Him out from every other man that had ever lived, by the Spirit coming upon Him, and by the words: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased"; and in the power of the Spirit that descended like a dove and abode upon Him, Jesus commenced His ministry.

He was thirty years of age when the Spirit came upon Him. The Spirit was God's seal, and the public acknowledgment of what Jesus had been in private life before the eye of God in thought, and act, and word, those thirty years—that He had been the delight of God. God had taken great account of His blessed life, and the Holy Spirit came upon Him, not to make Him more blessed than He was, but to express publicly what that blessed Man really was in the eye of God, and to bring out all the precious grace that was in Him, so that people

might thankfully recognize the long-promised Messiah, the anointed Man, the Christ sent to save them.

We see then that He began His ministry by reading that passage in the synagogue of Nazareth : " The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." And He *did* preach the gospel to the poor, not in word only, but in deed, for He died for us. He was truly the gospel to the poor. He was anointed for it, and in the power of the anointing the glad tidings in all their fragrance and unction came out in Him from day to day for every poor man. On every hand He blessed, and called men to follow Him. And many joined His school and became His disciples, and there is no school like the school of Christ.

It is a great privilege to be a disciple of Christ and to learn from Him and to study Christ from day to day. And what did men learn as they studied Him ? They found out more and more how blessed that Man was, and what wonderful words He spoke. He was evidently no sinner, and He spake as no other man spake. We read here : " And they wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." But, alas ! the heart of man is very hard, and at once He was opposed.

That very same occasion on which He read that beautiful passage from Isaiah in the synagogue of Nazareth, and spoke those gracious words, the people first complained and said : " Is not this Joseph's son ? " etc., and then, filled with wrath, they hurried Him up to the brow of the hill to destroy Him ! They hated His words of grace,

they would not have God's Christ. They wanted a man who would minister to their pride, not one who called for repentance and brought to them the grace of God for a guilty sinner. Jesus Himself said: "Another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." When the false Christ, the Antichrist, comes, they will receive him, for he will come in his own name, in his own importance and self-sufficiency. Jesus came in His Father's name, claiming glory for Him who sent Him, and was the fullest expression of grace and truth. He did not come to bring Himself before others, but to bring God before them, and from day to day there shone out in Him all the blessedness and grace of God.

It was a truly wonderful moment when Christ was here. Whatever town He came into HE WAS THE GOSPEL FOR THE WHOLE TOWN AND GOD'S ENCOURAGEMENT FOR EVERY NEEDY AND HOPELESS SOUL. In Acts x. we read how "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him." And yet there never was a man so unassuming. There was no pretentiousness with Him, no arrogance, no self-importance, but wherever there was a need He saw it, and proved Himself equal to meeting it. He delighted to bring relief and blessing on every hand.

Such, dear friends, is the Christ! and a great deal more. I do not feel at all equal to bringing out the Christ. The theme is too great, and no human words could describe Him fully. Thank God it does not depend on language. God's gospel

depends upon one Man—Christ—and no greater or more glorious gospel could be proclaimed. It mattered not whether man was burdened with sin or whether he was suffering in his body. Christ could relieve the body, He could relieve the mind, and above all He could relieve the soul. He was the gospel for the poor, and poor men crowded around Him and found in Him the Christ of God. Every day brought it out more and more evidently that God had anointed Him. There was something about Him that was indescribable, so that all who had eyes to see could not help owning Him to be the Christ. No other man that ever lived could be put alongside of Him. He was far beyond every other man the world had ever seen, and He is so still.

I quite admit there are, and have been, thousands of truly anointed people, who have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them. But no one was ever equal to Him. Every real Christian, everyone who has received the Spirit of Christ, even though he may be more or less like Christ, knows how infinitely beyond him Christ is, and that whatever grace there is in the Christian, he owes it entirely to Christ. But apart from Christ and the anointed company, what came out in Christ has never been found anywhere else. The fragrance of the unction came out in Christ from day to day, and the more the hatred and evil around expressed themselves against Him, the more it brought out what was in that blessed Man.

Now let us turn from the fourth chapter of Luke and the beginning of His ministry, to the close, to the scene of Calvary's cross, as recorded in

chapter xxiii. There the sweet unction of the anointed Man came out more blessedly than ever before, in striking contrast to the horrible evil around. The dark background of human wickedness, expressed in that sea of Satanic-looking faces, only brought out in greater relief the beautiful spirit and grace of that heavenly and anointed Man. God would not allow man to hide his wickedness any more ; the Pharisees even took off their masks of hypocrisy, and expressed all the venom that was in their hearts against the Anointed of God. **THE SUPREME EVIL THAT WAS IN MAN'S HEART** came out in striking contrast to the **SUPREME GOOD IN THE HEART OF CHRIST**.

Some men may appear remarkably good, but there is dreadful evil in every heart ; and yet men may be clever enough to hide it till their dying day. But on this occasion, God allowed Satan to gather up men, so to speak, and unite all their spirits together to express the evil that was in them as they stood round the cross of Christ. Never before did the awful wickedness of man's heart come so clearly to light. The chief priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, the leaders of religion, who attended regularly at the synagogues, and who till then had sought to hide their wickedness by the pretence of being all that was right, are now forced to express the hatred to God that was in them and which only waited for the test of Christ to bring out. They deride Him, saying, " He saved others ; let him save himself, if he be the Christ, the chosen of God ! " All are of one mind ; even the heathen soldiers are joined with them and say, " If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself " ; and even the

brigand on the cross unites with the priests and people, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." But in the midst of all this terrible expression of concentrated hatred against Christ, the spirit of Christ comes out in the most striking contrast, expressed in His first utterance from the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" Sweet and blessed answer to the horrible spirit around!

The dying thief was completely overcome by it, and had to alter all his thoughts about the Stranger that hung by his side. He could not resist the testimony of divine grace and love that shone forth in Christ. And so it is again and again—heavenly light and grace presented in Christ make men alter all their thoughts. It was evident to the thief that the only light and cheer in the darkness and intense hatred that marked that truly awful scene, shone forth in one living glorious blaze from the face of Jesus.

CHRIST IS STILL THE ONLY CHEER AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MANKIND. You will never find anyone that can gladden the human heart like Christ. No one can preach glad tidings for man unless he preach Christ. The only preaching in this world that has any true encouragement in it is the preaching of Christ. No one but the Christian can preach at all. He alone has any good news to tell to man. For 1900 years there has only been one word for all nations, for all men; one gladsome message, and that is Christ. Yes, the good news is Christ—the anointed Man, God's own Son, "a Man approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs," born miraculously

and marked out by God and distinguished from every other man, so that no one could ever question at all that He was truly the Christ, or ever have any difficulty in trusting in Him. His whole pathway was lit up with grace and glory, but it culminated in the cross. **HIS LAST MOMENTS WERE HIS GREATEST.**

When evil reached its greatest height, then shone forth in greater glory than ever the grace and love of that heavenly Man. Good and evil reached their greatest height at one and the same moment. At the cross they met in desperate conflict, but the good won the day, and God shone out in all His wonderful love in the death of Jesus, His own beloved Son. No infidel, no human being can deny it. There never was anything like it in the history of the world. At the very moment when that great mass of people of all kinds gather together and expressed truthfully under Satan's lead the awful wickedness of the whole human race, Christ, in striking contrast, expressed truthfully and clearly the amazing love in the heart of God. He brought the love of God into death and died for us!

Now if that was a true picture of the human heart—and it was—then, but for the love and grace of God witnessed in the blood of Jesus, His own dear Son, neither you nor I nor any other human being could ever expect to be revived and allowed to live again when once put to silence in the grave. When God has once stopped your proud and evil ways by bringing you into death, what right have you to expect revival? Do you really think He could and would revive you to continue again your evil ways and live again without God? It is impossible!

He would cease to be God if He could not put an end to the rebellion of man, but must allow him his own way and will.

The resurrection of the unjust is not the revival of the man. The unjust are raised for judgment, not to continue their old life, but for the judgment of the great white throne and for the lake of fire. Our only hope is in Him who died for us—the Saviour of sinners. He alone can bring in revival for man. Thus the cross was the brightest and most glorious hour ever known. The anointed Man was there, the Son of God ; the full light and love of God were there expressed in the mighty power of the Holy Spirit in Christ Himself. While multitudes round that cross with their horrible utterances were breathing out the breath and hatred of hell, Jesus the CHRIST SWEETENED THE WHOLE SCENE WITH THE BREATH OF HEAVEN, the love of God, told out fully and perfectly in His death. His words of tender love and grace : “ Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” were more than the dying brigand could stand. He was obliged to come to it, that that Stranger was the Christ, that if ever there was an anointed Man, it was Jesus. He could not help perceiving the fragrance of the anointing. The result was he, as it were, changed his man ; he left the world and joined that Man in all his solitariness at that time.

Christ was indeed a solitary Man, the most lonely of all men, understood by no one but God. Not a human being stood by Him, and the dying thief leaves the world for ever and joins that solitary Man. Was he right or wrong in so doing ? Surely

he was right. But if so, where does that put you? Are you with Him or against Him? To-day He has many who love Him all over the world. But the world itself is as cold as ever as regards Christ, and if it cannot reproach Christ personally, it reproaches those who follow Him and stand for Him. There was a deep fundamental reason for the world's hatred of Christ—He was always entirely apart from evil and a witness against it. It was not that they objected to a man who could relieve them of sickness and disease, but Christ connected all He did with God as the source of all blessing, and took no honour to Himself, nor did He give any place to human pride; such a Man was unbearable to them, and so it is to-day.

The general literature and public journals are in accord with the world, and tell pretty clearly what the world is. They give for the most part little or no place to Christ, nor would they be read if they did. Such is the world, it is a big system built upon lust and pride. And you who are young, what part do you desire to have in it? I feel greatly for the children of godly parents. Almost as soon as they leave the threshold of their father's house, to go to some school or office or factory, they hear all kinds of things that are wrong, and horrible things said against Christ and Christians; they find themselves in an atmosphere very different from the Christian atmosphere of their own home.

There is an understood, unwritten rule in the world, i.e., to give no place to that Man, and never to bring Christ into their conversation. Earnestly, then, would I ask the young: Do you want to be the friend of the world? Are you seeking a place

of honour and distinction amongst those who hate Christ? And you that are parents, are you putting before your children some ambition and vanity? or is your one desire for your children from their earliest days that they should know Christ, and that He should be their one commanding object through life? Do you pray that they may never be so placed in life as to be unable to witness to Him? Should not this be our one desire for our children, that they may be witnesses to Christ as long as they live?

What a glorious witness the dying thief gave! He stood alone with Jesus against a frowning world. And he knew what he was doing. He believed it was impossible that that blessed Man could remain in death, and that such precious grace could be buried for ever in a grave. And he was right; it was impossible. **ALL THE GLORY OF GOD DEMANDED THAT THAT MAN SHOULD RISE AGAIN.** And so it came to pass. He was put into the grave, and there was sufficient testimony as to His actual death and burial, but how could such a One see corruption? How could all that was so blessed in Him be lost? He could not remain there. He must come out of the grave. Every moral quality that shone forth in Him called for resurrection. And all that God is, demanded that that Man should come out. God would have ceased to be the God He is, if He had allowed His Holy One to see corruption.

Thus we see that death is gone. It is gone in one Man. If you belong to Him and trust in Him, then death is morally gone for you, and if you pass through it you will find no sting, nor anything

dreadful. You may sicken and die, but it gets more and more blessed as the last moment draws near, for you are going to be with Christ. Christ has shown Himself superior to all the power of the enemy, and how could that blessed anointed Man remain covered up in the dust and remain in the grave? Impossible! He rose again to see to it that death should not hold anyone that ever trusted in Him, and that those who believe in Him should never taste death nor ever see it. What could be added to God's glad tidings? Nothing. The gospel meets all our need. As to our sins—Christ died for them. Peter says: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." It was the anointed Man who suffered thus for us. Everyone who turns to Christ and believes in Him has the right and privilege of applying Peter's words to himself, and of saying: Christ bare my sins. **IF YOU BELIEVE IN HIM, YOU WILL IN ONE MOMENT OF TIME GET INFINITE BLESSING.** God often blesses most unexpectedly and by the most simple means.

I was once at a little Bible reading, and a young man came in and heard of the great things of Christianity and of the folly of those who, brought up in Christianity, threw away and despised the greatest opportunities ever given to man. At the end of the meeting, he said he had come in an infidel; how, though brought up in a Christian home, he had persuaded himself that Christianity was worthless, but that night, in one moment, light had dawned in upon his darkened soul, and changed all his thoughts. He saw himself to be a sinner and trusted Christ as his Saviour.

'The darkness went, and the light of God filled his soul.

The gospel is so simple, it may be received in one moment, and even by a child. God is too great to make the gospel difficult to a child. When Jesus was here upon earth the children came to Him, and found that none, not even their own parents, understood them as Jesus did. He gladdened their hearts and won their confidence in a way no father or mother ever did or could. And so it is still. Though you cannot actually see Him, you can come, dear children and elder friends, and you will find Jesus understands you and loves to receive you, and to bless you, no matter how great a sinner you may have been.

Now, having considered Christ in His ministry down here, and Christ on the cross and when risen from the dead, let us for a few moments consider **WHAT HAPPENED WHEN HE REACHED THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.** On the day of Pentecost, fifty days after His resurrection, when the disciples were assembled together, suddenly there was a sound as of a rushing mighty wind, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the 120 disciples who were there gathered together. They were immediately filled with the Spirit and went forth and testified to the glory of Christ. It was Christ the anointed Man who had received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and had shed forth on His loved disciples the very Spirit in which He had lived and served when on earth. In that Spirit they went out and witnessed, and 3000 were saved the first day of their testimony. And Christ gives His Spirit to all who obey Him, and not only are

they saved, but where the Spirit of God is there is liberty. The love of God is shed abroad by the Spirit in your heart, and you begin to know the love of God and to love Him and call Him "Father." Thus from the anointed Man in glory, the anointing comes on all His own down here and forms an anointed company—one body, God's assembly on the earth.

THE GOSPEL IS SIMPLY MAGNIFICENT IN ALL ITS PARTS. No one ought to find the least difficulty in it, or anything to object to, and there is nothing in it to be ashamed of. From first to last, from the birth of Christ to His ascension and session at the right hand of God, it is all one glorious testimony, and Christ was absolutely blessed and perfect all through. Not a wrong thing can be found in the whole testimony of Christ, from His coming into the world from heaven to His going back there as Man to open heaven for man. Even His enemies said: "Never man spake like this Man," and we may say, "Never was any man like Christ." What man could break the power of death as He did? Morally and in every way He is beyond every man, yea, He is in deed and in truth the Son of the living God, God blessed for ever! He has stilled the power of death for all who believe. If you once know a risen Christ, you cannot fear death. If it is a living Christ in whom you trust, and He is living, then the fear of death is gone for you. He has triumphed over all the power of evil, of Satan, sin, and death. But before He triumphed over the power of death, He went into it. He bore our sins on the cross: He suffered and died. Then He

broke the power of death by rising again the third day.

The Old Testament brings out two things as to Christ—His sufferings and His glory. Christ had not come in Old Testament times, but by means of the prophets upon whom His Spirit came, HE WROTE HIS OWN HISTORY HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE HE CAME INTO THIS WORLD, that is, before He was born at Bethlehem. The prophets did not write on their own authority; the Spirit of Christ inspired them, and as it were wrote in their prophecies. No one else ever wrote his own history before he came, nor could he. But Jesus did. He wrote about His birth, how and where He would be born, and when, and He wrote about His pathway of suffering and about His death.

In one Psalm, He is the poor Man who receives hatred for His love, and in the next (the 110th) that same poor Man is told to sit at the right hand of God until His enemies are made His footstool. And there He is to-day, at the right hand of power. But how wonderful and glorious must that Man be who could by His Spirit in the prophets describe His whole pathway before ever He came into time! Two leading thoughts come out in those writings, as I have said; one, that He would be a suffering Man, and the other that He would be glorified. His atoning sufferings are faithfully recorded in Psalm xxii., that He would be forsaken of God, and in Isaiah liii., that He would bear our iniquities.

Jesus came and fulfilled what He wrote in David one thousand years before and in Isaiah seven hundred years before. Our sins were laid on Him

and He bore our judgment. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. He suffered, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. But God did not suffer His Holy One to see corruption (Psalm xvi.). He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in glory, according to the Scriptures written before of Him.

Now let me ask : What place has Christ in your heart and mind ? Has He the first place ? He is more than worthy of it, and everyone is wrong who does not give it to Him. It is my daily prayer and desire, as no doubt it is of Christians all over the earth, that I may know more of that blessed One. How He stands out in striking contrast to the so-called great men of the world ! Take Mohammed for instance. What did he do ? Influence thousands to apostatize from Christianity, to leave Christ, God's anointed Man, the Man from heaven, and follow Mohammed, a man whose spirit was that of hell rather than of heaven, and who taught plunder and murder. God is, as it were, saying : **WHAT MAN WILL YOU HAVE ? THE WORLD'S MAN OR CHRIST ?** Surely there is only one Man worth considering, and that is Christ. Glorious things for man are bound up with the choice of Christ. Then choose Christ and come to Him.

Many people think we Christians have only read of Christ in a book, and that we have nothing but a book, the Bible. We have indeed a wonderful book, a collection of inspired writings given us of God, but **WE HAVE MORE THAN THE BOOK, WE HAVE THE MAN WHO IS THE SUBJECT OF THE BOOK—Jesus, God's own Son.**

He lives, and is the subject of scripture testimony from first to last. The book will stand. Christ, too, will never die. And the words of the book and the utterances of Christ will stand when heaven and earth have passed away. But it is not the book that loved me or that died for me, but Christ, of whom the book speaks. Surely Christ is greater than the book, though He Himself inspired holy men to write it. He can love me and does ; yea, He died for me, and now lives for me and for all that trust in Him. Soon, too, He will come and take us to Himself, that we may be with Him where He is.

Oh ! that I could persuade you to turn to Him and believe on Him. You would find it to be the grandest day in your life when you get to know Christ, whom to know is life eternal. You will find He is far better and more blessed than anyone has ever told you, and you will live for ever in His love. If not, you will die in the dark, and die in your sins, and there will be nothing before you but the judgment of God and the lake of fire. Remember the one gospel, the one light for man, is Christ, the Son of the living God. Come to Him, believe on Him, and own Him Lord, and you will be saved.

H. D'A. C.

THE GREATNESS OF THE GOSPEL OF GOD

“ THE GOSPEL OF GOD . . . concerning HIS SON Jesus Christ our Lord . . . it is the POWER OF GOD unto salvation to every one who believeth . . . for therein is the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD revealed from faith to faith.”—ROMANS i. 1-17.

“ God commendeth His LOVE toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”—ROMANS v. 8.

“ GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, HATH SHINED in our hearts, to give THE LIGHT of the knowledge OF THE GLORY OF GOD in the face of Jesus Christ.”—2 CORINTHIANS iv. 6.

I AM sure there are thousands to-day who have never really considered the gospel, nor have ever thought how grand and great it is. It is in every way wonderful and far beyond anything that has ever been heard of in this world. I would mention several facts in regard to it—(1) THE SOURCE OF THE GOSPEL IS GOD. It therefore springs from the highest conceivable source, from GOD HIMSELF. It is He who is the originator of the gospel. It is God that started it. What higher source could there be than the blessed God? No one suggested the gospel to Him. No one proposed that He would or could do something for man in his terrible need. The gospel arose out of the love that is in His heart. God's love is the spring and source of it.

'That being the case, the gospel is reliable, there is no flaw in it, it is in every way worthy of God, and must be. There is nothing higher than God, and He is the source of the glad tidings. God must have His rights, He cannot allow Himself to be dishonoured, and yet He can send us a message of joy which, wherever it is received, gladdens the human heart in an indescribable way, and adds no sorrow to it. It is called the gospel of His grace, the gospel of His glory, and the gospel of the Christ, who is the image of God. **GOD HIMSELF HAS UNDERTAKEN TO SAVE US!**

Perhaps you never thought you needed to be saved? Perhaps you are shutting your eyes to the fact that men are dying, and that you will soon be in your grave, and worse than that, that after death there is the judgment. Have you ever thought of that? In such a dreadful situation, what *man* could do anything for us? How good then it is to hear that God Himself has undertaken to save us! Not only so, but **THE SUBJECT OF THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S OWN SON!** as Paul puts it—"the gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." What greater Person could He speak about? The subject is inconceivably great, and no greater Person could He send than His own Son. You could not think of a higher source than God, nor of a greater and more glorious subject than His Son. If the Son cannot save us, then there is no hope at all, for none greater can come. In giving His Son, He has given His all. The whole creation could not give God the joy and pleasure that He had in His Son, and He has even *given* His Son!

What a grand answer to Satan's wicked suggestion in the garden of Eden! Satan then persuaded man that God wanted to keep from him what was good for him, and therefore had refused the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! But the truth is that God would not even withhold His Son from us, but sent Him to save us! Thus the need and wickedness of man brings out the love in the heart of God! As we could not save ourselves, He Himself, in the Person of His own Son, became a man in order to die for us and save us! What a God!

Satan tried to rob God of man, but God cannot and will not be robbed of man. He cannot be baffled or defeated in His own creation. He had His resource, He would send His Son! And this was no afterthought with God. He had His Son all ready. It was in the mind of God to send Him before the foundation of the world. God cannot be taken by surprise. God is greater than Satan. God wants man, and He will have man. He will have His house full, and if you do not want to be there, He can find some one else to fill the place, and no one will be missing then, for all who ought to be there will be there, that is all who are saved by Christ; and none will be there who ought not to be there, none who have slighted and rejected the mercy of God.

The moment man fell and sin entered the world, God announced the birth of Christ, that One born of woman would be the Redeemer, that is, that He would give His Son to die for us. How can the gospel be small and insignificant when it is all about THE GREATEST PERSON THAT COULD

COME AMONGST MEN? If that is the case, and it is, then the gospel is the most glorious tidings ever told. The gospel is not about *you*, though it is for you. It does not speak of something you can do to save yourself, for you can do nothing. It does not even speak about our goodness, except to say that we have none, that "there is none good, no, not one." No, the gospel does not speak about us, but about Christ, about God's Son. It tells what He has done, and how God has found means whereby "his banished be not expelled from him." Thus the gospel reveals the love of God. Rather than lose man, He has given His Son for us. If then God's Son can do nothing for us, and has done nothing, then there is absolutely no hope, for no greater can come than God's own dear Son. It is He who has been into death for us, and who can say how great are the consequences and how far-reaching the results?

This involves that **THE SCOPE OF THE GOSPEL IS WITHOUT LIMIT**. It must correspond with the greatness of the Source and with the greatness of the Subject. It is **THE WHOLE WORLD**, for the gospel goes out to **ALL MEN**. There is no limit. "God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God is good to all, He thinks of all, and cares for all. Christ died for all, "and gave himself a ransom for all." The gospel that comes from God Himself, and is about His Son, could not possibly be limited to any nation or people; it *must* be for all, and it *is* for all.

God would encourage every man, and so also

may we. None are too bad to be saved or too hopeless. The gospel is for the black and for the white, for the rich and for the poor, for the old and for the young. God never leaves out any one. If the Source of the gospel is great, and could not be greater, and if the Subject, too, is equally great, then, I say, the Scope or extent must be worthy of God and worthy of His Son. It cannot be narrowed up, it must be correspondingly great; indeed it could not be greater, for it takes in all. He is the Saviour of the world. The commission therefore which the Lord gave to His disciples when risen from the dead, and before being received up into heaven, was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." I hope, then, you will not think that *you* are left out, and that God will not look at you, will not receive you, or have anything to do with you, because of your unworthiness; for none are worthy, and yet God leaves no one out, His gospel is *for all*, and therefore it is *for you*.

THE SUITABILITY OF THE GOSPEL IS SELF-EVIDENT, and is in accord with God who sent it, for it suits all and it meets the need of all. It reveals God's RIGHTEOUSNESS, and it tells how God can be "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." We needed righteousness, for "all have sinned," and "there is none righteous, no, not one." And what we need, God *gives* as His own free gift, He gives us righteousness. It is all through Christ, who "suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God."

Thus the righteous claims of God against us as

sinner have been met by the blood of Jesus, who died for us and bare the sins of all who receive Him and trust in Him. We deserved nothing but judgment on account of our wickedness, but the gospel tells how God has dealt with us, not by the judgment of us personally, but by the judgment of His own Son, who suffered on the cross on our behalf. In this way God can offer His righteousness as a free gift to all, and clothe with it all who believe, counting them righteous for ever. The scripture says, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all who believe are justified from all things." Thus the gospel meets all our need. It brings us forgiveness and clothes us with righteousness.

More than that, it reveals the **POWER OF GOD** in removing death, and in raising Christ from the dead. **DEATH IS GONE!** for in the Person of Jesus we see man risen from the dead and living to God and for God for ever! Death has been annulled and brought to nothing, for the One who died for us, is not dead, is not in the grave, but is alive, is risen from the dead, never to die again. He was raised again for our justification—that we might learn in Christ raised from the dead that we, who believe, are so completely justified, and our guilt is so fully put away and atoned for, that death itself can now be removed, and has been already removed in the case of one Man, our Lord Jesus Christ.

God has raised Christ from the dead to show us that we who believe in Christ have not to die under the judgment of God, that death has now no right over us, and we are to live with Christ the other

side of death for ever and ever in the glory of God. Just think of death, and how it held the human race for 4000 years ! but now we can say, one Man is alive from the dead, a Man who actually died and was put in the tomb, and a great stone was rolled against it, but He rose again and showed Himself alive to His disciples again and again, and proved that He was not a spirit, but really the same Jesus risen again to die no more. So you see that death has gone in the case of one Man, and soon all believers will be actually beyond death for ever in glorified bodies, like Christ Himself. Thus the gospel reveals the power of God to break down the gates of death, and bring man out of it to live with Him for ever.

This is a far greater and more difficult thing than to make a dry road through the Atlantic Ocean from England to America, by causing the waters to stand up a congealed wall on each side, as God once did with the Red Sea. God has made a road for His people through death itself. Death to the believer has ceased to be the judgment of God, and has become a friend opening a way for him to be with Christ outside all the sorrow and evil here. Soon, too, death will be actually removed and be swallowed up in victory. If Christ were to come now, and we are expecting Him any moment, those who believe would never die, and if He found us in the grave, He would bring us out in glory.

The gospel does still more than this. It takes account of the fact that we are naturally very weak and easily drawn into some sin or evil, for on coming to Christ and believing on Him, we receive the Holy Spirit. It is Christ's own Spirit, and

through the power of the Spirit we are able to overcome sin, and to walk in a manner pleasing to God. In this way we become more and more like to Christ. We learn to walk in the steps of Him who did no sin, and in whose mouth was no guile nor deceit. How good then of God to give us the Holy Spirit, so that by yielding to the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, we may not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, and may be able to live in what is pure and holy and good, and find our very thoughts quite different from what they naturally would be.

Not only does the gospel bring to light God's righteousness and His power, but it reveals also **THE LOVE OF GOD**. The Holy Spirit given to us sheds abroad His love in our hearts. He teaches us to live in the love of God who gave His Son for us. For "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Our great need instead of provoking God to judge us for our sins, gave Him the opportunity of manifesting the great love He had for us by giving His own Son to die for us! There is nothing now for us to do but to accept and to live in the love of God.

THE SEAL OF THE GOSPEL IS THE HOLY SPIRIT, SO THAT EVERYTHING IS SECURE AND STABLE; for Christ gives His Spirit to those who believe on Him, and it secures us and marks us off from all false and unreal believers; that is, from all who have the name of being Christians, but who are not more than mere professors. All who believe in Christ are thus distinguished from others and secured by the seal of the Spirit. Ephesians i. 13, says: "In whom

also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory"; and chapter iv. 30, says: "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," that is, till our very bodies are redeemed and glorified, and made like Christ's body of glory. Thus the believer is secured for ever, for the sheep of Christ never perish. Christ never lost a man. He protects them and saves them all through to the end.

All that I have said brings out that **THE STABILITY OF THE GOSPEL** is such that it can *never be overthrown*. It has stood the test of ages. Nothing can shake it. Its foundation is sure. It is founded on principles of righteousness, holiness, and truth; yea, it is founded on the love of God, and is as firm as God Himself. God Himself would be overthrown if the gospel were overthrown. There is nothing wrong, nothing unrighteous, nothing unholy about the gospel. It is absolutely perfect and blessed. The whole gospel story—the coming of Christ into this world, His birth, His life, His ministry, His resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of God—is full of glory from end to end. It is perfect in all its parts. The world itself will be shaken, but never the gospel of God.

THE SURPASSINGNESS OR SUPERIORITY OF THE GOSPEL IS UNDENIABLE. It is superior to all the systems of men, to everything that men have ever proposed for the improvement of man; yea, it is even far superior to the law of God. For the law, holy and just and good though

it is, could only curse those who broke it. It could judge, but it could not save ; nor did it give man the power to love God and his neighbour as himself. The gospel alone can put away sin and death, and give us the power to live for God. The gospel has no superior, and no rival ; for only the gospel has a risen Man to present to men—the risen Christ. For He is the only Man who has gone into death and risen again and become the Leader and Captain of salvation for all who trust in Him. Christ has Himself broken the power of death for all His followers, by rising again. The gospel far surpasses anything ever heard of in this world.

THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE GOSPEL, OR ITS SATISFYING CHARACTER, HAS BEEN ABUNDANTLY PROVED. Christ has satisfied us in a way nothing else could, and He has done so from the very beginning. Those who receive Christ are so satisfied that they want no other. The very same Christ satisfies us in our old age that satisfied us in our youth. The same Christ satisfies us in this the twentieth century as satisfied the early Christians of the first century. None of us have ever wanted God to send another Christ. We have all we want in Him. There is such a fulness in Him that He is enough for all time, and enough for eternity too. He satisfies even a child. This leads me to another point.

The SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL IS SUCH THAT A CHILD CAN UNDERSTAND IT! The simplest mind, the weakest intellect can grasp its meaning, and children find that there is nothing so simple as to believe in the Lord Jesus,

and that He understands them better than a father or a mother. The gospel, too, is within reach of all, for it makes no demand on us. It does not require that we should make ourselves fit for God, or that we should do some good works first. No, it is for all who repent and believe the gospel. To repent is to change your mind, and to own the truth that you are a guilty sinner, and that you have been all wrong and have offended God and have walked in your own self-willed way. All such are encouraged to believe the gospel and to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. "By him all who believe are justified from all things." The moment you feel and own your need, the gospel encourages you and tells you of Him who "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," and that "when we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

When the jailor asked Paul, "What must I do to be saved?" the answer was simple enough, for a little child could understand it: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." You are not told to believe on something foolish and unreliable, or on some one who is dead and gone, but on One who is alive, on the Lord Jesus Christ, whom God has raised from the dead after He had previously been "delivered for our offences." Nothing really is simpler than faith, provided the one in whom you put your faith is reliable and trustworthy, and no one could be so trustworthy as Jesus. Millions have proved Him to be so.

If we were saved by works, we should never know whether we had done enough to be saved, and then we should boast of what we had done and of our own superior goodness; but salvation "is

not of works, lest any man should boast." It is simply and only of faith, and therefore the simplest thing that you could be called upon to do is to avail yourself of the salvation which is brought to your door. It bids us count on God alone, and that on God revealed as Saviour in His own dear Son the Lord Jesus Christ. God tells us the most reliable good news ever told, and saves us on believing in the Lord. He presents to us a Person more reliable and trustworthy than anyone we could ever meet or hear of—the Lord Jesus, a living Man, and God's own dear Son, and He justifies all who trust simply in Him.

Truly the gospel is simplicity itself. On the other hand, **THE SCHEME OF THE GOSPEL IS INCONCEIVABLY GREAT.** For what God proposes to do for those who believe Him goes far beyond anything we had ever imagined. It goes far beyond relieving us of our sins, and saving us from death and judgment. God is not content with forgiving us, He makes us His sons, and gives us the Spirit of sonship when we believe, "whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Yea, more, He will soon conform us to the image of His Son, so that in our very bodies we shall be like Christ Himself. Then in all the dignity and glory of sons, we shall be introduced by Christ into the Father's house, there to dwell in love before the Father's face for ever! It is a wonderful thing to be forgiven and saved, but no one ever conceived that God would do more than this—far more—that He would make us His own dear sons, and give us a place in heaven, and have us near Him, holy and without blame, before Him, in His own immediate presence, and in love for ever!

Not only this, but believers are baptized by one Spirit into one body, and form God's church or assembly, the body of Christ, and His bride, the bride of the Lamb. Her place of honour and glory in the coming ages is beyond all human conception. The church, as the body of Christ, will be "the fulness of him that filleth all in all." By means of His body Christ will fill and satisfy the whole universe. Each member of His body will be a ray of His glory, and in the character of the heavenly city or political system, will enlighten the nations with the knowledge of the love of God and will bring blessing on the whole world. When Christ comes to reign, the church will come with Him and reign with Him in that day of millennial glory. It is impossible to describe the elevated position and glory in which the church (that is, true believers in Christ) will shine in that universe of blessing which Christ will introduce, and of which He will be the Centre and Sun. You see how the blessings of the gospel are inconceivably great and in accord with the Source being God Himself, and the Subject being no less a person than His own Son.

You will not be surprised then to hear that **THE GREATEST SAMPLE OF THE GOSPEL IS SAUL OF TARSUS, THE CHIEF OF SINNERS.** God has saved the worst sinner that ever lived, for such was Saul of Tarsus.. His great object had been to get rid of every trace of Christ, and to blot out the very name of Jesus altogether! And yet God, in His marvellous grace, saved that man! He was going about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. He

was butchering and slaughtering the sheep of Christ, such was his intense hatred against Christ. The more he persecuted them, the more it brought out the Spirit of Christ in those he persecuted. He heard them even pray for their persecutors, and this sweet Spirit of Christ maddened him the more. He believed Jesus was a deceiver, a false Christ, and that He was dead and in the grave.

To his astonishment, as he was about to enter Damascus to arrest Christ's disciples, a great light from heaven streamed upon him, and he saw in the centre of that light, in heaven itself, the very Man he thought to be in the grave—Jesus, the Son of God, expressing all the love of God as He only could do. That love streamed down on the chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus, broke him utterly down, and captured him for ever.

When he found it was Jesus whom he had been persecuting, he was completely subdued and said: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" That light told him that he was not to perish, because Jesus had died for him, and that glory was the glory of a Saviour! He was to be the great sample to the world of what God's grace can do for sinners. It changed the man, and instead of burning hatred against Christ, there was ever after the greatest love for Him and for all who have His Spirit. The love of Christ commanded him to be henceforth His willing servant, and to be the greatest of all the apostles, and the most distinguished servant of the Lord in this world!

This leads me to say that **THE SERVICE OF THE GOSPEL IS GRAND IN THE EXTREME.** All believers are called to it. All are

called to testify to Christ and to serve the Lord. We are all called to do the will of the Lord, and not our own will, but to please the Lord every day. It is our service and privilege to make known the love of God in this dark world, and to encourage every man to repent and turn to God.

THE SUCCESS OF THE GOSPEL WILL NEVER BE FULLY KNOWN TILL THAT DAY, the day when Christ returns in glory, escorted by millions upon millions of blessed beings, all of whom were once sinners, but who were saved by His grace when the world thought little or nothing was going on. The world little knows how God is blessing on every hand and how many in all lands are being brought to Christ. Men who look only at outward appearances may say the gospel is a failure, because they see that so-called Christian nations are not much better than heathen, but hate one another, and do the same sins as the heathen. But the failure is not due to the gospel, but to the giving up of the gospel, and turning to other things, living as they please, and ignoring the rights of the Lord.

When the gospel is received, it changes the man, as it did Saul of Tarsus. Instead of living to please ourselves and doing our own will, our first thought is: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Instead of living in envy and pride and hatred, the gospel teaches us to walk in love and to follow in the steps of Him who did no sin.

May the Lord give you, too, to receive the gospel and be saved, and may you be brought to know and own the Lord Jesus, and to live for Him and serve Him for ever!

H. D'A. C.

THE KINDNESS OF GOD

“THE GRACE OF GOD which carries with it salvation for all men HAS APPEARED. . . . But when the KINDNESS AND LOVE TO MAN of our Saviour God APPEARED . . . He saved us,” etc.—TITUS ii. 11-14 ; iii. 4-7 (New Translation).

IT was a truly wonderful moment when God's grace and kindness and love to man first appeared, or was fully manifested. It was like a new day for man, so glorious was the light of God when Christ came into this world.

Till then, during the first four thousand years of this world's history, God had only given, as it were, a glimmer of light. He had not fully revealed and declared Himself. His grace, His kindness, His love to man, were active, for He was the same God then as He is now, but they were not revealed and made evident, for Christ had not come. The words in Titus iii. 4, “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,” mark a special moment when all this came into full light. What marvellous grace was here when Christ was here, what kindness, what love to man!

THE GRACE OF GOD APPEARED which carried salvation for every one, for all men, not for Jews only, but for Gentiles, not only for the outwardly respectable, but for the degraded, the hopeless, the outcast, the man that had lost everything, the lowest of the low! Yes, just because it was

grace, it was for all, seeing that "all have sinned," and in God's sight "there is no difference."

THE KINDNESS OF GOD came to light when Christ was here. The word translated "kindness" is a remarkable one. It occurs several times in the New Testament. We have it in Matthew xi., "Take my yoke upon you . . . for my yoke is easy [or kind]." Again we have it in 1 Peter ii. 3, "If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious [or kind]." And again in Romans ii. 4, "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness [or kindness] . . . not knowing that the goodness [or kindness] of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

Who was ever so kind as Jesus? He came amongst men like a physician who, after a terrible battle, goes into the field of the wounded and slain. With an inexpressible kindness Jesus went in and out amongst the masses of dying and morally dead, ready to save all. No case was too hard for Him. He was at the service of all. He healed thousands of sick ones, and even raised the dead. He brought, too, the grace and love of God amongst souls who were perishing and morally dead. He did all this with an astonishing kindness and tender thought for man, never known before.

The Old Testament had said that "God is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." Creation itself, and God's providence, had testified to this. We can see thousands of proofs in all ages of the marvellous tender care of God for man. But for all that, God's kindness was never fully manifested till Christ came. Then it was that **GOD REVEALED HIMSELF.** This was far

beyond anything that God had ever done before. It was a far more wonderful thing than when God created the heavens and the earth.

When Jesus came, God's kindness was expressed in a Man, His own Son, who touched us in the tenderest way conceivable, and that too in the case of the most godless and hardened of sinners, for He cared for all, and made no difference between men. In Him was a wealth of kindness beyond all calculation. Till Christ came, no one had ever conceived that God could be so good, but when He came, God's kindness streamed forth from a Man in an infinitely blessed way; for He was God come down here amongst men in the Person of His Son, who had come here in flesh, to make God known. Jesus was kind to people who had no claim on Him at all, and who knew it, and felt it; they felt their unworthiness and sinfulness. Not indeed that any had any real claim on Him, nor have any now, for all have sinned. But this very fact made His kindness the more striking. It was so unexpected, so surprising; no one, I repeat, ever thought that God could be so kind to guilty sinners.

Jesus entered into the towns and villages of Galilee, prepared to show the same kindness to all, and with a kindness and love never seen in man before. It was not what has been called "the milk of human kindness," which after all has some element of selfishness in it, and may leave God out. It was absolutely unselfish, and it was the kindness of God, and knew no bounds. No book could have told it out fully. It was the kindness of *God*, and only God's Son could fully manifest

it. Not even the Bible would do instead of Jesus. For the Bible cannot love me, but Jesus can, and does. The Bible tells about His love, and millions have Bibles, but how few have Christ! How few have ever tasted that the Lord is kind!

When Christ was here on earth, the great majority were content with seeing the miracles and the outward acts of kindness, and never went further; they refused to taste for themselves that the Lord is kind, and so they never knew what He could be for a guilty sinner who repents and turns to Him. They never repented. They despised "the riches of his kindness," not knowing "that the kindness of God leadeth to repentance." Surely it was the kindness of God and His love to man that led the dying thief to repent, so that he owned he was justly condemned, and testified of Jesus—"This man hath done nothing amiss." Never had kindness been seen before as it was seen then in the face of Jesus, and it shone out all the more clearly because of its striking contrast to that mass of human faces all around the cross marked by the bitterest unkindness and satanic hatred. Never had the human face looked so dark as did their faces at that moment, and never had the face of man been lit up with kindness and love as was the face of Jesus in that holy hour of Calvary's cross.

His words expressed the kindness in His heart, when, in answer to the hatred of man, He prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The hardened thief could not stand against such kindness and love. It broke him down utterly, and changed all his thoughts as to Christ, so that whilst condemning himself he was obliged

to confess as to Christ that He had done nothing amiss. He cast himself there and then upon Him for mercy, saying, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

Nor did he count on that kindness and love in vain. The answer that greeted him immediately more than confirmed his faith: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Nothing but divine love could have produced such a change in such a hardened man. And divine love opened to his view another world altogether, where the hatred of man and the sin of man can never come, for that day he was to be with Christ Himself in paradise! But the other thief, like thousands to-day, shut his eyes to and despised the riches of God's kindness and love to man as it was expressed at that very moment in Jesus, and died in his sins—an unrepentant sinner.

Now let me ask: What are we doing to-day with God's kindness and grace and amazing love to man? Perhaps you say, If only I had lived in those days, it would have been easy to repent, when such a wonderful Person came near to man, and when God's grace and kindness and love to man were so strikingly manifested. But that is only an idle excuse. **THE KINDNESS OF GOD AND HIS LOVE TO MAN ARE STILL MANIFESTED.** God has revealed Himself for ever. He will never withdraw the revelation. His love once revealed, is revealed for ever. God will not allow it to be hidden.

The Spirit of God is here to maintain the revelation, and has been here ever since Christ rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven and sat down

at the right hand of God. The world was not left again in comparative darkness, the Holy Spirit came, I say, to maintain the revelation, and wherever Christ is received, He sheds the love of God abroad in the heart. The Holy Spirit has faithfully maintained the testimony to God's love, and has not allowed the revelation of God to be lost, whatever may have been the failure of Christians in regard to it. Just as much to-day as it was at the beginning, is it open to you now to know the kindness and love of God in the sweetest possible way.

THERE IS NO ABATEMENT OF HIS KINDNESS AND LOVE TO MAN. The Sun that shone when Christ was here, **THAT VERY SAME SUN SHINES STILL.** CHRIST IS THAT SUN, and He still expresses the same marvellous kindness and love to man on the part of God. Millions have proved it, have tasted that the Lord is gracious, that the Lord is kind, and that, too, in a world that never really thanks God for anything. His people, on the other hand, have been, all along, blessing and praising God again and again. Millions of times, I doubt not, have God's people thanked God for His kindness and wonderful love, and have owned what a blessed God He is, far more blessed than words can ever say. Ever since God revealed Himself have praises risen to Him for His grace, His kindness, and His love. No one can ever estimate the greatness of God's revelation of Himself, nor can one measure or calculate the great results of God's Son coming here to declare Him.

What a difference there was even in creation between the light that prevailed the first three

days, and the moment when God, on the fourth day, put that great light of the sun in the heavens in relation to the earth (Gen. i. 16, 17). Though there was light before that time, and from the very first day, yet there was no sun shining on this earth and warming it, and there was no breath of life, nor any moving thing. But on the fourth day God caused the sun to reach this earth with its glorious rays, and then for the first time we find physical life and movement, and the earth responding to the warming influences and life-giving rays of the sun. Nor has the sun ever been taken from the earth from that day to this. Even in the time of the flood, the sun was behind the clouds, or Noah and all the creatures in the ark would have perished.

In the same way, after four thousand years, on, as it were, the fourth day, counting a thousand years as one day, did God shine forth in Christ and fully reveal Himself as a Saviour. A grand and glorious moment, indeed, it was when God thus warmed the human race with His love, which was manifested in the whole pathway of Christ down here, and culminated in the cross of Calvary when God gave His own dear Son to die for us. Then it was that the infinite love in the heart of God came fully out, and in this way God completely declared Himself. So great was His love to man that He even gave His own dear Son to suffer and die in our behalf.

The light of that shines still, **THE FULL LIGHT OF A SAVIOUR GOD SHINES OUT IN A MAN, AND THAT MAN GOD'S OWN SON.** For the Lord Jesus is the great

Light in the heavens. That light shines for all men, and century after century has it manifested, clearly and distinctly, the kindness and love to man of God our Saviour. That word translated "love to man," is in the Greek the word "philanthropy." God is the great philanthropist, the great lover of man. True philanthropy can only be learnt in Christ, who fully expressed the love to man that was in the heart of God. Modern so-called philanthropists are often prompted by selfish motives in what they do, and in many cases God is left out.

God did not manifest His love and give His Son for us in order to be applauded, but in the love of His own heart for man. No mixed motives, no selfishness, no self-seeking or love of popularity was ever found in the heart of Christ. In Him alone was found that true love for man, that absolutely pure philanthropy, which knows no selfish motive whatever. He was the full expression of God revealed in love. **THE GREATEST BLESSING THERE IS IN THIS WORLD IS THE REVELATION OF GOD.**

What an awful state we—yea, the whole world—were in before Christ came, and before the kindness of God appeared in Him! We were, as Titus iii. 3 says, "foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." The rich and great were as hateful as the poor, and hated one another as much as any. We were all foolish, disobedient, and deceived. We were all slaves to varied lusts and pleasures. Malice and envy were not confined to one class or to one nation, but marked every kind of man. Who then could save

us from such a terrible state of things? Judaism, though it had God's ten commandments, had not been able to do it, nor had Greek philosophy nor any system of morality, nor anything else that men had tried. Lust, and pride, and hatred, continued in spite of all.

Then it was that GOD SHONE FORTH AS A SAVIOUR GOD, revealing Himself in His own dear Son! HE SAVED US! He was too kind to leave us to perish. He loved man too much to leave him without hope, and though man hated God and his fellow-man, God loved man. His love to man was so great that He gave His Son to die for us, and He shed abundantly on us, on all believers, His Holy Spirit, that we might no longer be hateful and hating one another, but might love God, and love one another, and thus be saved from the wrath of God which must inevitably come on this present evil world.

It was not according to our works that He saved us. What works indeed could we do? We could only hate and serve our lusts and pleasures. No, it was "according to his *mercy* he saved us." He considered us and pitied us, in our helpless and hopeless condition, loathsome and hateful creatures though we were, He saved us, and manifested in this way His kindness and love to man. What a blessed God and what a wonderful salvation! And His grace has brought this salvation for *all* men. It is for you, my reader, however sunk in sin and worldliness you may be. The sun shines for *all*, and so does God's grace. His kindness and love to man have appeared and still appear. Clearly and distinctly in Christ does God shine forth for

all men in His grace, His kindness, and His love to man.

Is not this immensely encouraging for you, my reader, to turn to God and embrace the warming, lifegiving influences of His love to man? Believe God, receive His Christ, His own dear Son, who has so fully revealed what God is toward man, toward all men, and you will be saved through Him, who gave Himself for us, and whose precious blood cleanses us from all sin. "Us" is a very important word. It signifies all who believe God and receive Christ as their Saviour. Christ came expressly to bring God near to you, that you might know what God really is, and might be encouraged to trust Him.

It is all pure *grace*, but it will not teach you to live carelessly, but rather to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. It will teach you to live soberly as regards yourself, righteously as regards others, and godly as regards God. For you will desire to bring God into all the little things of daily life, and you will look for "the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," that is, a people for His own possession, to be entirely His own property.

It matters not to God who you are, or what you have done, or how low you may have fallen, because the grace of God brings salvation for *all* men. We are "justified freely by his grace." If it were "of works," only those who did the works could be saved; but it is not of works, lest any man should

boast. We should then boast of the many good things we had done, and that we are saved by what we have done, instead of by what Christ has done. Besides, how can we boast of our works when God says, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6)? But works come in their right place, that is, *after* we are saved, and have received Christ, not *before*. What good works can God look for in those who "serve divers lusts and pleasures," and who *live* in malice and envy? Such people need a Saviour; and so do you, my reader, as well as every one of us.

What a comfort it is that GOD DID NOT EXPECT TO FIND SOME GOOD IN MAN, when Christ came here, for He came to seek and to save that which was lost. HE BROUGHT ALL THE GOOD WITH HIM, and died for us, in order that the sinner who was under judgment might be put away in judgment in the death of Christ, and having done that, that He might give His own blessed and Holy Spirit to all who believe, and that, too, abundantly. In this way we are justified by His grace, we are clear of all the terrible judgment of God, and free from the imputation of sin, for He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the cross.

We see thus that instead of seeking good in man, HE PUTS THE GOOD INTO US WHICH IS IN HIMSELF. A dear old stone-breaker said to me many years ago: "You know, sir, there is no good at all in me, it is all bad material here" (pointing to himself). And then he went on to show that the good that was in Christ was put into him. He was right, for by the renewing of

the Holy Spirit, Christ, and the good that was in Christ, is put into us Christians, and good is wrought in us by the power and work of the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

THE WASHING OF REGENERATION, too, has an important place in connection with God's mercy in saving us, for by baptism we are brought into a new place on earth amongst those who have been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and brought under His rule and sway, and who have been outwardly separated from the nations to which we belonged, with all their wickedness. Thus we are brought into a new atmosphere where we can breathe the love of God, and where Christ is loved and His authority owned.

At the beginning of Christianity it was an immense help for a Jew to be separated by baptism from the Jews, with all their pride and determined hatred of Jesus, and for a Gentile to be separated from his own nation, with all the pollution and heathen wickedness that marked it, and to come amongst a new order of people, where God dwelt, and where Christ was known and loved. Baptism brought them into the only clean spot on earth, and was a great safeguard for the children of believers.

Christians had their households baptized and thus broke all connection with the Jews and their religious services, where Christ was hated and unknown, or with the Gentiles and their idolatrous associations. God thus provided amongst baptized Christians all the help of new associations, where Christ was the living bond. It is impossible to understand the true meaning of baptism by looking

at the masses of baptized Christians to-day, for vast numbers have never thought what baptism means, and are pretty well as polluted as the heathen, and in many cases even hate Christ, like the Jew. But where Christians are true to the meaning of baptism, and come under the sway of the Lord Jesus Christ, and are separate from the nations and their politics, there is found all the help of true Christian association among those who are separate from evil. But we need more than baptism, if we are truly to enjoy these privileges; we need to come to Christ and receive His Spirit. This shows the great importance of "THE RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST which He shed on us abundantly."

The Holy Spirit is given by God to those who believe. The very Spirit of Christ Himself is given to us to form us like Christ; so that instead of being any longer hateful and hating one another, we may come out in Christ's Spirit, and walk in His steps, and manifest something of the kindness of God and His love to man. God does not expect us to make ourselves fit to come to Him, and to make a great change in ourselves, but He does call us to repent and own how unfit we are, and to believe the gospel. Then He makes the change for us, and in us, for He gives us His own Spirit, and in this way God changes the man. HE GIVES US THE SPIRIT OF ANOTHER MAN, THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, and this Spirit, given to us, gives us new thoughts, new ways, the thoughts and ways of God's anointed Man, that is of Christ. This is what is meant by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

When we are converted to God, everything is

new, and we begin to live in a new world, the world of God's pleasure. The renewing of the Holy Ghost is a work *in the soul*, and goes on *every day* of our lives, provided that the Spirit is ungrieved by the allowance of sin. If He is grieved, He does not rest till He has brought us to repentance. His proper work is to unfold to us the grace and blessedness of Christ, and His coming glory, and to make us like the Christ whom we learn to appreciate. It is a greater thing than the washing of regeneration. Saul was told to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins, to separate himself by baptism from the untoward and perverse generation of unbelieving Jews, and the nation that had murdered Christ. That was the washing of regeneration. But the greater thing was that he received the Spirit of Christ, God's own Son. In this way he came under the teaching of God's blessed anointed Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. And so it is with us, the Holy Spirit is shed on us abundantly, that is, richly, but not on all men, only on those who believe on Christ and accept Him as "*our Saviour.*"

ALL MEN HAVE THE SAME RIGHT TO CHRIST, AND CHRIST HAS A RIGHT TO EVERY MAN; but if you, my reader, do not claim Him as your Saviour, you will never be saved. You will remain the same sinful and hateful creature till the end, a slave to lust and pleasure, and you will find your place among the lawless in the lake of fire. No one but Christ can redeem you from all lawlessness; but He can do so, and can enable you to prefer the will of God to your own will, and to devote yourself to good works. But not only does He justify us by His grace, but He

makes us "heirs according to the hope of eternal life." He gives us in Christ a glorious inheritance.

ETERNAL LIFE is the great end God has in view in His dealings and ways with man, but it is our privilege to anticipate and enjoy it now in the power of the Holy Spirit. He enables us to find our life in a sphere and order of things that death cannot touch. And we look for the blessed hope, and for another, a second appearing, not the appearing of the *grace* of God, but THE APPEARING OF THE GLORY OF OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Then all that came out when He appeared in grace, will be manifested in glory. God will be publicly glorified. Christ will not again be spat upon and treated with indignity. He will be universally honoured and worshipped by all the nations.

Eternal life will be actually brought in, and death will be swallowed up in victory. Then will be cleared away from this world all that man has gloried in, just as the rolling tide sweeps away on the sea-shore all the castles and wonderful erections that children have made, and when the sand appears again, all trace of them has gone. In the same way will the Lord Jesus clear away all that the pride of man has built up, and all the great names that have been written on the sand. Babylon will fall for ever, and the holy Jerusalem will take its place, and Christ will establish His glorious kingdom that can never pass away or be superseded by another and He will bring in eternal life, where all was marked by death.

God is only waiting till all the efforts of men to bring in a paradise or better state of things have

failed, and when, under human efforts, and the politics of men, life has become unbearable, and when, under the influence of the "man of sin," the people's man, God is completely set aside, then HEAVEN WILL OPEN AND REVEAL A MAN—OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST! And the revelation of His glory will change everything on the face of the earth. He will reign supreme, and we shall reign with Him and shall inherit all things. We shall see Jesus in His public glory, and His kindness and grace and love to man will be the joy and delight of all.

Receive Him now, in this the day of His appearing in grace, and you will reign with Him then when He appears in glory.

H. D'A. C.

GOD'S DELIGHT IN MEN

THE THREEFOLD PARABLE.—“What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not . . . go after that which is lost until he find it? . . . What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? . . . A certain man had two sons . . . and the younger son . . . took his journey into a far country, and there . . . spent all. . . . This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found . . . this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.”—LUKE xv.

IT WAS A WONDERFUL SIGHT TO SEE CHRIST IN THE MIDST OF SINNERS.

He had just challenged the multitude and said: “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,” and “Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.”

The publicans were not a poor class, they were fairly well off, but they had sold all the sacred hopes of Israel and the promises of God as to Christ, in order to associate with the heathen and farm the taxes for the Romans who ruled over them. They had given up the line of separation which God had made between Israel, the worshippers of the true God, and the heathen idolaters. They also enriched themselves by exacting more taxes than were due. The ‘sinners’ were another class, who had given themselves up to any sinful way they chose and left out God. What a strange

sight to see Christ in the midst of such a throng !
What did it mean ?

Christ was the very opposite to what they were, He was the delight and pleasure of God, and they had done nothing but offend God all their lives. Evidently He had some great purpose in His mind, some object for which He was working. Just as a sculptor working at a mass of stone has a beautiful statue in his mind, and does not rest until he has accomplished his design, or an architect who, in laying the foundation, has some magnificent structure which he has planned, and which he eventually erects upon it, so Christ had His object before Him. **HE WAS WORKING FOR RECONCILIATION.** This was the grand object Christ had in surrounding Himself with sinners—that He might make them like Himself, a pleasure and delight to God, and that for ever, so that God could delight in them and they in God.

CHRIST WAS HIMSELF THE PATTERN OF WHAT HE WAS WORKING TO EFFECT. Not that Christ needed to be reconciled to God, for He had never been estranged from God as we were by our wicked works. No, He had always been the delight of God and had always found His delight in God. The moment He was born into this world at Bethlehem, there was a multitude of the heavenly host celebrating : “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.” This last clause would be better translated, “good pleasure in men.” God’s good pleasure was in that Babe, but God’s thought was to get, through that Babe coming into the world, many more besides in whom He could find

His delight, and so they sang of good pleasure in *men*, not simply in a Man.

CHRIST CAME TO BRING ABOUT GOD'S GRAND THOUGHT—GOOD PLEASURE IN MEN. He was from His very infancy the delight of God. He said to God, "Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts." No infant was ever what Christ was. There was no fretting, no will, no wanting His own way even in infancy, for there was no sin there at all. Then, when He grew up into manhood, and connected Himself by baptism with those who, confessing their sins and owning their unworthiness and unfitness for Messiah's kingdom, had been baptized by John the Baptist, God distinguished Him from all the others. The heaven opened upon Him, the Spirit as a dove descended on Him, and the Father's voice declared: "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased"; or "in thee I have found my delight." In this way the Father showed the delight Christ had been to Him, and was from His very birth.

Then He began His ministry, and thus we find Him who was to the infinite pleasure of God surrounding Himself with the very greatest of sinners. **HE DREW THEM BY HIS LOVE**, and He had more influence over them than any one ever had. Never before had they seen anyone so happy in the love of God, so evidently pleasing to God and near to God. He seemed to be more at home in heaven than on earth, and could speak of heaven as if He lived there. No Old Testament saint or prophet had spoken of heaven in the same way, for they had never been there. But Christ came

from heaven and lived in heaven, even though actually He was on the earth in the midst of a sinful crowd.

Well, indeed, might He speak of joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, for He was the Son of God, and heaven was His home. What a sight it was for those sinners to witness—a Man, so different from every other man, for though His glory as in Deity was unknown, He never hid what He was as Man. He made it clear that there was no deceit, no want of transparency, no self-seeking, no pride, no evil of any kind. His eyes spoke of truth in the inward parts, there was nothing false in Him.

THE PRESENCE OF ONE SO INFINITE-
LY BLESSED IN THE MIDST OF SINNERS
WAS MOST ENCOURAGING. They did not run away from Him, they stopped to listen, for HE MADE THEM FEEL THAT HE WANTED THEM. His presence convicted them, for He was holy, true, and infinitely good, and they were the very opposite, but He did not repel them. He made them feel their exceeding sinfulness, but at the same moment He made them feel their case was not hopeless, that He had hopes of them, and that heaven wanted them, that God wanted them, and could save them when they could not possibly save themselves.

Christ was not seeking good in them, but had come to die for them and to put good into them by giving them His own Spirit. They never felt their wickedness as they did in His presence, but they could listen to Him when they could not listen to the priests, who only denounced them as law-breakers

and as meriting judgment, whereas CHRIST CARRIED IN HIS VERY FACE FORGIVENESS FOR ALL MEN. Not that there was any outward halo or anything special in His natural appearance, but He made it manifest that there was forgiveness for man, if only he would repent and turn to God. To put it in the words of Scripture: "GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

It was with this object that God sent His Son into the world, that the world—that is, any man and every man—might be encouraged to turn to God, and that the great distance between man and God might be removed. God Himself did not need to be reconciled, for He was always good and blessed; it was man who was at enmity, not God. God was working that not only should we have no will of our own opposed to God's will, but that another kind of man might be formed in us by God's Spirit, that we might become like Christ and delight to do the will of God. Christ did not look upon these publicans and sinners as hopeless cases, for nothing is impossible with God. He came amongst them on purpose that they might be reconciled to God.

Whilst He was doing this blessed work, He was rudely interrupted by the murmuring of the Scribes and Pharisees: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." It was a base insinuation, for they meant that He loved sin, and therefore associated with sinners. The Pharisees prided themselves in being outwardly separate from evil, but inwardly they were as wicked as others. The

Scribes wrote the letter of the law on paper or stone, but they never wrote the spirit of the law—love, either in their own hearts or in others. This only Christ could do, but they made out that He was doing the very opposite, that He was encouraging sin. But **NO ONE CAN BAFFLE CHRIST ; EVIL CAN EFFECT NOTHING AGAINST HIM, BUT ONLY TESTIFIES FOR HIM.** Their wicked insinuation only brought out the more how blessed He was. He answers by the grandest parable ever told, in which He shows that all the three Persons of the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, were all working for the blessing of man.

He began with the Shepherd, because it was not possible that reconciliation could be effected without the work of Christ in dying for us. He is "the good Shepherd" who "lays down his life for the sheep." Man is a sinner, and must die. Therefore the distance between man and God can only be removed by the death of Christ. The sinner must die, and so Christ died for us. In His death the sinner is put away from the eye of God for ever. God has dealt with man in judgment and removed him in the death of Christ, so that all who believe in Christ are free from judgment for ever, and are no longer sinners in His sight. God put them away in judgment in the death of Christ, but in Christ risen from the dead they are brought near to God in a new way and into all the favour and acceptance of Christ Himself.

THE SHEPHERD SOUGHT THE SHEEP UNTIL HE FOUND IT. He stopped at nothing, not even at death itself, and that death the death

of a victim, of Himself, offered in sacrifice in our behalf. "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." This is true for all who believe. The passage (Rom. v. 10) clearly speaks of us who believe in Christ. For us, the distance between our souls and God is totally removed in the death of His Son. But how this speaks of the marvellous love of God—the death of His Son! He has given His own dear Son in order to recover us, and remove the distance between us and Him.

The believer can say with the deepest thankfulness: The sinner, that is, myself, has been put away for ever in judgment in the death of God's Son, and when He died I died, and now He has brought me near to Him, in Christ, and in favour for ever and ever! The will that opposed itself to God is gone in death, and the man is gone who had the will. "You, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouceable in his sight" (Col. i. 21, 22). Man, that is oneself, is so irremediably bad and sinful, and so marked by a will that opposes itself to God, that the only thing God can do is to bring man to an end in death, and this He has done for all who believe, in the death of Christ, "in the body of His flesh," the flesh of Christ, "through death." Well may we "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement [or reconciliation]" (Rom. v. 11).

How wonderful to think of the Shepherd in the midst of those publicans and sinners, and with

death before Him in the near future, describing how the Shepherd seeks the sheep until He finds it! With what unutterable love to them must He have told out that parable! Who can wonder that they were so attracted and drawn to Him? But not only did Christ die for us to effect reconciliation in His death, but He rose again, and went to the right hand of God, and sent down the Holy Spirit to dwell in all His own, in all who believe in the gospel. In doing this He **GAVE THEM THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION**, if I may so say, for He gave them His own Spirit, the Spirit of the Man of God's pleasure, so that they might be a pleasure to God in the power of the Holy Spirit. This led to reconciliation in a very practical way.

At the commencement of Christianity there were thousands of Christians who lived and walked in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the Spirit of Christ, and thus **IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT THERE WERE MEN ON THE EARTH WHO WERE RECONCILED TO GOD AND WHO PLEASED GOD**. Yes, Christ had not come in vain. He wanted men for the pleasure of God, and He got them. But more than that, **HE SENT OUT RECONCILED MEN TO BRING OTHERS INTO RECONCILIATION**, with the result that on all sides men were attracted and brought to Christ. This is the meaning of the second part of the parable, where the woman lights a candle and sweeps the house, and seeks diligently till she finds the silver piece that she had lost.

The woman represents those indwelt by the Spirit, who search for the lost piece of silver, that is for those for whom Christ died, and for whom

He shed His precious blood to redeem them. The light of the candle refers to the Holy Spirit, who is given to all who obey Christ and believe the gospel. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Man who was ever the delight and pleasure of God, and it was in this Spirit that the early Christians went in and out among their fellow-men. Thus this second part of the parable—the woman searching for the silver piece—represents the work of the Holy Spirit, searching for the lost sinner by means of multitudes of happy men and women in whom He dwells and whom He inspires to encourage others to repent and turn to God.

This is what God has been doing from the very beginning of Christianity, sending out reconciled men to bring others into reconciliation. There is a wonderful power in a man who is consciously near to God and pleasing God, and sensible of God's delight in him. **WHEREVER THERE ARE RECONCILED MEN, OTHERS WILL BE ATTRACTED TO CHRIST.** For Christ is in those who are reconciled, and they have an influence which others could not possibly have. They are the greatest encouragement to guilty sinners, for if God has saved them and made them so happy and pleasing to Him, He can do the same for others.

NO ONE CAN MEASURE THE INFLUENCE OF A MAN NEAR TO GOD, of a man in the real good of reconciliation. How often we Christians find we have no power to do good, and that we cannot influence any one to come to God. It is our own fault; we have been so worldly, so

hard, so selfish, so bent on pleasing ourselves or just our own loved ones, and have not been consciously near to God and living for His pleasure. But put a man or woman who is near to God and truly reconciled, anywhere you like, he or she is sure to leave an impression somewhere that no one else could. Sinners will draw near to such to learn about God.

RECONCILED PEOPLE CANNOT HELP ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO BE RECONCILED TO GOD, for they commend God to man. They give sinners the idea that God cares for them and that God wants them, for they take such interest in their souls, and desire that they too should be saved and brought to God. Besides, they are themselves a wonderful proof of what God can do, and loves to do, for man. They are evidently not bent on doing their own will, as once they were, but on pleasing God, and serving God. Indeed, they are not the same people as once they were, but they are wonderfully like Christ; and well they may be, for the Spirit of Christ dwells in them, and Christ morally is in them, yea, He is their life. They are no longer far from God, they are near Him. Sinners draw near to such people who would listen to no one else, for they feel they care for them and desire their good, however faithfully they may reprove them and convict them of sin. They can bear the light when such true love is behind it, and such tender grace.

THE GREATEST TROPHY OF RECONCILIATION IS THE CHIEF OF SINNERS, namely, Saul of Tarsus. You might have thought that Christ could do nothing with such a man, for

he was the greatest enemy of Christ on the earth. He was more inhuman than any one in Europe to-day, for he went like a wild animal amongst a simple, harmless people whose spirit was like Christ, and who only prayed for him and showed him love, like Stephen when he prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Saul would wipe out such people from the earth, but Christ met him outside Damascus, and streamed down upon him from heaven the light of His love as it shone in the face of a Man in heaven, Jesus, God's own Son. He was instantly subdued, the will gone, and he prays, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Not only so, in the power of the Spirit of Christ which was given to him he went forth and preached.

He was a changed man, Christ was in him, another life was manifested—not a life of hatred and self-will, but a life of love and holy submission to the will of God. To use his own words: "God hath committed unto us," or more literally, "put into us," the word of reconciliation, for the expression of reconciliation was put right into him, so that he was a living monument of it and witness to it. He was another man, the will was gone, and Christ was manifested in him. Consequently, wherever he went sinners were attracted and brought to Christ, and reconciled to God.

Now we come to the third part of this wonderful parable, that which relates to the prodigal son. And here we have set forth in a wonderful way the Father. The part specially relating to the Father in this great work comes last, because **THE GREAT OBJECT OF RECONCILIATION IS THE PLEASURE OF GOD THE FATHER.**

The father gets his son! This is the great end in view in the ministry of reconciliation. God the Father is the source of it all and the object of it all. It was the Father who sent His Son and who sent down the Holy Spirit to accomplish in us all His good pleasure, namely, that "many sons should be brought to glory."

The prodigal is a picture of the sinner in his desire to be independent of God and to go his own way and live as he pleases. Many such surrounded Christ at that very time, but He came to seek them and to save them. Everything may seem to go well with us as we set out in life to please ourselves and leave out God. Worldly friends flock round us as long as they get anything out of us, and all seems very bright whilst we can enjoy ourselves and follow our own will. But the time comes with every one when we have spent all. No glory, or honour, or pleasure, or property can we take through death to the other side. All is soon over. Well indeed if we come to our senses before it is too late. Sooner or later we must all come to it, that **WE HAVE SPENT ALL**, and there is **NOTHING LEFT BUT DEATH**.

Even the millionaire will find at last that he has nothing left but death, and, remember, after death comes the judgment. So it is better to come to our senses now, in a day of grace, whilst we can think of the goodness in the heart of God for us, and of all His kindness to us, and turn to God before it be too late.

IT WAS HIS FATHER'S KINDNESS THAT BROUGHT THE PRODIGAL TO REPENTANCE. He said: "How many hired

servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare." His father was kind even to the servants, but he had not a friend where he was, for "no man gave unto him," "and he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat." Such is the result of turning from God, and of riotous living, and of indulging ourselves away from God. Misery, want, and death are the end of it all, as well as a guilty conscience and the terrible remembrance of a wasted life.

The thought of the kindness of his father produces repentance. He determined to arise and go to his father, and own how he has sinned against heaven and before him, and is no more worthy to be called his son, and ask to be made as one of his hired servants. He had the true spirit of repentance, and the sense of his utter unworthiness, and so must we, if we wish God to hear us. Whilst we have ideas of our own fitness or worthiness, we shall not know what it is to be forgiven and saved. We must come as sinners, or it is useless to come at all. God cannot encourage self-justification. But he does not stop at repentance, he "arose and came to his father." The same grace that produces in us repentance and a sense of our guilt, encourages us to confess all to God and count on His grace. But **GOD IS ALWAYS FIRST IN EVERYTHING**, and before the son could go any distance, "when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him."

IT IS THE FATHER WHO REMOVES THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE PENITENT SINNER AND HIMSELF. It is God's joy to do

this, and He only could do it. It is by the death of His own Son that the distance is removed and reconciliation effected. Then, too, He gives the Holy Spirit to all who obey Christ, and the love of God is "shed abroad in our hearts." It was so with the prodigal, **THE FATHER COVERED HIM WITH KISSES**, heaped upon him marks of affection. He did not say a word to him about his past life, or the squandered property, but gives him every possible proof of his love, and of his delight at having his son back.

The son, too, gladly accepted the father's embrace, and in the presence of love confesses how he has sinned. He could not ask to be as a hired servant, for already he was treated as a son, and not a shade of distance existed between them. Such is the welcome, dear fellow-sinner, that awaits you when you have spent all, have come to yourself, and turn to God! But what about fitness for the father's presence and the father's home? All that is provided for. The father says to the servants, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." The best thing in heaven is reserved for returning sinners.

THE BEST ROBE IS CHRIST, there is no clothing like it; we are clothed with Christ and are formed morally like Him. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Nothing of the prodigal goes into the house, for his moral clothing is Christ, and in the end our bodies will be changed and made like unto His body of glory, like Christ Himself.

Then, too, a ring is put on his hand. **THE RING REPRESENTS THE DIGNITY OF A SON**. He is not a servant, but a son. There are

no creatures in heaven who have such a place of honour and dignity as that given to us. The angels will gladly make way for us when Christ introduces the many sons into the Father's house. We are the honoured companions of His Son, not of the angels. The angels are but servants, we are sons. Then, again, **THE SHOES ON HIS FEET REPRESENT THE LIBERTY OF A SON.** The servants in the East do not wear shoes in the house, but the sons do, and God gives us the liberty of sonship. We are loved with the love wherewith He loves His Son.

THE FATTED CALF REPRESENTS THE FEAST OF DELIGHT PROVIDED FOR US IN CHRIST. The feast represents the celebration of all the grand results of the work of Christ in dying for us, and in securing the pleasure and glory of God for ever. We read, "they began to be merry," but there is no end to the merriment, for the joy that Christ gives is inexhaustible. The world's joys end in death.

WHEN GOD GETS A SON, MAN GETS A BROTHER. This brings us to the last part of the parable; the elder son in the field hears the music and dancing as he drew nigh to the house. I wish we were more musical; I mean, that we were marked by the music of Christ. He alone knows the true singing; He will lead the music and singing in the coming day; indeed, He is the music. If we had more of the happiness of Christ, we should make it more evident that prodigals have been restored and brothers come home. The servants said: "thy brother is come." The elder son had a brother in truth for the first time; not

a quarrelsome one, not a selfish one, nor a murderer like Cain, but a brother who loves, like Christ.

WHEN GOD LOST MAN, MAN LOST HIS BROTHER. Ever since sin came in, men have not only been wrong with God, but wrong with one another. Wars, family feuds, evils and wrongs of all kinds have marked the world all along. There was nothing of this in Christ, and there is nothing of this in one who is truly in the good of reconciliation. Under the influence of Christ, and in the power of His life, instead of quarrelling we love and serve not only one another, but even those who hate and persecute us. For nearly two thousand years the world has found in their midst men who are brothers, and who will care for them and serve them, no matter how badly they may have been treated by them. The world may hate them and treat them spitefully, but when they are in need, they have found again and again that a Christian will serve them when no one else will look at them, for when God gets a son, man gets a brother. The elder son was a Pharisee, full of his self-righteousness, and neither a son nor a brother; yet the father came out and entreated him to come in, for God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Come then to God whilst He calls you.

H. D'A. C.

THE TRIUMPHAL DEPARTURE OF THE SON OF GOD

"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."—JOHN xvi. 28 (Read also chapters xvii.—xx.).

THERE NEVER WAS ANY MAN AS GLORIOUS AS CHRIST! Whatever the glory of any other man, it was nothing at all in comparison with that of Christ. He stands quite alone in His glory, no matter what men, in their self-love and pride, may say against Him. In these days, when so many around us despise Christ and give up all profession of His Name, it is well that we should get a greater sense of His greatness, and of the folly of those who turn away from Him or take no notice whatever of Him.

HE ALONE CAME FROM GLORY, TROD A PATHWAY OF GLORY, AND WENT BACK TO GLORY. He came into this world from the Father, from that scene of satisfaction and delight in which the Father has ever been. He came into this world and revealed God, and made known His love. He manifested, too, His glory, for the blessing of all who received Him, but the world had no taste for glory. They preferred sin, and Christ has left the world, and has gone back to glory as Man, in order that His own may be with Him in that glory for ever and ever.

Every step of His departure was marked by glory. NO ONE COULD HURRY HIM, or make Him

leave before the time. He said, "Father, the hour is come." The time to depart was fixed by the Father, and not by the world, and He did not leave till He had said all He came to say and had done all He came to do.

Again, in that last and terrible night when men were plotting to destroy Him, **NO ONE COULD DISTURB HIS PEACE**, and in His closing moments He opened out to His disciples the glorious scheme He had before Him, and His arrangements and provision for the continuance of the testimony till He should come again. Then He prayed, and **NO ONE COULD PRAY LIKE CHRIST, HIS PRAYER COMMANDED ATTENTION, IT WAS THE DEMAND OF LOVE**. It was the Son making demands of the Father on behalf of His own, and entrusting them to His care.

In that wonderful prayer He opened out the eternal future of His own, and settled glory upon them, His glory, which the Father had given Him. "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them"; and then He says what the effect on the world would be—"that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

NO ONE COULD FRUSTRATE HIS PLANS OR OVERTHROW HIS WILL, yea, His plans of glory and His will for His own had to do with their blessing the other side of death where the will of man can never come. His will was to have them where He is, that they may behold His glory, the glory of the One who was loved before the foundation of the world, a glory we may be

permitted to behold, but which cannot be communicated to us, can never be ours. Then He declares His intentions when risen from the dead of declaring the Father's Name to His own, and every word of this He carried out. There is not a trace of defeat or dismay in all His closing words, but the contrary—victory and glory.

Then He goes to meet the foe. There is no panic or fear in His heart. He does not hide from the band of soldiers that were seeking Him, but He even goes fearlessly up to them and asks: "Whom seek ye?" "Jesus of Nazareth," was the reply. He answers: "I am He." The traitor stood with them, but **NOT EVEN JUDAS DARE APPROACH TO KISS HIM** till Jesus permitted it. And in spite of the power of the band and their swords and staves, **THE SOLDIERS COULD NOT ARREST HIM**. On the contrary, "they went backward and fell to the ground," and but for His mercy they might have fallen dead.

Then He repeats His question, and on their replying again, "Jesus of Nazareth," He answers as before, "I am He"; only this time He allows them to arrest Him, but **THEY COULD NOT ARREST HIS DISCIPLES**, He would not permit it. He says: "If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." Jesus wanted His disciples to continue the testimony when He had gone, and so He would not allow them to be put to death. Besides **HIS WORD COULD NOT BE BROKEN**, that He had just said to the Father: "Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none." Again, He could not allow His disciples to take the sword. He rebukes Peter for doing so, and demanding His

liberty for the moment, saying, "Suffer ye thus far," He touches the ear of the wounded man and heals him. He came to heal and not to wound, nor would He allow His disciples to take the sword, and He could not be diverted from doing the Father's will, nor from drinking the cup which the Father had given Him.

HE CONTROLS THE WHOLE SCENE, and whilst allowing their wickedness to show itself, He works all in favour of the testimony that He was the Christ, and makes even the wrath of man to praise Him (Ps. lxxvi. 10). Under the influence of the Spirit of prophecy even THE HIGH PRIEST HIMSELF HAD TO PROPHECY IN HIS FAVOUR. He "gave counsel . . . that it was expedient that one man should die for the people," prophesying as high priest "that Jesus should die for that nation: and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

Thus against his will Caiaphas was forced to proclaim the efficacy of His death and its necessity, and that too before the death of Jesus took place! Every incident bears witness to Him; even PETER'S DENIAL WITNESSED TO THE TRUTH, for Jesus had said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."

Then, before the court they can find no evidence by which to condemn Jesus, but they seek to get Him to witness against Himself. His answer convicts them, and completely confounds them. There was abundance of evidence, if the high priest wanted witnesses. His very transparency baffles

them—"I spake openly to the world," etc., "and in secret have I said nothing . . . ask them which heard me what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said." It was easy to get witnesses, but they would have witnessed to the truth, and the court would not call them up. In every case, before whatever judge He was brought, **THE PRISONER BECAME THE JUDGE, AND THE JUDGE THE PRISONER!** for Christ convicted the judges, instead of the judges convicting Christ. The tables were turned, the Bar became the Bench and the Bench the Bar. Christ was really the Judge all through, and the judges were convicted. Jesus convicted them, but they could not convict Him. An officer struck Jesus with the palm of his hand saying, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" but **HE SILENCED THE OFFICER OF THE COURT**—"If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"

They had brought Him before Annas first and then before Caiaphas, but He confounded all His judges, for He was the Son of God, and every one who attempts to judge God must get the worst of it, for God will judge him.

Then they bring Him before Pilate, the heathen governor, the representative of Cæsar, the head of the great Latin Empire that then ruled the world. Pilate, however, easily sees through the Jewish accusers, that they have no case, and he bids them judge Him according to their law. But the Jews wanted Him to be killed, and being under the dominion of Rome they were not allowed to put any one to death; otherwise they would have

stoned Jesus. But HE COULD NOT BE STONED, for Jesus had settled three years before that His death would be by crucifixion, when He told Nicodemus: "So must the Son of man be lifted up," and no one could set aside His word.

The next thing that comes out is that HIS KINGDOM COULD NOT PASS AWAY, IT WAS GREATER THAN CÆSAR'S, GREATER THAN THE LATIN EMPIRE, yea, it will supersede it and never be overthrown. There stood before Pilate at that moment the One of whom Daniel speaks as the Stone cut out of the mountain, without hands, who was to smite the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay and break them to pieces, that is the One who was to destroy the great Latin kingdom when it should rise and assume its final form, the great European coalition of ten kingdoms, and who would set up in its place a universal kingdom which would never pass away.

If Cæsar, or the Latin empire, unjustly put Christ on the cross, put Him to an open shame, in the end Christ will come out of heaven and destroy the Latin kingdom and set up in its place a glorious kingdom that can never be overthrown. That kingdom was there before Pilate—embodied in a Man—in Jesus, for all the blessed principles of the kingdom were set forth in Him. It was not "of this world," else His servants would fight, but His kingdom was "not from hence." It was not won by the sword of man, nor was it founded on principles of lust and pride, but upon righteousness and the love of God.

Jesus did not claim to be a King. In answer

to Pilate's question, "Art thou a king then?" He says: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Pilate's answer, "What is truth?" speaks for itself; it exposed to the very foundations the Roman Empire, that it was not founded in truth, for that was unknown; it was founded on the principles of this world, and was built upon falsehood, for great though the Empire might seem to be, God was unknown and His rights were entirely forgotten.

There was no real life in the Roman world, for they had not the true God. It was like society to-day, a big lie; it professed great things, but it could not satisfy. Christ alone was the truth, and **THE TRUTH COULD NOT BE SILENCED**; yea, it shone forth all the brighter in the midst of the lying world around. Jesus alone declared God, and He alone presented in His own Person what a man is who satisfies and delights the heart of God. Christ as Man expressed all that God would have man to be.

What a searching word that was for Pilate, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice"! All who wanted true satisfaction and what is truly life, all indeed who wanted the true God, found in Christ all they desired, the true satisfaction of all they craved. He was and is the Truth. Only by Christ can we find the truth about anything, whether it be about God or about man, about the world, or about Satan its prince. But for Christ, we could never know the love of God, nor how low man has fallen, and how far he has got away from

God. An infidel or a self-righteous man may appear to be moral, but he is a living lie, for he has no true idea about God, or Christ, about himself, or the world. But what Jesus said to Pilate, "Every one who is of the truth heareth my voice," the voice of Christ, holds good to-day.

Have *you* heard His voice? If not, you are not of the truth, and if a man is not of the truth he is a lie. God has shone out clearly in Jesus. There is no excuse for being deceived. Our guilty state has come fully to light, and that in the presence of divine love revealed in Jesus. It is evident we are all sinners; it is also evident that God would save us, and can do so by means of His own Son. "When we were yet sinners Christ died for us." No one ever spoke so plainly as Jesus. He told everything out. He fully and perfectly declared God.

Not only could the truth not be silenced, but it penetrated and reached the conscience, and Pilate was obliged to declare, "I find in him no fault at all." Then taking advantage of the custom of releasing a prisoner at the feast time, he offers to release to them Jesus, the King of the Jews. Then **THE WORLD HAD TO DECLARE ITSELF—THEY WOULD RATHER HAVE A ROBBER THAN A GIVER, A MURDERER THAN A SAVIOUR!** for they answered—"Not this man, but Barabbas." At this the Governor loses all sense of justice, and scourges Jesus after publicly declaring His innocence! The soldiers, too, mock Him and put on Him a crown of thorns and a purple robe.

Even though it was in mockery, **THE SOLDIERS HAD TO TESTIFY TO HIS FUTURE GLORY**

AS KING OF ISRAEL AND RULER OF THE WORLD. For Jesus will yet wear the kingly crown and the purple or imperial robe ; for He will soon return to be welcomed by Israel as their Messiah and King, and to be universally honoured when He comes forth King of kings and Lord of lords. Pilate then again declared he found no fault in Him, and as he brought Jesus forth to them, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, **EVEN PILATE COULD NOT REFRAIN FROM PROCLAIMING—“BEHOLD THE MAN!”** For He *was* the Man. There was no other. Every other man was a fallen creature and a guilty sinner.

Jesus stood alone in His moral glory, the delight of God, the perfect Man, full of grace and truth. All blessedness was expressed in Him, all grace was there. Yea, more, He alone brought the love of God to man and made God known. God calls every one everywhere to “Behold the Man,” and learn in Him the love of God to sinful man, and find in Him the Saviour of the world. It is impossible to behold Him really and not find in Him all the comfort and blessing that we need. For in Him is found the answer to all the need in this sinful world. If you look, you will live, for whosoever believeth in Him hath everlasting life, and all who believe are justified from all things.

Pilate perhaps only thought to get rid of his prisoner by exciting human pity and compassion, but hatred of God revealed in love had dried up every drop of human kindness, and instead of beholding the Man and learning in Him the love of God, they cry again, “Crucify him, crucify him.”

To this Pilate replies, "Take ye him and crucify him," adding for the third time, "I find no fault in him." Thus we see that **THE JUDGE WAS FORCED THREE TIMES TO ACQUIT THE PRISONER!** and then he bids the Jews to take Him and crucify Him, that he might divest himself of his responsibility and put it on the Jews. But they reply, "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."

At this Pilate is the more afraid, for **THE GLORY OF THE PRISONER INTIMIDATES THE JUDGE!** And entering the judgment hall he asks, "Whence art thou?" but Jesus in His holy majesty gave him no answer. Then Pilate appeals to his authority, which Jesus at once owns as given him "from above," and that therefore the greater sin belonged to the Jews for delivering Him up. He thus made it evident to Pilate that He submitted to his authority because it was given him of God, and that Jesus was not a rebel. Then Pilate sought again to release Him, but the Jews reply, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar."

This was too much for him, and **PILATE IS CAUGHT BY HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD. HE BARTERS HIS SOUL TO KEEP THE FRIENDSHIP OF CÆSAR!** He thought everything depended upon his having the favour of Cæsar, and the favour and approval of God does not come into his mind. But he lost both worlds, for soon after he was banished by Cæsar and died in exile! However, he makes one

more effort, and that the Jews may be thoroughly tested, PILATE HAD TO GIVE A SECOND TESTIMONY: "BEHOLD YOUR KING," words no doubt guided by the Lord that the nation might definitely decide whether they would have Christ for King or not. "We have no king but Cæsar" is their reply, and in these words they not only refuse Jesus, but refuse and deny their God.

Foolish nation! Christ would have saved them—Cæsar destroyed them. They are now thoroughly apostate, they refused their God revealed in grace. All is over, and Pilate delivers Jesus to be crucified. He is led to Golgotha, "the place of a skull," a place that well described the end of man. There they crucified the Prince of Life, and that between two others—Christ in the midst, the central object, as He will be too in glory.

Then Pilate writes the title and puts it on the cross—"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Written for all classes and nations, in Hebrew for the religious man, in Greek for the learned and philosophical man, in Latin for the world in general. The Jews wanted Pilate to write: "He said I am King of the Jews," but JESUS COULD NOT BE STYLED A PRETENDER, for He was truly the Christ, the King of Israel, and the title could not be altered. "What I have written, I have written," was Pilate's determined answer.

EVEN THE SOLDIERS WHO CRUCIFIED HIM HAD TO PROVE HE WAS THE CHRIST, for they fulfil a prophecy written a thousand years before: they take His garments and make four parts, and cast lots for the coat whose it should be.

It might be thought of no importance what they did, but every event that took place round that cross had to witness in favour of Jesus and prove Him to be the Christ. The soldiers of course had no Bible, knew nothing of its contents, and probably were not even aware of its existence, so ignorant were they.

David had written in the Psalms, under the guidance and inspiration of the Spirit of God, many centuries before Christ was born: "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots" (John xix. 24). It is the fulfilment of Psalm xxii. 18, a psalm which describes the atoning sufferings of Christ as forsaken of God, and also His treatment at the hands of men and the glorious results of His work in resurrection. The Jews had been accustomed to sing it for hundreds of years, and now they see it fulfilled, and thus the soldiers, unknown to themselves, prove Jesus to be the Christ! The coat or vest, too, was without seam and had been worn next His holy Person. Naturally they would have divided it into four pieces, but **HIS VEST COULD NOT BE RENT**, or the prophetic word would have been overthrown. Besides, the vest was a picture of Christ's beautiful human life that had never had a rent in it nor a tear, for He was without spot and blameless, and all the wrath of man could not rend it.

Next, we find that in spite of His terrible sufferings and the wicked treatment of His enemies, **NOTHING COULD MAKE HIM FORGET HIS MOTHER, NOR STAIN HIS PERFECT HUMANITY**. Jesus was truly man, and nothing could dry up His perfect human love, or make Him

forget what was due to her who had cared for Him from His birth. He was perfect in every relationship in which He was found down here. But to whose care could He entrust His mother? Certainly not to His brethren after the flesh, James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, for they did not at one time believe on Him (John vii.), nor could He trust human nature. He commits her to "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and says, "Woman, behold thy son," and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother" and from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

This incident, showing the perfection of His humanity, is all the more remarkable since it is related in the gospel, the special object of which was to bring out the truth of His Person as Son of God, and which omits the story of His birth. It also sets forth the fact that the hopes of Israel and their future national glory could not be entrusted to the unbelieving nation, but are entrusted to the church, to those who love Christ, and not to those who do not believe on Him. It is not the unbelieving Jew, but the true Christian, that looks forward to and speaks continually of the millennial reign of Christ. Then Jesus for a thousand years will reign over this world and be Israel's King, will restore the twelve tribes to their own land, make them a blessing to all the nations, and establish them for ever.

Then, again, even HIS PHYSICAL SUFFERINGS WITNESSED IN HIS FAVOUR and proved Him to be the Christ. Ten centuries before David had written of Christ—"In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," and that this might be

fulfilled Jesus saith, "I thirst." False Christs do not suffer before they are publicly and universally received, but all Scripture had shown that the path of the true Christ, the One truly anointed of God, lay through suffering, that the Christ must suffer and enter into His glory. They fulfilled then the Scripture and gave Him the vinegar, and when He had received the vinegar, His words, "IT IS FINISHED," SHOWED THAT HE COULD NOT AND DID NOT DIE TILL HIS WORK WAS DONE. All was fully accomplished. All the power of man and of Satan could not prevent Him finishing His work. Thank God, He left nothing unfinished. He came to suffer for sins and to make atonement, yea, to do the will of God, and He did it, and then like a mighty Conqueror He cried, not in weakness, but with a loud voice, "It is finished," and departed.

Nor did He die like one of us, for He was the Son of God, and at the very last moment He could have come down from the cross. HIS LIFE COULD NOT BE TAKEN FROM HIM. He handed over His Spirit to the Father, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke xxiii.). He had said, "I lay down my life . . . no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself," and this was just what He did. It was not a case of having to succumb to crucifixion, which was generally a lingering death, and lasted often two or three days. The Son of God gave up His own spirit and delivered it up. An ordinary man would have to let it go; or breathe his last, the moment God required it; but Jesus voluntarily gave it up of Himself into the Father's hands, a

thing which could be said of no mere man. It was the act of Christ Himself, the Son of God, in His own divine power.

Viewed as Man, He was crucified and slain, and that by wicked hands, and yet without His permission they could do nothing, nor prevent Him in His own power laying down His life, in order to do the Father's will. How blessed to know that all is done, that there is nothing left for the sinner to do. He has only to accept the work that has been done for him, and the One who did it. We have not to put away our sins, nor could we do so, but Jesus has borne them Himself "in his own body on the tree." We are not called to satisfy the demands of Justice against us, but to rejoice that Christ has done it, in His own death, for all who believe in Him. All is finished. We have only now to believe in Him who finished the work to the complete satisfaction of God who sent Him. He came to do it, and He did it, and no one was allowed to hinder Him or to have a hand in the great work of making atonement. It is all of God.

Even after His death the will of man was restrained, and all was still made to witness to Him, for **NOT A BONE OF HIM COULD BE BROKEN.** The soldiers came to do it, and indeed they did it in the case of the others, the two malefactors. But another Psalm had still to be fulfilled, and the soldiers' hands were arrested, little as they knew the promise to the righteous man in Psalm xxxiv., "a bone of him shall not be broken." But one soldier more heartless than the rest could not let Christ alone, though evidently

dead, and he drew his spear and pierced His side But EVEN THE BRUTAL SPEAR THRUST PROVED HIM TO BE THE CHRIST, for Zechariah some 500 years before had said, "They shall look on him whom they pierced."

What overwhelming testimony that He was the long-promised Messiah and Saviour! THE BLOOD AND WATER FROM HIS SIDE WAS A GRAND WITNESS TO CHRIST'S TWOFOLD WORK, as well as to the reality of His death. For we read that on piercing His side "forthwith came there out blood and water." The BLOOD spake of atonement for sin, of sin put away for ever, so that if the cruel soldier repented and believed in Jesus, he could never be condemned for piercing His side, for the "blood of Jesus Christ his (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sin." It was the blood of the righteous One, who suffered once for sins, "the Just for the unjust" and "who himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree," so that every sinner who believes in Christ might be free from the terrible weight of his sins, and know that they were for ever put away.

Then THE WATER out of His side spoke of purification and cleansing by the death of Christ from the man that was a sinner, that is from ourselves, for Christ represented man, and when He died the man that deserved the judgment was put away in judgment in the death of Christ. In this way that same soldier, if he afterwards (as is possible) became a believer, would find cleansing and freedom in the death of Christ from all that he was as a sinner, and he could never be looked upon in heaven as the man that pierced His side,

but as in all the acceptance and perfection of Christ Himself! What a grand answer to the soldier's wicked act! It brings out the love of God expressed in the death of Jesus, and presents, as I have said, the twofold result or efficacy of His work: (1) to atone for what we have done; (2) to cleanse us from all that we are as sinners, for we ourselves came to an end in God's sight in the death of Christ.

Next we find that HE COULD NOT BE BURIED WITH THE WICKED in a felon's grave. Isaiah's prophecy, given about 700 years before, had to be fulfilled, they "appointed his grave with the wicked, but he was with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was there guile in his mouth" (Isa. liii. 9, N. Trans.). A rich man, Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple, is brought out at the right moment. God does not think much of money, but if He wants a rich man He can easily find one, and Joseph goes boldly to Pilate and gets leave to have the body of Jesus, and provides a new tomb in the garden close by, cut out of the rock. Into that clean tomb was put the only pure sinless body that ever was buried. Nicodemus, too, comes forward, the ruler who three years before had come to Jesus by night.

THE CRUCIFIXION COULD NOT SHAKE THE FAITH OF NICODEMUS, BUT CONVINCED HIM THAT JESUS WAS THE CHRIST. For at the very beginning of Christ's ministry Jesus had told him not only that He would be crucified, but that His crucifixion was absolutely necessary if man was to have eternal life. He said

all that time before, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Nicodemus now sees how wonderfully Christ's words have come true. His faith is strengthened and he associates himself with the body of Jesus, and brings costly spices for the burial. He believed in Him, even when Christ was dead, and when His disciples had forsaken Him and fled, and he boldly confesses Him when outwardly it seemed as if all hope was gone.

DEATH COULD NOT KEEP JESUS IN THE GRAVE, NOR COULD HE SEE CORRUPTION. It was impossible that One so blessed should be held by death, impossible that His body should remain in the grave. His body could not break up, it could not see corruption. Everything depended on His resurrection. He had Himself said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," referring to the temple of His body, *and He did it*. He proved Himself the Son of God by waking out of death His own body, and raising it up, breaking for ever the power of death and the grave. He did so not for Himself, for He need not have died so far as He Himself was concerned, but we were under the power of death, and He has broken it for us by rising again.

All that the power of man and of Satan could do was to bring out the greater power of Christ

and of God. They tried to silence Christ and to keep Him in the grave, but Christ silenced them, for He rose again the third day, and He is the one living Man presented for our faith, the one light and blessing for man from that day to this. Neither the stone rolled against the tomb nor the Roman guard could prevent Him rising again; yea, John does not even think them worth mentioning, for what could they do against the Son of God? They could no more prevent Christ rising again than a number of toy soldiers could prevent a little child from waking and getting up in the morning.

Thus CHRIST CARRIED THE TESTIMONY THROUGH DEATH, AND THEN ON THE RESURRECTION SIDE SENT A JOYFUL MESSAGE TO HIS OWN. He reveals Himself to a woman, to Mary Magdalene, for it was a woman that brought sin into the world, and a woman must be the first to tell of its removal, and of the victory of God over evil. His message announces greater things than they could ever have looked for: "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Thus HE PROCLAIMED GREATER BLESSINGS FOR MAN THAN EVER WERE LOST BY THE FALL. They were called to new relationships, the blessing of sonship—His Father was their Father, His God was their God, and they were His brethren, the intimate companions and associates of the heavenly and exalted Man, and His home was their home!

His message rallied His own, and THE MOST WONDERFUL MEETING EVER KNOWN WAS HELD. They locked the doors to exclude

all that was contrary to Christ, everything that would intrude or oppose, but locked doors could not hinder the risen Christ from entering where love, holy love, would welcome Him. He must be with His own, and He came and stood in the midst, and, **AS TRIUMPHANT CONQUEROR HE PROCLAIMED PEACE**, saying, "Peace be unto you." Then He showed to them His hands and His side, and identified Himself to them as the very same Jesus, and gave the proofs of His grand and glorious victory. Henceforth all cause for tear was over, and peace was theirs for ever.

This peace has belonged to Christians ever since, it is ours to-day, for our Christ can never die, nor can He ever lose the effects of the victory He has won. We read, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw *the Lord*." It was truly a grand sight—**THEY SAW THE LORD WITH THE HEAD OF THE GIANT IN HIS HANDS**—that is, with the evident proofs that He had triumphed over death and over the whole united power of Satan and of evil. Then He repeats His announcement, "Peace be unto you," and adds, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you," and then He breathes into them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

Thus **HE SENDS THEM FORTH IN HIS OWN SPIRIT ON THE GRAND MISSION OF DIVINE LOVE**. He gives them the same spirit of divine love in which He had served down here. In that spirit, the spirit and power of love, they were to go forth and make God known, testifying that the Father had sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. They were to proclaim

remission of sins for all who believed the Gospel. They were so completely forgiven that they were never to be looked upon as sinners, whereas those who rejected Christ were to be left for judgment. "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them : and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Thus the death of Christ in no way put an end to the service of love which Christ had begun down here ; on the contrary, it greatly extended it, and by means of tens of thousands of living witnesses imbued with the same Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, the love of God in sending His Son was to be spread and published through the whole world.

SO FROM FIRST TO LAST IT HAS BEEN ONE CONTINUED TRIUMPH FOR CHRIST, HE HAS NEVER BEEN DEFEATED, THE TRUTH HAS NEVER BEEN OVERTHROWN, AND NEVER WILL BE. He has ascended on high to the right hand of God, and from that place of power and glory, where no evil can ever come, He supports His people here, as they carry on the conflict in His Spirit, the Spirit of love, and in His Name, the Name of Him who has suffered for us and who, for all who trust in Him, HAS SUNK FOR EVER THE GREAT MONSTER DEATH THAT FRIGHTENED THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE !

People say that all is over, and that Christianity is a thing of the past. It may be all over with them, if they obey not the Gospel, but Christianity still lives, for Christ lives, and the mission of love is still going on ; on every hand souls are being saved and brought to know the love of God.

Nothing can triumph over the Son of God. He is still gathering the spoils of His victory at Calvary, of which His resurrection is the grand and glorious proof, and soon it will be publicly manifested that

HE HAS WON THE DAY

May you be part of the blessed fruit of His victory. Do not disobey the Gospel, but receive it from God as God's good news, and come to Christ, and you will be saved, and you will have part with Him in the day of glory.

THE LORD ON HIGH LEADING IN TRIUMPH

O LORD, what joy to see Thee there,
Where evil cannot come,
But where we can approach in prayer,
And find in Thee our home!

What rest it is to turn to Thee,
And know Thee, Lord, above!
How can we fear the raging sea,
When sheltered by Thy love?

If here we find no strength or force
And have to stand alone,
Yet, Lord, Thou art our great resource,
And like Thee we have none.

Thou canst and wilt maintain Thine own,
Throughout the deadly fight,
For Thou art ever on the throne,
To help us with Thy might.

Though we may never take the sword,
Nor carnal weapons use,
Yet Thou dost give Thy blessed word,
With which the foe to bruise.

Though great his strength and fierce his rage,
When coming like a flood,
Thou hast, O Lord, in every age,
Against His power stood.

O Lord, with joy we turn to Thee,
To save us in the fray,
That we may ever faithful be,
And kept from day to day.

If we have greater foes to fight,
Than ever known on earth,
It is to prove Thy heavenly might,
And find how great its worth!

Thou wilt from Thine exalted seat
Sustain us by Thy word,
Wilt all Thine enemies defeat,
And lead in triumph, Lord!

H. D'A. C.

GOD'S MARVELLOUS GRACE ; OR, THE CHIEF OF SINNERS

Acts vii. 54-60 ; viii. 1-4 ; ix. 1-22.

WE have in these chapters a remarkable instance of what God can do for the chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus. First of all we have him brought before us in connection with Stephen, and with the part he took in his death. The more the grace of God comes out in Christians the more it provokes the anger of the world that persecutes them. The murder of Stephen made Saul like a wolf. He dragged into prison and put to death those in whom was the spirit of Christ, but at the end of the story there is a complete change in Saul, for he loved the sheep of Christ as much as, if not more than, any man ever did who cared for the flock of God. Instead of breathing out "threatenings and slaughter" against them, he breathed out the breath of heaven, and was full of divine love. His conversion illustrates the remarkable power of the Gospel in the energy of the Holy Spirit, and shows also what God can do with the most opposed of men, and God only could do it.

Stephen's history is brief: he was early proved to be faithful, and was put in care of the ministration to the widows; but he was soon promoted to a greater service, for full of faith and power he

did great wonders and miracles among the people, and testified publicly to Christ. He had to confront all the leading schools of thought in the city, but there was power in his word, and his opposers knew not how to answer him. "They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."

Even to-day people find men of God close to them whose wisdom and power cannot be resisted. No man in London or anywhere can find one weak point in the Gospel, much less can they prove that it is false. But apostates from Christianity will always gain a hearing from those who do not want God, and who worship their own intellect. Intellect, if not kept in its proper place, often ruins a man, because it is set against Christ, and conscience is ignored. God, however, is not to be blamed for the misuse of His own gift; but intellect could not confront Stephen, because his power and wisdom came from God. His hearers nevertheless, instead of being humbled and repentant, resisted the truth, just as they had resisted Christ. He was brought before the Jewish Council, and had to stand alone. But God stood with him. His face even shone like that of Moses, but like Moses he was refused.

Stephen was a simple man, and in a remarkable way he was called upon suddenly and unexpectedly to make his defence before the Council. But he was enabled without previous thought or preparation to describe in divine power the whole history of Israel from beginning to end. It was a long history of wickedness, and of the rejection of every servant whom God had sent to them. Now the history

of Israel was the history of the leading nation on the earth, a nation of God's special choice, and yet every man whom God had raised up and sent to them they had refused.

If England or any other nation had been tested like Israel, they would no doubt have equally failed. In this way Stephen in divine power convicts the Council and ends up with fastening upon them the culminating sin of the murder of the Just One—their Messiah—"of whom," says he, "ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." But they would hear no more. "They were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." In striking contrast we read, "he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven"—there was nowhere else to look—there was no other comfort; and there he saw "the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." What comfort and what support for him! Why was Jesus standing there? To comfort and sustain His servant. What was it he needed? Grace and strength that he might not give in and be overcome, or manifest a spirit which would give the lie to his testimony.

The hatred on the part of his enemies could not produce hatred in Stephen, for there was none there. His whole spirit corresponded with the love of Christ. The awful hatred around found no answer in him. He lived and witnessed in the power of the Holy Spirit, and such a man cannot hate anyone. If Christians are bitter, they are not in the Spirit of Christ, and they get no support or approval from Christ.

In the midst of that satanic-looking crowd,

Stephen, like his Master, shone out before them in striking contrast to them all; he manifested on earth the Spirit of the Christ on high who sustained him. He says: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Yes, the Son of man was there in heaven! What a wonderful support! What a wondrous sight for Stephen to behold! The Jews should have been looking for the Son of man. Revival was to come in by Him. The eightieth Psalm had long before celebrated it. Israel's revival was to come to pass by the Son of man—as Scripture says, "the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself." When revival does come in by Him they will never again go back from Him.

Daniel also spoke of the Son of man as bringing in the last monarchy or kingdom which is never to pass away (Dan. vii. 13, 14). He shows that the Latin or iron kingdoms would eventually take the form of ten kingdoms (formed no doubt to defend themselves from the Asiatic powers), but that it is broken in pieces, and the "Ancient of Days" gives the kingdom to the Son of man, and it can never pass away.

Stephen sees in the rejected Jesus, this Son of man—the One who was to revive Israel when all hope was gone. But they would not have his testimony. They rushed upon him and cast him out of the city and stoned him. "They stoned him, praying and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Yes, it was all right for him, he could trust his spirit to his Lord's care; his enemies could not touch that. As to his body, it mattered not even if it were mangled and crushed, the

Lord would give it back to him in resurrection glory.

“What about cremation?” said an opposer, to an open-air pracher, who thought in his folly that if the body were burnt God could never raise it. The preacher replied that it makes no difference to the Lord whether a man dies in his bed, or a martyr at the stake, or like Stephen is stoned to death; his body will be raised by that same Lord, who when dead, and in the grave, rose again in three days by His own divine power. The great thing is to be able, like Stephen, to commend your spirit in faith to the Lord, so that you are received by Him, and are with Him and under His care till the resurrection morning.

Stephen adds another word, for he thinks of his enemies, not in hatred, but in love, and he prays for them—“Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,” and then “he fell asleep.” The last stone brought out the *love* that was in the man. He loved his enemies, and would not have them perish. In his last breath he breathes out the love of heaven, expressing it in his dying prayer. What a contrast to Saul, the leading man in his murder! We read (chapter ix. 1): “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest and desired of him letters to Damascus, etc.,” that he might arrest the saints. His breath was the breath of hell, but no case is too hard for the Lord.

God knows how to put out in Saul the man who only breathed destruction, and so to change him that Christ may be seen in him—another Man—a man who breathes the love of heaven. At first

He allowed Saul to take his full course. We read (chapter viii. 3): "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison." The result was the saints had to flee the country, and "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." They left Jerusalem, where the Gospel was refused, and they spread the glad tidings everywhere. They *all* evangelized. They could not help it, so full were they of Christ, both men and women, though the latter in a more private way and suitably to their sex.

They were *all* full of the Christ for whom they had suffered the loss of all things, or anyhow the loss of their home. It is a sad thing when any Christian man or woman has no heart to speak of Christ, no heart for the Gospel, and no care for souls. What true sense can such an one have of the love and power of God? An evangelistic spirit has always marked the person who knows God.

Saul then goes on his course—to hunt out the disciples of the Lord and to persecute those who have the spirit of Christ—a spirit which he hated and could not bear. He gets authority from the high priest and goes on his way to Damascus with a large escort. His authority was great, and men think a great deal of having authority; but what does God care for it when it is directly opposed to Christ and attempts to prevent God from carrying out His purposes of love? God takes small account of man's authority, it is nothing to Him. He will overthrow and bring down all the haughtiness of man. Saul, with all his boast of authority, was

only breathing out a satanic spirit, and he must therefore be brought down.

Suddenly there shined round about him a light *from heaven!* In one moment what a change takes place! He finds himself in the presence of greater authority than any on earth. God intervenes and stops him in his course, and he and the whole escort are thrown to the ground. Now what about his letters of authority from the chief priests. All he boasted in was brought to nothing. Authority in heaven had asserted itself, and the whole cavalcade are on their faces. At the same time he saw a great light above the brightness of the sun. It was at midday, yet this light far exceeded for brightness the greatest light that shines upon the earth. Nor was it only *physical* light, it was *moral* light. All the light of God was gathered up and centred in a Man—that Man, God's own Son—and the glory from Him shone in all its bright and blessed rays straight down on one man on earth—on Saul of Tarsus!

There could be no mistake. He heard a voice in his own (the Hebrew) tongue addressing him by his own name—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me." It was the very Man they had murdered, and whom he thought to be in the grave, and a false Messiah! Yes, he heard the voice of Jesus Himself! Stephen saw Jesus in the glory of God, and Saul *heard His voice*, the voice of Jesus, that blessed Man, speaking from heaven. It is in the face of that glorious Man that all the glory of God shines.

Saul learnt that He was the Son of God! That meant more than the fact that He was God. All

the love of God was gathered up and centred in a Man—in Christ! From that Sun of righteousness it streamed down in all its living rays of divine light and love on one man on earth, and that man the chief of sinners! All the love of God was thus radiated down on one man, and revealed *in* him as well as *to* him!

There was no resisting the One who had arrested him in this way, and indeed why should he resist One who loved him? He hears Him saying: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Why are you always pursuing Me? But perhaps you ask: How had he been persecuting Jesus, if Jesus was in heaven? It was because he persecuted those in whom was the very same blessed Spirit—the Spirit of Christ—and Saul had hated that kind of spirit; it was too blessed for him. He hated the grace and love and tender feeling that the persecuted saints manifested toward him. "Who art thou, Lord?" replied Saul. "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." What a revelation! It was Jesus actually alive in the glory of God!

Saul had believed that Jesus was dead, but now he hears His very voice! His face no longer marred, but lit up with all the glory of God! God Himself was in Christ shining down on Saul, and thus Saul learnt God in that blessed Man! It was the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God that then shone into Saul, and it completely changed his whole being and gained his heart. It could not be otherwise. It took three days for him to enter into all the meaning of what he saw, before he realized fully the glorious character of the revelation; but from the first moment that the light

reached him he was *subdued*. It was the first effect of the light. It was heavenly light, and he did not resist it.

Children of Christian parents take care that *you* are not fighting against the truth—against God. Take care that you do not go too far in your resistance of heavenly light, and sink for ever into darkness. Dear children, remember you have been brought up in the light of Christ; do not throw away your privileges. You may already have been hardening your hearts, but if you turn to the Lord, there is nothing too hard for Him. I look to the Lord that you may all get the blessing of the Gospel. Outside the Gospel there is nothing that is worth universal attention; everything else is small compared to it.

Let us look again at the blessed Lord shining down upon Saul with all the love of God in His face. Saul says, "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" He saw the Man in the glory, and heard His voice! He saw that very same Jesus, whom he thought to be in the grave, and a false Christ, and a deceiver. He saw Him *alive*, and with the glory of God shining in His face! The consequence of the light shining on him was that he was there and then broken down and completely subdued.

On the third day Ananias, an obscure believer, is sent to him by the Lord, who tells him that Saul was praying. But Ananias was afraid, and tells the Lord what Saul had purposed to do in coming to Damascus. The Lord, however, knew more than he, and says, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before

the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. So Ananias went his way and entered into the house."

What a moment for Saul! Already in a vision he had been encouraged by seeing a man named Ananias coming to him and putting his hands upon him that he might receive his sight. Otherwise he might have lost his reason, overpowered by the sense of his own wickedness and of the terrible evil he had been doing. He had not taken any food or drink for three days, so completely had he been upset when he discovered that instead of being, as he evidently thought he was, the best man in the world, he was the chief of sinners!

The teaching of Gamaliel and of the great Jewish Rabbis he now finds to be false. His education all went for nothing, yea, he had to unlearn and turn away from the false ideas which he had got from the world. The religious leaders had taught him that Jesus was a false Christ, a malefactor, and that He was not the Anointed of God. They had taught him, too, to look for good in man, although God says there is none. God does not think much of the learning of this world. We have to unlearn all that the world has taught us, and to learn from Christ.

The world cannot teach us how to preach Christ. God alone can give light. No school or college can work in the soul, or give a man the light of Christ. Light comes from *heaven*, not from college. Saul had to begin again like a little child. But light from heaven had entered his soul. Till then it was all chaos and darkness. God who caused the light

“to shine out of darkness” had shone into that man’s heart that the light of God’s love might shine out for the whole world.

Paul had the Gospel in its fulness, and that at the very beginning of his spiritual history. *We* only apprehend it in our measure, and we are constantly learning more of its deep meaning, but God gave it to Paul in all its fulness. He says, “When it pleased God . . . to reveal *his Son in me*, that I might preach him among the nations.” God’s Son had been revealed in Saul, and this involved a complete change. Christ was formed in him. Henceforth, instead of breathing out threatenings and slaughter—the breath of hell—he breathed out the breath of heaven as it were, for the breath of heaven is divine love, and he was willing to suffer anything for Christ and for His saints. Up till then the apostles had preached that Jesus was Lord and Christ, but Paul goes beyond that and preached that He is the Son of God—the full out-shining of God.

He went from city to city and from nation to nation to announce that God had shone out in Christ as a Saviour-God. He found the nations in utter darkness as to any true knowledge of God. Indeed, it is not natural to man, who is a fallen being, to have any true thought of God. But God has declared Himself in Christ. The blessed God Himself has been down here in the person of His Son, has taken up the burden that lay upon man, has silenced every slander against Himself by fully declaring His love. God has been vindicated in the death of Christ, and has cleared every believer in Christ of every charge. He has satisfied the demands of His righteousness in the blood of Jesus

Christ, His own Son, so that He is now free to approach every man with forgiveness. If men are not forgiven, still the truth remains that forgiveness is *there* for them in Christ if they repent and believe the Gospel.

But there is much more than that—the greatest conceivable blessing is now the portion of believers, for the greatest conceivable Person has been here and has died for us, and the greatest conceivable work has been done, and now the greatest conceivable results flow from it, and man is brought to God in such a way that he is positively more at home with God than with any man.

The chief of sinners may come to Christ and be saved. Hence we see the man who once only breathed out threatenings and slaughter against Christ and against all who manifested the Spirit of Christ, that very man we see now walking in the Spirit of the Christ whom he had so hated, and breathing out the love of Christ wherever he went, and that no matter how he himself was treated. Christ alone could effect such a change. The Gospel is God's power unto salvation, and nothing else is. If you know nothing about it, it is open to you this very hour to have this inconceivable blessing, and to know the love of God. It was God who first started the Gospel, not man. It was God who approached man, and not man who approached God.

No one even suggested to God that He should save man, nor did it come into the mind of man that the God against whom we sinned would Himself put away the sin and draw near to save us. To this very day men are seeking salvation by human

means, they look for a saviour of their own sinful race to rise up and save them. They will willingly receive Antichrist—the man that comes in his own name. But he will ruin all who trust in him. Young people, I beg of you, distrust the present world and all its thoughts. It gives no place, no true place to Christ, and injures all who come under its influence. Do not despise the Christian training of your own home. Value all you have heard there of Christ. Cherish what you have been taught of Him from your childhood upwards, and get it for yourselves. It is open to the youngest. No one ever understood children as Christ did, and He understands them still. It is amazing how He can get the confidence of a little child. He can get it in a way that no father or mother can. He encourages the youngest to come, and He receives all that trust in Him.

It will take more than a lifetime to learn the greatness of that blessed Man and all the fulness of the Gospel; but all has been told out in HIM. In Him God has shone forth in all His blessedness. And not only are we sheltered from judgment, but even the man that offended God—all that we were as sinners, has been removed in judgment in the death of Christ! And now there is a Man out of death, a *Man*, not a spirit, but a real Man in the glory of God. As Man in glory He is the setting forth of our place of favour before God. Saul actually saw Jesus alive and in glory. He learnt too that *that* Man was God's own Son, and that concentrated in His own Person was all the love of God, that He had caused it to shine down from Himself in glorious rays upon one poor man

here—upon himself—Saul of Tarsus, the chief of sinners !

Saul then learnt not only what it was to be forgiven and saved, but that he was a *son* of God, and that he had been brought into the greatest liberty of love before God Himself as a son with the Father ! Even angels have not this place of nearness to God. Then—full of the grace and love of God, he goes out into the world to announce the glad tidings of a Saviour-God, and that the Christ whom the Jews had crucified and slain had been raised from the dead, and that He is God's own Son who has been given for us !

Oh, friends, take this word as a message from God. It was He who has brought you under the sound of His word. He has searched you out and brought the glad tidings to your very door. Do not refuse your God, but thank Him for His grace ; believe the glad tidings, and you will be saved.

H. D'A. C.

PAMPHLETS BY H. D'A. C

Price 2d. each.

God's Marvellous Grace ; or, The Chief of Sinners

The Kindness of God

The Triumphal Departure of the Son of God

The Gospel of the Christ

The Precious Blood

The Greatness of the Gospel of God

God's Delight in Men

The Priestly Service of Christ

Divine Friendship

Christ our Living Teacher

The Assembly of God

Christ's Last Letter

The Bride of Christ

Our Value

Christian Fellowship

The Protection of the Lord

The Times of the Gentiles

The Roll of Honour

The Holy City, Jerusalem

Christ Magnified

Suffering and Glory

The House of Prayer

The above Pamphlets bound in Volume form—

GOD'S GLORIOUS GOSPEL, containing Gospel pamphlets.

WONDERFUL PRIVILEGES „ Believer's „

FROM SUFFERING TO GLORY, „ „ „

Price 1/3 per Vol.

By H. D'A. C

TREE OF LIFE SERIES.

8 kinds, 1/6 per 100 net

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Jesus Himself | 5. The Tree of Life |
| 2. The King | 6. He Frankly Forgave |
| 3. The Wound of Sin | 7. Jonah and God's Salvation |
| 4. The Rights of God | 8. Full of Grace and Truth |

The above booklets bound in Cloth Boards, 6d. each ; Manilla, 3d. each.

GOOD NEWS FROM HEAVEN SERIES.

8 kinds, 1/6 per 100 net

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. The Paradise of God | 5. The Power of the Lord |
| 2. Calvary's Great Cry ? | 6. The Lamb of God |
| 3. The Prodigal Son : or, one
Sinner that Repenteth | 7. The Great Deliverer : or, what
He did for Three Hopeless
Cases |
| 4. Christ Risen : or, God's Anointed
Man | 8. The Great Supper |

The above booklets bound in Cloth Boards, 6d. each ; Manilla, 3d. each.

GOSPEL OF THE GLORY SERIES.

8 kinds, 1/6 per 100 net

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The Gospel of the Glory of the
Blessed God | 5. The Unchanging Saviour |
| 2. Christ is Alive | 6. The Day of Grace |
| 3. Peace Proclaimed | 7. The Man of God's Right Hand |
| 4. The Grand Commission | 8. God our Saviour Revealed in the
Mediator |

The above booklets bound in Cloth Boards, 6d. each ; Manilla, 3d. each.

GRACE AND GLORY SERIES.

8 kinds 1/6 per 100 net.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The Name above every Name | 5. Christ Evangelizing on the Cross |
| 2. The Son of Man | 6. Christ on the Cross Forsaken of
God |
| 3. Faith in Christ : Its Beautiful
Simplicity | 7. Christ in Joy and Triumph after
the Cross |
| 4. Before the Cross : or, Christ's
Service of Love in His Life
on Earth | 8. The Glory of God in the Face
of Jesus Christ |

The above booklets bound in Cloth Boards, 6d. each ; Manilla, 3d. each.

"A CASKET OF GOOD NEWS"

Containing these Four Volumes in Cloth with Gilt Lettering at back.
Price 2/6 the Set.