

# CHRISTIAN CHARITY:

A L E C T U R E

BY THE

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ON 1ST COR. XIII.,

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B E L F A S T .

B E L F A S T :

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## CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

### LECTURE ON THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER OF FIRST CORINTHIANS.

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We shall take for the subject of this morning's meditations the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians—"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge: and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Now, if we wished to take a text from which to speak to you upon Christian charity, we might take the first three words in the first verse of the fourteenth chapter—"Follow after charity." But we think it better to take the entire of the thirteenth chapter, for here the Apostle Paul gives you a beautiful exposition of the whole subject; and, oh! may the spirit of God expound it to our understandings, and apply it to our souls, that the name of Christ may be glorified! Now, the Apostle Paul had been writing to his children in Christ, the Corinthians. They had received from the Holy Spirit many gifts, and of these he speaks to them in the twelfth chapter. They had received from the Holy Spirit the gift of prophecy, the gift of speaking with tongues, and the gift of healing diseases; and now, in the last verse of the twelfth chapter, Paul says to them—"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." In this thirteenth chapter he expounds to them the more excellent way, and beseeches them to "follow after charity." I like the Welsh translation of this word, which is simply love; and the French translation, which is simply love; and the word

in the original just means love. And first, Paul begins by giving you seven different contrasts to show you the superiority of love over everything else. He then goes on to show you sixteen of the different foot-prints of charity. He begins by showing, in seven different ways, the superiority of charity ; and in order to do this, he collects together the different gifts and graces of the Christian Church, and contrasts them with charity. He collects together many precious stones, and pearls, and diamonds, and then brings forth from the crown of God, that jewel that burns with unearthly splendour, and shows that this, which is the brightest star in His forehead, outshines and outvalues all the rest.

He says first—Though I had the gift of tongues—"though I speak with the tongues of men"—though I could speak in all the different languages spoken among men throughout the world ; though I could converse equally well with the Jew in Hebrew, with the Roman in Latin, with the Chaldee, the Elamite, the Parthian, the Scythian, with all men of all nations, in all languages ; yea, and more, though I could speak with the particular power of particular men in my own language—though I could reason with all the clearness and accuracy of the logician, and with all the depth of the philosopher—though I could discourse with the flow, and rhythm, and beauty of the rhetorician—and with all the sweep, and power, and eloquence of the orator ; yea, "though I could speak with the tongues of angels" (to what a height he rises here!) ; yea, though I had the eloquence of angels, whose words I heard fourteen years ago—"whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell—God knoweth ;" whose words I heard in heaven, words which it is not lawful for man to utter ; yea, though I had the voice of that angel who shall yet descend with the trump of God, and call the dead to judgment—"though I could speak with the tongues of men and of angels"—though my eloquence were winning eloquence, moving eloquence, persuasive eloquence, irresistible eloquence, overpowering eloquence, heavenly eloquence, angelic eloquence ; yet, if I had not got one thing, and that one thing made of little account by the world—if I had not got Christian love, I am become as—what? A rhetorician, linguist, philosopher, orator, poet, logician, angel, or archangel ?—says Paul, "I am become as sounding brass." Ah !

brethren, here is a comparison—"as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Ah! what a laugh of derision is this! "As a *tinkling cymbal!*" What, then, are such gifts as these, when contrasted with love? They are less than nothing.

He says still further, "though I had the gift of prophecy"—though these lips of mine, like the lips of Isaiah, were touched with a burning coal from the hallowed altar of God—though I had the power to pour out prophecies in a stream of inspiration—though with the hand, the hand of a prophet, I could bear back the dark veil which hangs over and covers futurity, and show mankind glimpses of the bright and beautiful above, and of the dark and terrible beneath—though I could unfold to you the dread secrets of future time and future eternity—"though I had the gift of prophecy"; yea more, "though I understood all mysteries"—and there are mysteries in multitudes, which have never been mentioned to us, and of which we have never dreamed—there are ten thousand mysteries, of which we only know the existence, but which we cannot comprehend. Why we are mysteries to ourselves. Who can understand all these? says Paul, though I could! Try now, for the sake of the argument, that you may be in a better position to judge of the unearthly glory of love, to place yourselves on the throne which Paul the Apostle occupies—though you understood all mysteries. Who can understand the mystery of the incarnation? How Jesus, who showed Himself in the form of flesh, lived on earth, and died on the cross, "was God manifested in the flesh"—though I did!—"though I understood all mysteries." Who can understand the mystery of Deity, that there are three persons in the one God; equal in power, equal in wisdom, and equal in glory, yet not three Gods, only one? Who can understand this? Though I did! "Though I understand this mystery, and all knowledge"—in fact, though I knew everything—yea more, "though I had all faith"—not simply some faith, not faith like a grain of mustard-seed, but faith whereby I could remove one solitary mountain, but "all faith," whereby I could work the most stupendous miracles, and roll mountains into the depths of the sea—"and HAVE NOT CHARITY, I am"—what? A prophet? A wise man? A mighty miracle-worker? "I am," says Paul, I hardly know how to utter it—"I am—nothing—nothing—nothing—nothing

—nothing.” O man! if thou hadst the power of an angel, without an angel’s love, thou wouldst be after all but a devil. Now, follow Paul still further, “though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,” surely, that would be a charitable act! Alas! there’s many an uncharitable charity. A man might bestow his goods to feed the poor, and beggar himself, and all from selfishness. And, “though I give my body to be burned”—how to be burned? At the stake. What for? Why, as a martyr. Oh! this makes us tremble for many of the old martyrs. You know that Roman Catholics have been burned at the stake as well as Protestants, and God knows! numbers have been burned at the stake more through ignorance than knowledge, and more for Satan than God. Now mark well, though I beggar myself for penance, and burn in hell for purgatory, if I have not love, all *will profit me nothing*. If a man had all Christian graces and all heavenly gifts, and performed all good works, and practised all self-denials, and suffered all painful persecutions, and at the close were carried in the flaming chariot of martyrdom to the portals of paradise, if he had not love, Heaven’s gates would be for ever barred against him—all would profit him nothing.

The apostle goes on now to point out the foot-prints of charity; but I feel, as I go on and go deeper into the subject, the utter uselessness of my speaking thus—I feel my utter impotency as I stand up among you—I feel that I cannot effect any good; but oh! if the Spirit of God work among you, blessed fruits will follow, and you will walk in love’s footsteps all your days, and for ever.

Mark, then, the different foot-prints of love, which Paul the Apostle discovers to us:—1—“Charity suffers long.” 2—“Is kind.” 3—“Envieth not.” 4—“Vaunteth not itself.” 5—“Is not puffed up.” 6—“Doth not behave itself unseemly.” 7—“Seeketh not its own.” 8—“Is not easily provoked.” 9—“Thinketh no evil.” 10—“Rejoiceth not in iniquity.” 11—“Rejoiceth in the truth.” 12—“Beareth all things.” 13—“Believeth all things.” 14—“Hopeth all things.” 15—“Endureth all things.” 16—It “never faileth.” What have we here? I believe that the Apostle Paul was always filled with thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, and had Jesus Christ before his eyes when he drew this picture. I am sure he must have been “looking,”

as he says, "unto Jesus," for this is one of the most exact and perfect portraits of Christ we have given us in Scripture ; and it is not a mere miniature—it is a full-length portrait from head to foot of Christ's character, as it was manifested when he moved among men in the world. And I tell you, dear brethren, that I have only to make one little change of a word to show you this. Suppose, instead of my reading the word "charity" I read the word "Christ;" let us then look at the passage, and see if we have not His description. "Christ suffered long and was kind—Christ envied not—Christ vaunted not himself, and was not puffed up—Christ did not behave himself unseemly—Christ sought not his own—Christ was not easily provoked—Christ thought no evil—Christ rejoiced not in iniquity—Christ rejoiced in the truth—Christ bore all things—Christ believed all things—Christ hoped all things—Christ endured all things—Christ never failed." Ah ! wonder not that this could be applicable to Christ, for Christ was love concentrated—love consolidated. He was love exemplified—love manifested ; yea, he was *love incarnate* !

Now I beseech you in the name of love, to "follow after Christ," and I beseech you, in the name of Christ, to "follow after love," and if you follow one, you follow both, for love and Christ are one. Let us now, dear brethren, dwell a few moments on these words. First, "Charity suffereth long." Christ suffered long with the coldness of His disciples, with their weakness, with their unbelief, and their hardness of heart. "How long shall I suffer you?" says Jesus, "How long shall I bear with you?" Yet still He suffered them, still He bore with them ; and, in addition to His being long-suffering, he was also kind to them. Now, dear brethren, have you been long suffering ? Many of you are placed in circumstances of peculiar trial ; you meet with a great deal of unkindness in the household, in business, and even in the sanctuary. Oh ! are you long-suffering to those who treat you thus ? Are you long-suffering ? You say you try to be so. Now I put a question to you—Are you kind as well as long-suffering to those who are unkind to you ? I do not say you frown at those who frown at you, or scoff at those who scoff at you ; but do you not give them often the cold shoulder, and forget them in your prayers at the throne of God ? Is this like Christ ? Is this love ? Now, turn round and take a new course—Take coals of the fire

of love and heap them on their heads, and you shall melt down the ice of indifference into the streams of affection. Remember, love is kind. "Charity envieth not." Now, Christ envied not. He was so poor, that when they came to demand the tribute-money, he had to send Peter to the sea-side to fetch it from the mouth of a fish. But did he envy those who rolled in riches along the streets of Jerusalem? Oh no! Christ envied not: and though the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, yet the Son of Man had not where—when His hard day's work was over—to lay His weary head; but did He envy those who slept in their palaces in Jerusalem? He envied not. A king speaks to the people, and they give a shout, and cry—"It is the voice of a god, not of a man!" Christ speaks, and speaks as man never spake before or since, and they hiss, and say—"Thou hast a devil and art mad;" but does He envy such success? Ah no, He envied not. Now, do you envy? Baxter says that we are not apt so much to envy those who are above us, as those who are on a par, on a level, with ourselves. Thus, oftentimes, the physician envies the more successful physician; the lawyer, the lawyer; the tradesman, the tradesman; and, alas, God knows! the minister, the minister. But love never envies. Oh Christians, envy is a viper that will poison all your happiness. Oh pluck it out of thy bosom, and trample it beneath thy feet. Remember love will lead you to rejoice at the superior success, and prosperity, and advancement of others. Then follow it! "Charity envieth not." "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Now Christ never vaunted himself. But you say, did He not sometimes speak of His glory? Yes, but that was not vaunting himself. Suppose that, in that glass globe, there burned a light; if I were to wrap around it a thin veil, would you wonder at the light streaming through? You say, no; and when the glory of the indwelling Godhead was covered with the marred veil of the body of Jesus, do you wonder at the beams of glory that sometimes shone through? And shall we vaunt ourselves, when Christ never uttered one boastful saying? Oh saints and sinners! shall Deity be clothed with humility, and dust with pride? God forbid! Oh! pull down thy pride from its pinnacle, and bury it—bury it—bury it—bury it quick out of sight. Oh! brethren, the heavenly Jesus humbled himself, and endured cross

after cross, shame after shame, until He bore the shame of shames and the cross of crosses, being put to death as a vile and guilty malefactor, crucified between two thieves on Calvary. Oh! brethren, this is He who descended from the throne of God, and knelt before a few poor fishermen to wash their very feet; and this that He might set in a frame of never-equalled glory the loveliest picture of humility ever painted, and exalt it to the everlasting admiration of all earth and heaven. How abominably proud many of us are. How we scorn to notice those beneath us. How enraged we feel if by chance a poor man is shown into our pew. How often do I watch you! Sometimes a minister is too much taken up with the effort he makes to preach to observe what is going on in his congregation; but when the whole congregation is very still and attentive, an observant minister sees the least movement anywhere; and he often sees the proud, and those who come in with "a gold ring" and with "goodly apparel," say to the poor man who comes in, as James admirably describes it, "in vile raiment," "stand thou there," or "sit here under my footstool." The aisle or the free seats are good enough for them! Why, what do men mean? Is not the great difference between the rich and the poor simply the external one—the dress, and equipage, and appearance. Surely all these are external; whereas the soul of the poor man may be pure as the spirit of an angel, and the soul of the other may be vile as the spirit of a devil. Do you not remember that in old times Christians greeted each other with an holy kiss; and do you think the poor people merely kissed the poor, and the rich the rich? But now the rich man draws on his gloves, and offers his finger to a poorer brother, and would not be seen noticing the very poor in the streets. That is apostolic—is it not? That is Christlike—is it not? And that is being clothed with humility—is it not? Yet these are our charitable people, who give their £20 to one society, and their £50 to another; and the world blows its lying trumpet before them, and proclaims them paragons of Christianity. But these are they who corrupt the Church. Ah! luke-warm Laodiceans, beware lest God spue you out of His mouth. Oh! humble love, let me walk with thee in the steps of Jesus, who "vaunted not himself, was not puffed up."

"Love," says Paul, "doth not behave itself unseemly." I am

sure that this was the case with Christ. His words, His looks, and His actions were all seemly; because Christ's words were words of love, Christ's looks were looks of love, and Christ's actions were actions of love. Oh! where is the man besides, whose words breathe such love, whose looks shine such love, and whose actions testify such love—there is none. But let us not despair, let us imitate this pure, modest, angel love, that "doth not behave itself unseemly."

"Love," says Paul, "seeketh not her own." In leaving Heaven Christ sought not His own, in all His preachings, and all His prayings, and all His watchings, and all His weepings, and all His sufferings, He sought our good and His Father's glory—"He sought not His own." And I tell you that now He has gone home to God and Heaven, He still continues to seek our good; for whether you wake or sleep, eat or drink, labour or rest, live or die, Christ prays—prays—prays—prays—prays—prays by day and by night—from age to age; and will continue till the last saint is gathered home to God, till the last tears are wiped away from the eyes of the last mourner, for He ever liveth not to seek His own, but to make intercession for those who come unto God by Him. Oh, the beauty of the love of Christ! What an amazing contrast between our conduct and His. Oh! where shall we see those who are not selfish? Where shall we see those who are self-forgetful? I look around me, and I find that the great moving principle that keeps this world going, whether it be trade, politics, or religion, is *selfishness*. I have no hesitation in saying that in trade, in politics, and in religion, this is true; and thus it is—God knows!—that we are the delight of devils, and the grief of God. I warn you earnestly against selfishness. But there are some of you who live for nothing but self. Oh! thou that dost rise early and labour late, simply that thou mayest aggrandize thyself, and collect a little of the dross of this world, and art unmindful of the crown of life held by the angel above thy head, put away thy muck-rake; God has something better to offer thee than the world has. Within thy reach there are riches such as man never dreamed of. But if thou turnest away from Heaven's opened gates, the end of these things will be most miserable. If you will live a worm's life, you must die a worm's death. For selfish sinners that go grovelling

all their days are crushed at last under the foot of vengeance.  
"For the end of these things is death."

"Love," says the Apostle Paul, "is never provoked." He does not say that, for it would be false ; but he says, "Love is not easily provoked." It was because Christ was not easily provoked that man dared to tamper with him. If he had slain those who mocked him, as he slew those who mocked and persecuted some of the old prophets, men might have ceased to trouble him, but he came not to destroy, but to save ; and never was he provoked, even by the most aggravated insults and violent persecutions, to utter a curse or strike a blow. And perhaps some of you go on in sin because he is not easily provoked against you. Is he not, you ask, "The Lamb of God ?" But let me tell you that there is such a thing as the "wrath of the Lamb," and that there is no wrath so terrible. That expression, "The wrath of the Lamb," is the most black and awful one occurring in the whole Scriptures from first to last. It is true, O sinner ! that wrath is not easily provoked ; you may go on in sin for a while ; you may try to the utmost Christ's forbearance ; but I tell you solemnly that the last sin that God permits you to sin—and there is a measure known to God, which you shall not more than fill—there is a bound fixed beyond which you shall not go. When you have committed, I say, the last sin which God permits, then shall wrath come upon you to the uttermost. Oh ! 'tis hard to upheave the floodgates of the wrath of God, but thy last sin shall do it ; and as sure as God made you, God shall destroy you—you shall die in your sins. Oh ! turn from the error of your ways, oh ! cease to provoke God to anger, and oh ! take shelter under the cross of Christ, and you shall not die, but live, saith the Lord. And now I beseech you, brethren, in the name of God, and by the gentleness of Jesus, not to be easily provoked with each other. "If it be possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men," even with the most unkind, and froward, and passionate. Remember, if God bears with that person well may you do so ; and more than that, return every curse with a blessing, and "pray for those who spitefully use and persecute you."

"Love," says Paul, "thinketh no evil." He means—Love puts the best construction on the manners, and language, and looks, and lives of others ; and where it is possible to think good

of another, thinks no evil. He does not mean to say that love never sees sin in others. Love is often more sharp-sighted than hatred ; why, Christ who is love itself, is not blind to the sins of others, but He never thinks evil of a man when He should think well. " Thinketh no evil." " Love rejoiceth not in iniquity," like the devils in hell; but " rejoiceth in the truth," like the angels in heaven. " Love," says Paul, " beareth all things," like Christ, " our sorrows." " Love believeth all things." Every promise, and prophecy, and word of truth. " Love hopeth all things." Yea, even hopeth against hope. " Love endureth all things," even to martyrdom. " Love never faileth"—never faileth! There is the rock I rest on. Do you want to know what is the key to the final perseverance of the saints? Here it is—" Love never faileth." Now, I do not mean the love in the bosom of the believer for Jesus, but the love in the bosom of Jesus Christ for the believer, who is " the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Ah! we live in the midst of constant and never-ceasing changes. There is nothing in the world that doth not alter. The winds are always veering about ; sometimes they blow from the cold north, again from the sunny south, sometimes from the bleak and bitter east, and again from the warm west. Ever changing! The clouds sometimes drift above us in black masses, again they float over us in white volumes. Ever changing! The tides do ebb and flow; the moon doth wax and wane; the stars do rise and set; the seasons do come and go; the days do dawn and die. Ever changing! The flowers of the field do grow, and blossom, and bloom, and blush ; but they pale, and wither, and droop, and die. Ever changing! Do not wonder, then, that your strength should become weakness ; that your health should become sickness ; that your life should be turned to death, and your earth to heaven or hell. But, oh, " love never faileth!" Its eye is undimmed, though it hath wept a thousand times ; its brow is unfurrowed, though it hath seen a thousand sorrows. Oh, love of Jesus! thou art " THE SAME yesterday, To-day, and For EVER." On that rock, amidst these swelling seas, and drifting clouds, and rolling thunders, and raging storms, hath God built His Church, and the gates of hell—which mean the powers of death—shall not prevail against it. Oh! brethren, here is a haven for the tempest-tost, and rest for the weary. The love of

Jesus which "never faileth." And now, be you to each other, what Christ is to you, *unfailing in love*. Oh ! mother, never fail thy child, though it grieve and wound thee. Christ never faileth thee. Oh ! child, never fail thy parent, though that parent forget thee. Christ never faileth thee. Oh ! husband, never fail thy wife, even though she sin and wander from thee, for Christ never faileth thee. Oh ! woman, never fail thy husband ; he may be unkind and bitter. Christ never faileth thee. Oh ! pastor, never fail your people. Christ never faileth you. And oh ! people, never fail your pastor. Bear him in your bosom to the throne of grace ; and in prayer there keep him before Jehovah. Christ never faileth you.

Now Paul draws the subject to a conclusion. He shows us, in the last few verses, how that though other things fail, love fails not. He says—"But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail." Mark that. He does not mean that one jot or tittle of God's prophecies shall fail of fulfilment, but he means that the gift of prophecy shall fail, and you know that it has already. There are some who profess to have it still ; but their profession is pretence. I have met some of them and heard from others. One I met a few weeks ago called himself Elijah, and I have received several letters from him since, but such prophets are either very sinful or very mad ; seeing the gift is withdrawn. But "whether there be tongues, they shall cease." Does Paul mean that there shall be silence in heaven, or silence in hell ? Ah no ! For in heaven they shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb ; and in hell there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. He means by this—"Whether there be the miraculous gift of speaking with tongues, this shall cease," and it has ceased. "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." Why is not knowledge to continue ? I tell you, that the foolishness of God is wiser than our present knowledge ; for, says Paul, It is but partial ; and he confirms and illustrates this by saying—"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come," and we bless God that which is perfect is coming, "then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child ; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Here he contrasts his knowledge on

earth and his knowledge in heaven—now a child, then a man. But though this is the child Paul speaking to us, there is nothing childish in what he says, for it is the wisdom of the Most High he utters, God speaking to us by his child's lips. Ah! brethren, what children we are still. Do I not see trickling down the faces of some of you tears of sorrow, and why is this? Ah! you say, God has taken away from me the one I loved. . Some toy, was it? I tell thee—weep no more, for—mark me!—thou shalt presently put away the toys and the tears of childhood together. But you say—It was not a toy God took away—it was that one I loved—some tender plant, perhaps, that grew up by thee, and twined its soft tendrils round and round thy heartstrings; and God saw that thou didst love that flower more than thou didst love himself, and He touched it, and it withered, and you wept. But oh! child of earth, weep no more; for though God will not bring thee back thy flower, yet thou shalt see it again, for He will carry thee to His Eden, where it blooms beneath a brighter sky, and will wipe all thy tears away. “When I became a man I put away childish things.”

“For now we see through a glass darkly.” What is the meaning of this? Glass was not known in the days of the Apostle Paul; the word simply means a mirror—“For now we see in a mirror darkly,” or “in a riddle,” as some read. Now turn to the third chapter of Second Corinthians, you will find a verse that will give you some light. He says in the 18th verse, “But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” All God’s glory we see at present is reflected glory—and even when we seem to behold Christ most clearly we see but His image after all. A great mirror lies before me, clear as crystal, and in it I see reflected the forms of angels most beautiful, and the faces of devils. Here I see patriarchs, and prophets, and priests, and kings, and apostles, and martyrs, and all the 144,000 in white array. Here I see the creation and the flood, and the general judgment, and hell, and heaven; but all too “darkly”—in outline sometimes bright and sometimes dim, and that magic mirror is the Bible. But it shall not be so long; for by-and-bye the veil shall be taken away, and, looking up from the mirror, we shall see these things “face to face.”

Oh ! I think that many a sermon might be preached from these words, "face to face." They sparkle with heavenly light—"Face to face!" Thank God, the veil that hides the face of Jesus shall soon be drawn back ! Then shall we see Him "as He is," and then, Oh ! blessed be God, shall He see us "as He is," for we shall be like Him ! and shall meet Him "face to face." "For now we know in part, but then shall we know even as also we are known."

And now, says the Apostle Paul, winding up, and drawing to a close—"Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Before you go, permit me to ask you, why do faith, hope, and charity, of necessity abide during the present dispensation ? First, faith abides ; because, without faith it is impossible to please God, and without pleasing God, it is impossible to enter heaven. Have you faith ? Have you faith ? Oh ! remember "he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." "Now abideth hope," says Paul, and why does hope abide ? Because while tossed on the stormy sea of this life, the only anchor that keeps us from drifting to darkness and death is the anchor of hope, and, blessed be God, we are told by Paul, that it is "sure and steadfast." Perhaps many of you would be inclined to think that these two words have one and the same meaning. But hear one who knows what it is to be tossed at anchor off a lee-shore, tell you what two dangers a vessel is in when she lies in such a situation, when the storm is fierce and the strain great. If the anchor bends or breaks, it will come up, and the vessel will drift to destruction ; or, if the anchor were to remain unbroken and unbent, and to drag, and drag along the bottom, the vessel would likewise drift to ruin. But, blessed be God ! our anchor is sure—it can neither break nor bend. Our anchor is steadfast—it can neither drift nor drag ! Not the mightiest tornado that ever turned up the depths of ocean, can drive a Christian from his anchorage, for "hope"—our hope—"abideth."

But Paul adds to faith and hope, "charity"—"these three." Now tell me why love abides—why ? The fact of it is, that the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments, given from the smoking summit of Sinai, that trembled beneath the weight of God's glory ; these

ten commandments are every one embodied in the eleventh commandment—"Love." "A new commandment," saith Christ, "I give unto you," and that commandment is the law of love—therefore "love abideth."

But the greatest of these is charity. Now, brethren, how is this? How is this? How is charity greater than faith, and greater than hope? I believe for this one reason—just, because love shall live when both faith and hope are dead and buried. Now, do not mistake me. I do not say that there will be no faith and no hope in heaven; but they will be very different in their nature, for when I see Christ face to face, I shall no more care about "the evidence of things not seen." I shall no longer want this glass, in which I see but "darkly." So with hope, the sailor leaves the anchor behind when he comes on shore. But though we shall no more want this faith and this hope, yet faith and hope will be in heaven, but so transformed that you shall hardly know them; for they shall have wings there—and one, one shall carry you up to God, and the other, other shall bear thee on into futurity. But, oh, this love shall be there—grown from childhood to manhood, but still the same love, "for the greatest of these is charity." Oh! brethren, I could fancy faith, and hope, and charity, coming for the first time to the gates of heaven. Christ has been preparing the many mansions, but they are still empty. An angel stands watching at the gates; and presently Faith comes up, and knocks, and the angel opens the gates, and says—"Who art thou?" Saith Faith—"Angel, it is I." "Oh," saith the angel, "Faith, there are no blind eyes, dumb tongues, deaf ears, or dead souls in heaven. There are on earth. Go back; open the eyes of the blind, unstopp the ears of the deaf, loose the tongues of the dumb, and raise the dead, and guide them to this gate; but thou canst not enter here." And the angel closeth the gates. Anon, Hope cometh up and knocks at the gates, and the angel opens them, and saith—"Who art thou?" Saith Hope—"Angel, it is I." "What dost thou hold in thy hand?" saith the angel. "It is my taper," saith Hope. "Oh!" saith the angel, "Hope, thy light would die here in heaven, 'as a dim candle dies at noon,' for here 'the Lord is our everlasting light,' and 'our God our glory; but there are dark valleys of sorrow and of death on earth. Go back; light poor pilgrims through the

darkness to this gate ; but thou canst not enter here." Presently, Love comes and knocks at the gates of heaven, and the angel rolls them back, and gazing, gazing with admiration, on Love, "Love," he saith, "who art thou?" Saith Love—"Angel, it is I." "Oh!" saith the angel, "Love, thou mayest enter here; behold—behold thy throne—it is the throne of God." And the angel closeth the gates. "For the greatest—the greatest—the greatest of these is charity!"

Now, in conclusion, let me bind up two arguments in two sentences, in order that you may see the superiority of love. You cannot say "heaven is faith," you cannot say "heaven is hope;" but you can say "heaven is love." Therefore, the greatest of these is charity! Now, take one more still better. You cannot say "God is faith," you cannot say "God is hope;" but you can say "God is love!" Therefore, therefore, therefore, the greatest of these is charity!" Now, with overwhelming power do these words come home to your hearts and consciences—"Follow after charity," that you may follow after long-suffering, and kindness, and humility, and modesty, and gentleness, and purity, and joy, and truth, and submission, and faith, and hope, and endurance, and unchangeableness. Oh! "follow after charity," and it will lead you up that ladder Jacob saw in dreams, to glory—where you shall breathe the atmosphere of love, and walk in the light of love, and wear the crown of love, and dwell with the angels of love, and commune with the saints of love, and speak the language of love, and sing the song of love, and see the Lamb of love, and dwell with the God of love!—and all, For Ever!

Oh sinner, the blackest sin of omission you can commit, is not to love God. Stop, and listen, lest you die in your sins. Unless "the love of God is shed abroad in your heart," you perish—without hope—in hell. God offers to do this by His spirit, for all who come to Him through Christ. Hear God, O man. Hear God, O woman—"As I live," saith the Lord, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he turn from his wickedness and live. Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel."

"The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."