

The Glory System

READINGS AT DETROIT

SEPTEMBER, 1921

Revised by F. L.



NEW YORK
GOSPEL BOOK AND TRACT DEPOT
65 Bible House

LONDON, E. C.
GEO. MORRISH, 20 Paternoster Square

PRICE, 33 CENTS

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE PATTERN	5
THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST	30
THE INDIVIDUAL	52
THE COLLECTIVE	75
GLORY IN THE ASSEMBLY	96

THE PATTERN

*Exodus 19, 3-6; Exodus 24, 9-11; Exodus 25, 1-11;
Exodus 40, 33-35.*

F. L. Personally I feel there is no line which would be of so much help as a deeper entrance into the purpose of God, and I thought possibly we might get some help on it. If we have a reading upon the framework of things in Exodus, then perhaps, we might turn to the New Testament and see how things are worked out in a spiritual way.

We apprehend the spiritual import of things by what God set forth as their pattern in the heavens. It is not exactly the bringing into view of what is new, but what is new *in revelation*. The tabernacle was the pattern of existent things, so that we get in figure the building of the divine sphere according to the divine thought, adequate for the present age as for the world to come, with elements which enter into eternity; and the starting point in relation to all is really the heart of God. It is *love*, and the subjective formation in us is the product of the divine nature. It is the emotions of the heart guided by what is intelligent,—wise men,—wisehearted. If we could get

a little of the framework, then we could follow on to see the greatness of Christ, about whom all these things revolve and from whom everything takes character; then how the thing is worked out in this day of the Spirit, and its influence in the world to come and in eternity.

W. B-t. It is, "That I may dwell among them."

F. L. Yes, so that, having secured a people to Himself, the first movement is expressed in His appeal to them: "How I brought you to Myself," "Ye shall be unto Me," and "They shall make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them"; it at once introduces the thought of blessing; the beginning and the end of everything is that God will dwell where He loves. Now He makes the conditions and sets forth the elements of what constitutes a sphere adequate to express Himself, to draw His people around Him, and to fill all things. Of course it is only to be understood in relation to Christ, so that what is presented in the last half of Exodus is what in its spiritual significance presents the universe of bliss, as filling time and going into eternity. We are much occupied with what we are as individual believers, with our own little family circle, or meeting; but what we have is either the greatest thing which God bestows or else it is not worth while our going on with.

W. B-t. In the end of Revelation it says, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; I will be

his God and he shall be My son." Now you propose to take up the "all things."

F. L. I thought we would get on to that.

W. B-t. It is what God is planning to bring in in its full development. It becomes everything to us so that we can inherit it. "Shall inherit all things."

F. L. Really what we touch in the opening of chapter 25 here is the essence of everything, everything else becomes detail. That is, "Make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them," because we find that the ultimate thought of God in the eternal day reaches to this, and no further, it cannot go further. "The tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them."

J. W. D. Would you say then that the height of the Christian calling is included in it, or would that be greater?

F. L. The height of the Christian calling is sonship, and sonship comes out in connection with the Son, with Christ. Later on we should have a reading upon the greatness of Christ and how He fills all things. Sonship is involved in that. It is the height of the revelation of God.

O. J. O. Here you would say he brings in the whole company, "Say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel."

F. L. Yes, we have to look deeply through the details. What God was really setting out was the construction of a tent which in the eyes of men

would be utterly insignificant, the tabernacle itself; yet in the unfolding of the divine mind about that He brings to light the full expression of the glory of God and how it would be filled by Christ, so that we contemplate a universe in the building. If we apply that to the present time we get something that is worth considering. We see the creation of a moral universe in the actual doing of it. There was a material creation in the first of Genesis, but we are privileged in this day to sit down and see the actual working out of a moral creation. Now can we awaken to the consciousness of that?

J. A. W. We do not get a view of what you have been opening out to us from the valley but from the mountain top. What is the significance of that?

F. L. All light is viewed as coming from the mountain. That is, you go up to God, and so in the fourth chapter God gives an original thought, which is really based on sonship, "Israel is my son, my first born: Let my son go that he may serve Me." All is set in motion by what is in the heart of God. Thus when conditions become right, through redemption, God comes out and calls Moses to the mountain where He unfolds to him what one would reverently say must have given great pleasure to the heart of God. He says: "I have brought you unto Myself." Then in chapter xxiv. Moses is called to the mountain

with Aaron and his sons, the nobles and elders; and "they saw God and did eat and drink."

R. S. S. What do you think was involved in what is said in regard of their seeing God?

F. L. I take it that would be under some such form as He appeared to Abraham, but in circumstances of glory. That is, the One who was Jehovah came. On the Mount of Transfiguration where there was glory it is God manifest in flesh, and here the revelation of God was made in such character as to imply what is the ultimate end in the eternal day; God will dwell with men. They ate and drank—there is the expression of the peace, the complete reconciliation of everything, which is characteristic of the eternal day which gives force to the thought that God for a brief moment was thinking of the end. He will surround Himself in an atmosphere of divine contentment, where He will rest in His love.

R. S. S. The thought of reaching God in that intimate way and eating and drinking before Him gives God's thought as to what He has ultimately in view, in nearness.

J. W. D. Do you get the thought of Father in connection with the tabernacle system, or simply God?

F. L. When we come to Christ, who reveals the Father, we see that the thought of Father is embedded here, but it was not discoverable until Christ should make it apparent. We can turn

back and see what was in God's mind when He said, "Israel is my son, my firstborn." It is sonship God has before Him. One great thought of the moral universe is that it is wrought upon the family idea; the divine system in whatever aspect you look at it always has a center; those who are the beneficiaries, are brought in the circle of blessing to a Center. Now the foundation of all lies in the heart of God. It is LOVE—it is the movement of His affections.

W. C. R. The thought of the covenant is brought in.

F. L. Yes, even before the law. That is, God expresses terms upon which He was prepared to be with them which are inexpressibly blessed, it is the expression of the mind of God—I am prepared to live with you.

R. S. S. You are referring to chapter xix. and the law in chapter xx. What is the difference between the covenant and the law?

F. L. The law was a covenant, but covenant on another basis. Chap. xix. was a covenant without condition, except the sovereign pleasure of God,—that He was prepared to be amongst them and dwell with them. "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness." (Jer. ii. 2.) Now that is the nineteenth chap., and they are viewed as the children of purpose. They are not looked at as those who

are under conditions of law but "if ye will hearken to my voice indeed and keep my covenant."

G. A. T. So you would say He first impresses them with what He has done for them, and then leaves them down here with the object in view that there might be a people and a place where He would be free to meet with His people?

F. L. Yes, where He would dwell with them. So, taking them to the mountain and their eating and drinking before Him, expresses that there was nothing to intervene and that really gives a glimpse of what is reached in eternity. That is, we are in the light of God in the perfect enjoyment of divine blessing.

S. T. Up to this point it is God acting purely from Himself in grace, so that with His purpose clearly before Him, having brought in redemption, showing them the truth, and bringing them to Himself, He is ready to dwell with them.

W. B-t. I notice you are laying great stress on the heart of God; so that anyone knowing what God desires in connection with His own affections, would desire to know the terms upon which all this could be brought about.

F. L. Chap. xxv. follows logically this revelation on the mount to Moses and the elders, with its suggestion of the sphere of reconciliation. Now in chap. xxv. it is as though God would say, I am prepared to make this perpetual—not occasional. "Make me a sanctuary where I may dwell among

them." But then you will note that the initial thing is to be the emotions which are subjectively wrought in the people themselves. If God would take His pleasure in dwelling with them, that which was to be formed as this circle of divine pleasure is the product of the emotions of the people. It is a heave offering.

G. W. H. So the covenant in the nineteenth really is formation. It is where the soul is formed under the sovereign love of God.

F. L. Yes; had you in mind Romans 7, how we pass from the seventh to the eighth of Romans?

G. W. H. Yes, the law engages us with ourselves, what we are, and bondage; while God declared in the covenant brings the soul into liberty before Him where He rests. You were saying at the beginning that it was not new, but new in revelation.

F. L. So that everything set out was really patterned upon what existed already with God, a pattern of things in the heavens, and so going through in detail to the end of the book we find this: let everything which depends upon man's responsibility break down, let it all be withdrawn and put into the discard, yet there remains a spiritual fabric which is imperishable and which is as divinely perfect at the end as at the beginning. While man may fail the thing does not fail, and that which God establishes in the light of His

revelation on the mount is of such character that no condition of failure amongst the people breaks it down.

G. A. T. The foundation of God standeth sure.

F. L. It does. The verses we read in chap. xl. show the setting up of things filled with the glory of God, and running all through is a thread of that which is imperishable; therefore it becomes a pattern of what is taken up in Christ and is made effective through this present age; it shines out in all its lustre in the world to come, and then is carried on the line of the purpose of God into eternity.

G. W. H. You could not have anything more important than that.

W. C. R. The reason it cannot fail is because it is the presentation of the terms upon which God will be with us, righteousness and love, which are really found in this chapter.

F. L. It is, and so long as a Joshua or a Caleb continues in the camp the thing will not fail.

G. A. T. We often get discouraged because of the ruin around us and are apt to think the testimony has failed.

F. L. I hope we grow a bit beyond that; we have been greatly helped in recent years in being established upon the things which are imperishable. "Upon this rock I will build my assembly and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

And so, contemplating this, you see in the actual process of creation, a moral universe. In a sense the tabernacle is not completed. It is being made now. The ark of the covenant is not really in its permanent place yet. Christ is in a provisional place in heaven. The tabernacle embraces everything which is precious to God, much of which has yet to be put into position. You have been brought in; I have been brought in; and the process is going on. We see the actual thing being made.

S. T. I think it is very attractive to see here how God unfolds Himself in such a wonderful way to His people, according to His purpose, before He ever raises the question of responsibility.

F. L. That is what we want to get at, so He takes it up on this line: "Bring me a heave offering of everyone whose heart prompted him."
(N. T.)

S. T. And He reveals His wonderful thought in regard to a peculiar people unto Himself. It is so attractive.

F. L. So has God come out in Christ and has revealed the deep affections of His heart which had their movement even from before the foundation of the world. What effect has it had upon us, because upon that effect depends the "heave offering" which furnishes the material out of which the moral elements of constructive work are evolved. It is "whose heart prompted him." It is a stirring of the spirit responsive to the love

of God which leads you in the sense of sonship, of what is true in Christ, to take up things Godward.

R. S. S. That is chap. xxv.

F. L. Yes, and what follows; you see the one is dependent upon the other.

R. S. S. I do not want to delay or divert, but there has been a point raised by our brother H. in connection with law and covenant. Now in chap. xix. there is a condition, where God speaks of having brought them to Himself, and He says, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." Is not His voice expressed in the twentieth chap. where you get the law? I would like to get clear in regard to what Mr. H. said, that it is a great thing to pass from law to covenant.

G. W. H. I had thought that the law made demand upon you and called for certain things which man could not give, and when that was all over with, according to Romans viii., then it was a question of God coming out in what He was in His nature, and what He would be to man on that ground.

R. S. S. Yes, that would be rather the new covenant, is it not? But does the old covenant not embrace the law?

F. L. The old covenant embraces the law, but I think what we get in the nineteenth chapter is

not the old covenant. It is the simple expression of the desire of God to enjoy the affections of His people without terms or conditions except that they shall hearken to His voice. No terms or conditions are set out as in chap. 20.

R. S. S. They should obey the voice.

F. L. That is what I mean. It is keeping righteousness and holiness. He had brought them to Himself. They had been maintained in pure grace; no issue had been raised with them because of failure or breakdown, and so it is in Romans. So what He propounds in chap. xix. is not a family of priests, a family of a family—the family of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi—but for the whole twelve tribes to be on the footing of having access to God. Now that in its essence transcends the covenant of the law. The covenant of the law is, so to speak, put upon them when they, instead of saying to God that they embrace in their hearts what He presents, seeking grace from Himself to maintain them in it, make an unconditional promise, “all that Jehovah hath spoken will we do.” That brings in a testing of the flesh—“Thou shalt” and “Thou shalt not,” and with the testing of the flesh is the collapse. So if we follow through the latter part of this book we shall see that God takes things up, not on the ground of the flesh fulfilling requirements, but the flesh being set aside in death. So that it is really in spite of

the law and not in consequence of it that things are maintained.

R. S. S. The point that I was raising is, when He says, "If you will obey my voice," etc., I suppose there was always the necessity for God to raise the question of responsibility with man. He did so at the outset. No creature of God could be without responsibility.

F. L. It is so now. Take Hebrews, it is "Whose house are ye *if* ye continue"—so long as God is dealing with man there must always be the "if," but apart from the "if" there is that which divinely maintained now in the power of the Spirit makes the thing effectual. It is potent; it carries through and does not break down.

W. B-t. Then the great point is that the material for the building comes from men.

F. L. It is what is subjectively formed now. If you look at the things, the first point is the emotion of the heart going out to God. Nothing else is of any moment, because the movement of the heart is vitality, and the system of God is a system of life, but then it takes form. What will this divine sphere be like? So you get gold, silver, brass—that is one line. Blue, purple, scarlet—another line. Goat's hair, linen, ram's skins dyed red, badger's skins—another line. Shittim wood—another line. Oil for the light—another line. Spices for the anointing oil, the incense of fragrant drugs—another line. Onyx stone and stones

to be set, for the ephod, and for breast-plate—another line. Now the accumulation of those is an accumulation of power, of glory, of light, of preciousness and of delights. That is the kind of universe that God evolves in His desire through His people, and if we apply it morally it opens to our souls a very great sphere.

J. W. D. Before these elements are laid in the soul does the covenant not have to be established?

F. L. The spirit of the covenant so far as we are concerned is another term for a profound appreciation of the love of God. We come back to the circle. We see how the love of God produces the covenant, the covenant is the love of God, and we are brought under its influence every Lord's day morning in the breaking of bread. We never escape from it.

G. A. T. At the close when all was gathered together, Moses looks over the whole thing and says, You are just the way the Lord commanded, and he blessed them. Would that indicate that God puts His approval on it by filling the place with His glory?

F. L. Yes, when the one who was in the place of head over God's house puts His constructive power upon the elements (which now are really produced as the fruit of the Holy Spirit), blessing rests upon it and God dwells.

S. T. Is the heave offering on the line of priestly grace, beginning in the hearts of the

people through the revelation of Himself? He has revealed Himself and all that He was to them, and brought them to Himself, so that is the covenant in the nineteenth chapter?

F. L. Up to this point it is, because really the restricted priestly family of Aaron and his sons has not yet been brought into view, and what had been propounded was that they should *all* be on priestly ground, which intimates a sphere of liberty and of sonship because sonship and priesthood go together. When it comes to the question of the elements of the tabernacle portraying what is in the heavens there is no limitation. It is the spirit of sonship which serves to the production of these things.

S. T. And it is all on the line of what God had purposed and revealed. He had revealed Himself to the hearts of His people in such a way that in priestly grace they could respond to Him, and that I understand is the heave offering in connection with chap. xxv.

F. L. One might say in priestly grace, which draws out the spirit of sonship, because if we go to Hebrews where the contrast of all this is given, we find that sonship and priesthood are practically the equivalent one of the other, and He who is Son over the house of God is great priest over the house of God.

S. T. Entirely outside of responsibility?

F. L. Excepting the "if" is brought in. We

never escape from the test as to where we stand subjectively in answer to what is presented objectively.

J. W. D. But does priesthood not suppose a certain distance—God and the priests: Father and the sons?

F. L. I had rather looked upon it as divine access. That is, the great priest over the house of God has gone in and our title to go in is because He has gone in. We go in with Him; we are of the priestly family and He becomes us. In Israel the veil expressed distance; the priestly family had access to the tabernacle but not to the holy of holies, but now the veil has been taken away and the whole priestly family has access to the holiest. In the world to come, the veil will be put back again in the temple upon earth, but not in the tabernacle.

W. C. R. In the bringing to light of a new creation and reconciliation all distance disappears.

F. L. Yes, the veil is taken away. What in Israel was a veil of separation becomes, being removed, manner of access for the whole of the priestly family, and sonship enters in.

G. A. T. Today would it be as we get in Hebrews, Having access by the blood of Jesus?

F. L. We enter by the veil, that is to say, His flesh. That is, Christ, what He is as Man, becomes our power of entrance. Christ as Man is

the exclusion of man according to sinful flesh, but Christ as Man is the way of our entrance.

W. B-t. The first verse read was: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself." "Now therefore," He says, "if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel." It really seems to express, now if this has taken place, you have seen all this, redemption has been accomplished, now therefore pass on to the next thing. That would take us to the heart of God and what He is going to produce from His people, through affection.

F. L. Precisely so, and so when Peter undertakes to write his epistle to the Hebrews, he goes back, as I understand it, not to Exodus xxviii. and the installation of Aaron and his sons, but to chap xix., and brings into view the holy and royal priesthood which has title to access in virtue of the Living Stone. "Ye also as living stones are builded together."

W. B-t. And God's thought here embraces all.

F. L. It embraces all. Now, in this day of the Spirit, there is nothing exclusive. What one wants to see is the greatness of the place, and,

what kind of a sphere it is which God perpetuates. Let us grasp it in our minds in its application to us. Gold and silver and brass, the thought of righteousness divine, redemption, and righteousness as it relates to man. These entered into the making of God's moral universe. They are imperishable. Blue, purple, scarlet, that which is heavenly, is royal, is of glory. These are of God's sphere. His universe is builded that way. There is another thought connected with it, which is pure beauty. When those things are taken, entwined and wrought by the spinning of the wise-hearted, not only do they express qualities, but also exquisite moral beauty under the eye of God. Then the linen, the goat's hair, the ram's skins, the badger's skins, what an idea is expressed in them of how absolutely the sphere of God is separated and protected from defilement and power of evil. Nothing shall contaminate it. Then there comes in the acacia wood. Applied to Christ or the saints it is that which is perfect in manhood. Then the oil for the light. God's sphere is a sphere of light, maintained in the Holy Spirit. Spices for the anointing oil and incense: there is fragrance ever going from God's sphere. it is covered all over with it. Then things which are precious; the stones which shine out in the breastplate, and in the heavenly city. Can we not get into our spirits some conception that there is thus actually wrought a sphere of God where

such things are actually and divinely expressed, and we are a part of it? They are being wrought out in the saints.

W. C. R. I suppose once Christ is brought in under the eye of God there will be nothing else under God's eye but Christ. It will be Christ that will fill the universe, so, if I understand you aright, all these different things are qualities formed in believers now?

F. L. That is right, so if you take up each one of these things individually, you look to Christ and you see every one of them actually wrought out and expressed in Him. That leads on to what is the center of all, which is the Ark, the type which is the pure expression of Christ personally—no other like it.

S. T. You have been speaking of how we are brought subjectively under this revelation in the power of the Spirit; that we may now have the formation which God is looking for in His people. With that object before us, in the power of the Spirit that subjective formation is brought about.

F. L. So if you look at what the tabernacle expresses, it is what is wrought in the power of redemption through the gospel, in drawing out material which becomes subjected through the formative work of the Holy Spirit to the Head on high, but what is the intent of that? It is to be a shrine for the ark. It is very important to see that the tabernacle was formed for the ark,

not the ark for the tabernacle exactly. The prime point in all this is the setting of the ark. That is, the place Christ occupies as the centre of all God's thoughts; so the sanctuary becomes a place for the enshrinement of the ark, which is the essential thing.

W. B-t. The ark is the greatest of all types speaking of Christ.

J. A. W. Would the fact that there is no temple in Revelation xxi. 1-8 bear that out?

F. L. I think it does, the thing which eternally abides is the tabernacle. The ark is seen in heaven in the Revelation, and the temple opens in heaven.

W. B-t. The temple is opened in heaven and the ark of His covenant is seen.

F. L. That is, God is still working in relation to the adjustment of things upon earth, preparatory to the introduction of the world to come. The ark has been lost sight of upon earth. After it was ensconced in the temple it disappears from view. We never hear of the ark again, so far as I recall, until it is discovered to us in heaven. That is, the presentation of Christ risen upon earth is restored to us in heaven for the adjustment of all things here, and then later on in connection with the eternal state it is discovered to us that the idea of the tabernacle is imperishable, the tabernacle is seen in the eternal day as the dwelling place of God. (Rev. xxi.-3.)

R. S. S. Having raised the question at the outset, and Mr. H. having spoken of the same thing, I would just like to express my thought and see if I am correct. In the nineteenth chapter you have God bringing the people to Himself, as you have dwelt on it, not only redeeming them, but saving them and then ministering to them through the wilderness, feeding them with manna, with water, etc. Then they say, "All that the Lord our God hath said we will do." They really put themselves on ground that God did not put them on.

F. L. That is the thought.

R. S. S. And God, so to speak, says, I will take you up on that ground now. So in the twentieth chapter He gives them the law, the ten commandments, as we speak of it. Well then, having raised that question, how is it going to be dealt with? And I was just thinking that between the scriptures you had read at the beginning you find that question dealt with. In chap. xxxii. Moses goes up and receives the two tables of stone, and when he comes down he finds the children of Israel breaking the very first commandment, and he casts the two tables of stone out of his hand and breaks them. And God does not reprove him, because, I suppose, if he had brought them into the camp they would have been all dead men. Then in chap. xxxiv. and the two chapters following God tells him to come up again, and He again writes on

two tables of stone; and He tells Moses this time to "hew out." I think we learn from Numbers that before he goes up he had formed the ark, and when he comes down he does not exactly bring the two tables into the camp, but deposits them in the ark. Really Christ in this way met the question which the children of Israel had raised.

F. L. That is very helpful, and so we see in the chapter we read (xxv. 16) that the divine mind was never to entrust the tables in the midst of Israel; but in this chapter, "Thou shalt put into the ark the testimony that I shall give thee." That is, it was not an afterthought that, iniquity having come in and the tables of stone being destroyed, they should be preserved by being put into the ark. It was the original thought. God never intended that they should be entrusted to men in the flesh. They were to be enshrined in the heart of Christ. That was always God's thought, that Christ was to take up the law, magnify it and make it honorable. Life in Christ through the Spirit would give us adequate power, that the righteous requirements of the law should be fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

R. S. S. It is rather remarkable that the giving of the law, the writing of the two tables, comes in between all the instructions God gives as to the formation of the tabernacle, and that which answers to it,—which you have called our attention

to,—the subjective work that is carried on later when it is actually done.

F. L. Just so. That is very helpful.

R. S. S. So God allows all this question man has raised of his ability to keep God's law to come in and to break down, to be perfectly manifest, before we have the formative work that is carried out. That is, it is very remarkable that not only do you get the fullest detail of instruction in chapters xxv., xxvi. and xxvii., but you get it all repeated later on where we are told the children of Israel *did* these things, which I understand, and you have emphasized to us, is the answer. One is objective and the other subjective, as we speak of it.

F. L. So, just to follow on in that line, you will note from chaps. xxv. and xxx. the keynote all the way through is: "Thou shalt make," "Thou shalt take," "Thou shalt bring,"—it is reiterated again and again in these chapters, it is all objective. It is all the mind of God coming out in exquisite detail as to what He would have. Then if you come into chap. xxxii. you find the flesh is inadequate, it breaks down, and then we find that the answer to that is the unsparing judgment of man according to the flesh, and the hatred of that which is dearest to us. The sons of Levi put on the sword, they go into the camp and they unsparingly judge and put to death that which is dearest to them naturally.

R. S. S. That is the end of the thirty-second.

F. L. Then it follows on (I am just giving a brief outline) : in chap. xxxii. Moses pitches the tent outside the camp, and all who were responsive to Moses rose up and went out to the tent of meeting, which is really the principle of separation. It is 2 Timothy ii., if you like. Now then, there is morally the beginning of the new order and Joshua, the son of Nun, does not depart from the tent. "Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man." It is a young man. There is a new point of departure, and then, consequent upon separation and the maintenance of what is due to the tent of the testimony, glory appears.

R. S. S. In the end of the chapter?

F. L. Glory appears and then the mediator comes in. Moses intercedes, and then, all that working effectively, in chapters xxxv. to xxxix. inclusive, it is all subjective. You will see it is, "And he made," "And he made," "And they made," it goes through wherever you turn, so in every minute detail there is the exact answer to what God is objectively presented. Now the product of all that is brought to the Head. Moses is head over the house of God; he is constructive, and he puts it together, he gives it form, so that it appears the pattern of what is in heaven, undiminished in its glory and beauty, in its imperishable nature, in its expression of unity, and God takes possession, the glory of God fills it. There

is no place for man in the flesh there, but the glory of God fills it. Now in that way I think we get an idea of the framework of the moral universe.

R. L. C. It is a wonderful verse in chap. xxxii., 6, "And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb." That showed the mind of God had been reached.

THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST

Hebrews 1, 1-14; John 1, 1-5 and 14; Matthew 11, 27-30; Colossians 1, 12-20.

F. L. I thought this afternoon we might consider the greatness of Christ. This morning we were contemplating the glory system according to the divine conception of it. That system could not come into being except there be One competent in wisdom and power to bring it in, and to give it character and life. Everything awaited the revelation of that One, the fulness of that Person becomes the essential quality for the production of the glory system. We should pause and consider the greatness of Christ. We said that the tabernacle was made for the ark, the ark suggests Him who is both divine and human—God manifest in flesh. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." Now Hebrews i. prepares us for all that. In the first of Genesis we see a material creation; in Exodus xxv. we see the shadow of a creation patterned upon things in the heavens; but everything waits, and so Hebrews i. is the release of what was awaited, all was now to be brought to final accomplishment, and the glory system would be inaugurated in the person of the Son.

W. C. R. I suppose the system set up in Genesis is in contrast to this system with One at the head of it in whom all things subsist. That system broke down and failed. Now God has put everything into the hands of Him in whom there will be no failure. So it says, "By Him all things subsist."

G. A. T. So if it is a great system it takes a great Person to be at the head of it.

F. L. That which fills all things and which is competent to make the display of the glory of God in the world to come and to abide for His pleasure throughout eternity, is so great that the mind apprehends there is only One person who can bring it in and give it character. The ministry of Hebrews i. and Colossians i. is that this One is found in the Godhead.

R. S. S. It is interesting that circumstances arise which lead the Spirit of God to make these marvellous statements in Hebrews and Colossians, also in the first of John. In Hebrews it was in view of setting before the Hebrew Christians the One whom God now had brought in to take the place of all that had broken down; the statements are not made arbitrarily or without occasion. And the same thing is true in Colossians; there was an occasion to make these statements in regard to the Lord. Also in John i., which perhaps is one of the latest books (if not *the* latest book) in the New Testament, that was

written to set forth the Lord's divinity, really to maintain it.

F. L. Just so. So what we contemplated this morning, and which as to its material aspect was perfectly well known to those addressed, is taken in Hebrews i. as the text on which to expound the glory of the Son of God, Who brings into being the abiding and eternal glory universe which is the substance of all that of which the tabernacle and the ark were the shadow. The shadow had been cast down through the age, but now the light which produced the shadow shone forth in the person of Christ; so in time past, on different occasions God had spoken in *prophets*, therefore in every voice there was something yet to come. So long as God spoke in prophets finality had not been reached, but now He speaks *in Son*; the final word is spoken. The last thought of God has come out in revelation.

G. A. T. Would you mind explaining those two expressions—"His Son" and "In Son"?

F. L. In the opening of Hebrews we get the movement of the Godhead in much the same line as in Colossians. That is, the Person who will give final effect to the purpose of God is disclosed; its carrying out must come from heaven and in connection with the Godhead, so He whom we know as Son comes into manhood that He may bring to pass the pleasure of the Godhead. Therefore the voice that speaks is *in Son*. It is not in

Father or in Holy Spirit; it is in Son, but not to be confused with Son of Man, or Son of God, which are different thoughts.

R. S. S. It is God really that is speaking.

F. L. It is God, and therefore it is God in Him whom we know and speak of, for want of a better expression, as the second person of the Trinity. When we speak of the Son we have perhaps almost instinctively a thought as of inferiority, but in His essential name of Deity—SON—there is no thought of inferiority, it is the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit (Math. 28); and therefore the movement of the Godhead to bring to pass its own eternal delight and purpose comes out in Hebrews i., it is the sovereign movement of Deity, as it were. It is guarded and expressed as, "By whom also He made the worlds." There is the thought of the universe—that is, heaven and earth and every sphere in which the light of God shines. They were His product, and they could only be the product of One who Himself is Deity.

O. J. O. Would you say it is similar to Genesis i. where God says, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness?"

F. L. The thought of Godhead is there and it is very clearly brought out in Colossians i. I emphasize this so we may have clearly before us that the movement came from the Godhead; that the mind which in purpose conceived the glory

system from before the foundation of the world itself moves in Him who is the Son; when He takes things up we can bow our head and say, The end of God is reached, for what He has undertaken will surely be carried through.

Ques. What is the more excellent name?

F. L. Having come in incarnation, then His pre-eminence as man amongst men in every possible relation, His pre-eminence in relation to all things created is emphasized; His place above angels, above His companions, above all powers. Then the thought of the inheritance comes in and it all marks Him as what He had become in incarnation. You get the same thought of pre-eminence in Colossians.

W. C. R. And is it not to emphasize the greatness of the speaker?

F. L. Yes, because the speaker is the One whom we know as Son of God. So that when we speak of the Son of God immediately there comes up before our minds that it embraces every attribute and glory of Christ. It is all covered in Son of God.

R. S. S. When you speak of the Lord in that way, as Son of God, have you reference to Him in manhood or in Godhead?

F. L. In manhood. Where He is spoken of as the Son of God, or as the Son Who is head of all things, or to whom is committed the nations, "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten

thee"—in all such relations it is Christ in incarnation; but we remember that the One who is in incarnation has come into that place for the pleasure of the Godhead, in order that He may bring to pass the purpose of God. I suppose we are all perfectly clear that, while He is spoken of, "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee," yet the thought of being created is never introduced as referring to Christ. He is the beginning of the creation of God, but He Himself was never a part of creation. That is to say, He brings to pass the creation, but He Himself is introduced as the One who is the Creator.

R. S. S. That is rather a difficult thing to take in. I think we all accept the fact, but the way in which, of necessity perhaps, it has to be expressed, as the beginning of the creation of God, would almost imply the other thought.

F. L. Let me try to put it another way. We get the expression, the first Adam and the last Adam. Adam was of the earth, earthy. He was *created* and there was breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, but the last Adam is a quickening spirit. *He creates*. He is the originator of the creation of God, the power that brings it to pass and therefore He is the *beginning* of the creation of God so designated in resurrection; but He Himself is not created. I hope we are all clear about that.

W. C. R. The first Adam it says was made.

J. S. It has been said there is no past history in new creation.

F. L. It is altogether outside of responsibility or of the question of sin. It has its origin from before the foundation of the world, and so one gets a conception of it in the morrow after the first sabbath. I do not know of anything that I would commend more to all of us than to get alone and contemplate the first day after the first sabbath.

R. S. S. You are speaking now of Genesis ii.?

F. L. I am speaking now of Leviticus xxiii. The point of view there is that everything is closed up in death. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and He was buried. That sabbath held Christ in the grave and there was no life occurrent under the eye of God. Everything was sealed up in death. Then on the first day after the first sabbath Christ, solitary, emerged from amongst the dead, and stood, a Man in life from amongst the dead. Under the eye of God there was none other. Contemplating Him, you see the beginning of the creation of God, the last Adam, who is the quickening spirit; and the whole vision of the glory system pervades your soul. It is made good in the Man that is alive from amongst the dead, while as yet no single atom of it is out of death but Himself. I do not know of anything that expands the greatness of the

thing in our eyes more than the morrow after the first sabbath.

W. C. R. He becomes the first fruits of them that slept.

F. L. Yes, so that immediately Christ the first-fruits should be put in motion, as it were, under the eye of God in the wave offering, God would discover in the person of Christ alive from amongst the dead the earnest of the glory system.

R. S. S. Are you speaking of Leviticus xxiii. 10, "And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, When ye come into the land that I give unto you, and ye reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah, to be accepted for you; on the next day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." (N. T.)

F. L. That is it, the morrow after the sabbath. That is Christ personally as He comes out from amongst the dead, and as He greets us: "Go tell my brethren, I ascend to my Father, and your Father." We speak of a universe taking character and life from Christ. The whole earnest of it is in that Man on that first day after the first sabbath.

G. W. H. Our first thoughts in regard to the Lord Jesus are pretty much in connection with relief, and in connection with ourselves. But it is a vastly greater thing to think of Him coming out to give being to the glory system.

F. L. It is indeed. If we can but touch the meaning of it and its effect upon our own souls, we may be thankful for this meeting. The first thing that meets us in the beginning of Hebrews or of Colossians is that the movement to bring this about originates in the God head, out from whom comes the One who Himself is God, and who for the purpose of bringing it to pass takes possession of a prepared body. He is now Son of God, Son of Man, the Christ, the Lord, Saviour, the Builder, the Mediator, and so one might multiply His varied aspects in manhood; but the first and supreme thing is that He who is God, the Son, comes into the prepared body and as Man undertakes to compass the pleasure of God. Consider how great is this Person.

J. W. D. Does not Ephesians i. suggest that to get the light of that in our souls we have need of spiritual vitality to know "the exceeding greatness of his power in the knowledge of Him"? What does that special spiritual vitality refer to?

F. L. There is the renewing of our minds and spirits, development of affections, and thus things are set in motion. There is an emotion of affection in response to God, there is no one single thought of God which is now withheld. Everything has come out in Christ; we do not wait for any *new* thing to be revealed or developed; it is a question now of appropriation.

R. S. S. We the firstfruits would of course be

the fruit of the Spirit, as it goes on to say, "The eyes of our hearts being enlightened."

F. L. Just so. In speaking thus the presence and the work of the Holy Spirit is taken for granted, and the reference to the eyes of the heart exactly illustrates the thing. That is, the spiritual state is ruled and produced through the affections. It is not the eyes of the mind.

S. T. The glory system is especially developed in Ephesians iii., is it not? That is, "Being strengthened by his Spirit in the inner man" to see all the glory that is in connection with that Person.

F. L. Yes, so that the product is glory to God in the assembly throughout all ages. That is Ephesians iii. and so is the answer which God gets to the divine conception, to bring to pass which He who was God came into humanity, that as Man He might, with perfect power and wisdom, bring the whole thing to pass.

S. T. Would you say a word in connection with that verse: "That the Christ may dwell, through faith, in your hearts"?

F. L. "Being rooted and founded in love," so that there is a moral state with believers who, free from the unbeliefs of men, absorb the light of God; and Christ in the heart expands the divine nature, "rooted and founded in love." This is looked at as of the saints as a whole, so that the answer to all is found in "glory to God in the

assembly throughout all ages." It is the result of the heave offering, if I might put it that way. Every bit of the tabernacle material has been gathered up in the hand of Christ, and, as the supreme builder, He has put all into form. Now in the world to come the glory of God fills the universe through the assembly, but one can only understand that in connection with the greatness of Christ.

S. T. I thought that in that creation there are various circles of His glory and it was the light of that seen in this wonderful Person which gave effect to the whole. It is all produced by Him and was all in Him, and the light of that is the truth we have in our souls.

F. L. Conceive of such an one as Joshua or Caleb listening to the divine communication and saying, What do these things mean? They mean a universe compacted of righteousness, redemption, purity, power, glory and of light divine outshining. They would receive it by faith in their hearts. The eyes of their hearts would be enlightened, and so we see thereafter to the man of faith the ark became the most precious of all things. The tabernacle all took its character from what the ark was in its centre. I do trust we may get a little help on this line, especially those of us who in a way are younger in the faith, who have reached the knowledge of Jesus as Saviour; can we not have our apprehension of Christ expanded?

G. A. T. On the principle of the way it affected the Queen of Sheba.

O. J. O. Would you say the saints on earth represent the tabernacle?

F. L. Yes. I wanted now, if we could, to consider the personal greatness of Christ. We say amongst ourselves, "Christ is everything," but when we come right down to it we find very often that our thoughts are very vague about Christ; it is a source of worship to contemplate the movement of the Godhead, that One who is of the Godhead should Himself undertake for its pleasure to come and be a Man amongst men, that He might be the beginning of the creation of God. There is what is productive of worship.

G. A. T. Is that why it says He has been anointed with the oil of gladness above His companions?

F. L. That is what He is as become Man; there is a hymn which says with remarkable accuracy: "The higher mysteries of Thy fame, The creature's grasp transcend; The Father only that blest name of Son can comprehend." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." There is no qualification about that. You may know the Son of God, the Son of Man, but "No man knoweth *the Son* but the Father."

R. S. S. That is why you read Matthew xi.

F. L. I read Matthew xi. with two objects—one to get this thought before us; the other that

when it comes to the working out of the glory system the character of the Man which covers it is "meek and lowly." The One who has the right to express Himself in power and what the world would call greatness, the outshining of His wonderful glory is that He veils it all and is meek and lowly. So the two thoughts come together: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." He is there solitary and unknowable, He "dwells in light unapproachable, which no man hath seen or can see," and yet He can reveal the Father.

G. W. H. Such an One graced manhood.

F. L. Such an One becoming Son of God in manhood will now take up in every aspect the working out of the divine sphere and put His own character upon it. What will that character be? We get the suggestion in Exodus of the spinning and the weaving of these things of beauty and glory, and what is spun and woven is in its character the meekness and the lowliness of the Man, Christ Jesus. "Truth as it is in Jesus." I think that is the end of Matthew xi.

J. S. God could recognize in Moses that he was the meekest of men, but the Lord Himself could say, "I am meek and lowly in heart"; the perfect and permanent expression of everything that God loves is in that blessed Man.

F. L. The inner springs which were developed and poured out came from a fountain meek and lowly. Meek and lowly *in heart*. God will suf-

fuse the whole of His universe with the character of that Man, but who is He? "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in flesh." One feels that we have our hand upon the sublimest and most precious truth, that the universe of God is being compacted and built by Him who became Man in order to bring this about. We know how things work, and can actually view the building of that moral universe.

J. W. D. It speaks of "Come unto Me," referring to the Son as revealer of the Father. Where would you place that in the experience of our souls?

F. L. The love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit given to us, and we are turned to the Man who is wholly lovable to God, and, coming to Him we are brought into reconciliation. We have *rest*, it is really sabbath. "Come unto Me and I will give you rest." The very next thing which comes in is "sabbath." Where does God rest? In Christ. Where do we rest? In Christ. So that we have arrived at the keeping of the sabbath when our souls have reached the apprehension of Christ.

R. S. S. I do not know that I exactly follow you in this.

F. L. In Exodus xxxi. there is a parenthetical breaking off, not apparently for any cause. At that point Jehovah says, You must keep my sab-

bath, it is the rest of Jehovah. Just after the breakdown and when you would think that the mind of God was more engaged in getting things started aright, He says, "Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, holy to Jehovah." (Exodus xxxi. 15, N. T.) It is really the world to come. But when Christ came, in whom He found all His delight, God rested in His love in Christ. There was the keeping of the sabbath in Christ. Now then the Lord says, You come to Me and I will give you rest; I will put the sabbath into your heart.

S. T. Are you referring now to the end of Matthew xi.?

F. L. At the end of Matthew xi., the Lord emphasizes it: "Come to me, all ye who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Then (Chap. xii.), "At that time Jesus went on the *sabbath* through the cornfields." When there is criticism, He then declares Himself Lord of the sabbath; He is greater than the sabbath, and that because He has brought rest into the heart of God and into our hearts *now*. It will be general in the world to come.

S. T. In connection with His service here, He had been working on where most of His mighty works were done. He was rejected and He en-

tered into the presence of His Father and found rest. I have been struck that you have the same thing in Luke x., but you do not have that portion about "Come unto me, all ye who labour."

F. L. Matthew xi. is one of those interludes, when the whole glory of eternity opens up before your soul for a moment. These things are hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes; and then He says, "No man knows the Son but the Father; and no one knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son may be pleased to reveal Him." He is prepared to take up divine relationships and reveal them to those renewed in nature as babes.

G. A. T. Would you say the Builder of this great system is the meek and lowly Jesus?

F. L. Yes, that is truth as it is in Jesus.

G. A. T. And to be partaker with Him in the building requires the same kind of a spirit?

F. L. I think what is reproduced is on the line of spinning and weaving, and the bringing of precious material which is utilized by the Spirit of God in producing the ultimate results in those who have life in Christ.

G. A. T. I was going to contrast this with the lion of the tribe of Judah. It is not that here?

F. L. No. So if we consider the glory of Christ as we get it in Hebrews i. or Colossians we have unfolded to us the greatness of that Person. He was and is God. He comes for a set

purpose, and Colossians is especially beautiful as to the way in which the Godhead takes action—all fulness being pleased to dwell in Him. You referred to Hebrews, Colossians, and John. They are each brought in for a special purpose. In Hebrews it takes up shadows and develops them into spiritual value for the Hebrew believers. In Colossians it takes up the attitude of the Godhead towards man as such, the expression of it being found in the nations—the mystery of Christ in you, the hope of glory—but it presents the same point of approach, if one might so say: One stepping from the Godhead into the lowly veil of a human body, guarded in every way as the Creator, and as the One who in all things has the pre-eminence. Then in the time of John I take it that already apostasy and defection had set in, outwardly everything had gone, and the Spirit of God speaks to John, as it were, Take your pen and inscribe the glories of the Son of God, for the unfolding of His person is that imperishable element which, put into the assembly, will carry it through to the end; so, “The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us”; and “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

R. S. S. What did you say when you spoke of Colossians a moment ago? How did you begin your remark?

F. L. The presentation was towards man.

R. S. S. Not towards Israel?

F. L. It follows the line of Luke's gospel, it is towards men. In Colossians it is what is for the satisfaction of the Godhead itself, which is secured for it by One who has come from the Godhead, but it is presented as the mystery in you Gentiles, not in you Jews.

G. W. H. Colossians is most profound. He steps from the Godhead into manhood, to be Servant of the Godhead, for the Godhead.

F. L. So from that point on one sees there are many elements in the glory system. There is the gospel—He is the Preacher of it. There is the kingdom—He is the Ruler of it. Adam is forced out as an unworthy and fallen head; a new Head is discovered, Christ is the Head of every man. The assembly takes the place of Israel, and He is the Head of the body. Sonship is the supreme height of revelation, and there must be the One brought into view Who is competent to bring the many sons to glory. The nations have to be ruled, and the world to come administered; therefore, He is the Son of Man. So one might follow on in many aspects and in every aspect you will find Christ takes it up. In one's own soul the Man, Christ Jesus, is wonderfully glorified.

H. W. D. Have you not time to mention a few more of them?

F. L. He comes in as the Mediator. Moses had to mediate, and he said to God, Let me be cut off and the people spared, but then the death

of Moses could accomplish nothing; for us the Mediator must needs die but He lives again. Then too the system must be supported Godward; therefore, the Great Priest over the house of God comes in. God has a house and who is the head of it? Moses was the best servant in a sense God ever had, but was incompetent and broke down; therefore, Christ becomes Head over the house of God, over His own house. We have to enter in; therefore our Forerunner has gone in for us, showing us the way in. So one might multiply.

W. C. R. One who was the Reconciliation of all things.

F. L. He is the Reconciler of all things, and it is "*all things*." So He died for *all things*; not only for all men, but for all things.

W. C. R. In Colossians i. it says: "And He is the head of the body, the assembly; who is the beginning, firstborn from among the dead, that he might have the first place in all things: for in him all the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell, and by him to reconcile all things to itself." (vv. 18-20. N. T.) Godhead is active, as you were saying, reconciling all things to itself.

F. L. One can see we had a root in Adam, but if Adam has ceased to be our root, what are we to do? We find a life-giving Spirit in Christ. He breathes into us: He is the life-giving Spirit; we were of the order of the first man, how are we to become of the second man? The second man

is out of heaven. Christ is the second man. So one could continue. When you see the greatness of the person of Christ in every occasion, what a line of things opens up! You become conscious that you are embraced in a system of glory, but in every aspect of it you become conscious of this, that it is not possible except through Christ, and so Christ becomes glorified in one's sight.

R. S. S. And also it is through Christ that everything is removed of the first order; so that reconciliation is connected with death, which is an important thing, I think, to note.

F. L. Quite so, and so I have no doubt it carries an eternal thought, that He is the Minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord has pitched and not man. I understand from Hebrews viii. that the Lord takes up an attitude in connection with the sanctuary which will be eternal in its character.

R. S. S. It is a principle that has often been stated, that God never does anything great without giving testimony to it beforehand; and I was just thinking of that principle in connection with what is engaging us today, that what we had this morning is really God giving us an intimation of what is coming, but giving it to us in connection with material things which have reference to that which is infinitely superior to the material. It is that which is spiritual and moral.

F. L. If I take a map I convey things which

may take in the scope of a continent. The value of the Old Testament is that material things are put in an understandable way, and they expand in our souls as to the spiritual greatness of the system of glory. When you contemplate Christ, what are all the Old Testament saints? Every one of them you might say is an expression of the glory of Christ. Something in this one, something in that one, something in Abel, something in Enoch, another thing in Samuel, another in David, another in Isaiah, characteristic of Christ. Search the scriptures! He begins at Moses and all the prophets and shows to them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. Where is He to gather them from? He has to gather them from the accumulated army of witnesses, and every one of that army of witnesses has something characteristic of Christ, and the assemblage of all together is an adequate testimony of Christ, but it takes them all. He is so great that if you stop short of embracing them all you fail of some expression of Christ.

S. T. Is there not another thought, that God in communicating His thoughts to us will test us on them?

F. L. What do you know of God excepting what Christ has told you? How do you know the Father excepting in Christ?

S. T. It is a wonderful thought that it is our privilege to so contemplate Him that we may be

brought into all the fulness of God. We have just been speaking of His fulness, that all fulness is in that Person, and now we are called upon to contemplate that Person, that we may be filled unto all that fulness.

F. L. "We beheld His glory, the glory as of an only begotten with a father, full of grace and truth." One says it deliberately, there is nothing from God but what has been expressed through Christ. You do not know the Father but as you know Christ; and so when we talk among ourselves and we say, Christ is everything, I would again say that our thoughts are oftentimes very vague, we have not drawn out the threads from the scripture which, brought together, show out the greatness and the fulness of the glory of Him who, being God, deigned, for the pleasure of the Godhead and for our blessing, to come into the condition of manhood. Then one understands that, if there is to be a system of glory, it is going to be effectuated, it is not going to break down.

THE INDIVIDUAL

*Luke xxii., 19-23; John xii., 1-3 and 36;
John xiii., 1-8.*

F. L. I thought we might perhaps take up the line of what is individual, as necessary if we are to know our place in what is collective, which might follow later.

R. S. S. Did I understand you to say your thought was to suggest from these scriptures how we enter into things individually, with a view of our later entering into what is collective?

F. L. Yes. The gospel gathers us as material and we apprehend it individually, that is the beginning. The material is in view of what is constructive, or collective, but we have to reach things along the individual line. So the truth of the gospel is to gather human material. As it was for the tabernacle, the material is first accumulated before form is given to it; for the temple, David accumulates the material; and so with regard to the body, the Lord accumulated material which was put into place by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; the gospel ever follows that line. One feels the trouble is that when the gospel

has awakened the soul, and he appreciates the goodness of God in the forgiveness of his sins, that is looked at as though a final point were reached; whereas it is the beginning of what is the mind of God for you.

W. C. R. The Lord said to Israel: "This shall be the beginning of months to you."

F. L. So the tabernacle itself was to begin to take form. The passover was the beginning of months, and the tabernacle itself in its constructive side was also identified with the beginning of months.

H. W. D. Would you say that was two steps reached in the soul's history?

F. L. The first step is reached and then we are led on in the light of the mind of God to what is His pleasure, which is putting us in relation to Christ as a center, which naturally adjusts us to each other. That is, all adjustment comes from Christ as the centre; in Luke and in John we see the thing from two lines of approach, and it would help us if we could understand a little about those two lines.

R. S. S. Your thought is, to apply it to ourselves here, we are a company, maybe a couple of hundred together. We are individual Christians who have received blessing in our souls and know the Lord as our Saviour, but then the great thing is for us to enter into what is collective, if

for no other reason than that the greatest Christian blessings are not individual, but collective.

F. L. I think one would go so far as to say that individually there is little indicated in the mind of God. Everything contemplates the individual work of God taking form in what is collective, whether it be in the assembly, in the body, in the house, the flock, the temple or many other similes that are used. It is never contemplated, so far as I can see, that the individual believer has reached any end according to the mind of God until he is put into adjustment in his proper sphere.

R. S. S. Something like the stones in the temple. They were great stones and costly, but when they were there by themselves they did not form part of the building God intended should be reared up for His glory and His dwelling place.

F. L. So if we contemplate what we had yesterday in the tabernacle, the mass of individual believers correspond to boards and fibres of beautiful texture, that is what they are until assembled and put into form. One never calls a mass of men an army, for instance; they are a mob. They are not an army until they have been put into proper adjustment to each other, under central control. If you take the idea of the tabernacle, the gospel produces the material; then there comes the constructive work in the weaving and the finishing, which results in the mind of God in the

tabernacle. In the wilderness the tabernacle might be dis-assembled and re-assembled. It may be taken down today and re-assembled tomorrow, but it never afterwards loses its collective form, even though it be dis-assembled. It never afterwards becomes a disorganized mass of material. Every board, curtain and portion of it is in its place, even if dis-assembled, they are going through the wilderness with it, so that when the moment comes it re-assembles in perfect order and completeness. The board that is in the tabernacle never again becomes a separated and individualized board; the strand of cord never again becomes a single thread. It is part and parcel of a curtain. We want a perception of that.

J. A. W. So you make progress as an individual, but along collective lines?

F. L. The collective thing is always in view.

G. A. T. Would it be all right to go back a bit in the chapter to get that point of adjustment you are bringing before us? They had been with the Lord before they are together in the upper room where He sent them. He ordered them and brought about the condition in their souls so they could come together.

F. L. Quite so, and in the gospel of Luke we get the line of assemblage and adjustment which puts us in relation to things through the new covenant and the supper. So far as I see there are two great avenues which are similar in character

—one is the supper and the other the washing of feet for part with Christ. The one leads through the spirit of the new covenant, and, with spiritual logic, it goes on to the assembly. The other (in John) leads through the line of divine relationships into which the Lord introduces us. They serve as the two avenues through which all that is individual is passed in order to come into the spirit of that which is collective. In the one instance in the sphere of the assembly, in the other of divine relationships.

W. C. R. Before the material was put together in connection with the tabernacle God appointed Bezaleel and Aholiab, wisehearted men. What do they represent now? I mean do we have men who are bringing in material, men who present the proclamation?

F. L. That material is brought to them.

W. C. R. Do they put it together?

F. L. I have rather taken Bezaleel as symbolizing the work of the Spirit—of course through servants—the spirit of wisdom was what characterized him. There were others who worked under him, who would doubtless be descriptive of the gifts that the Head puts amongst us.

On the individual line, in the gospel of Luke the son in chap. xv. is what one might call the sample man. He is the product of the love of God. In the individual you see a piece of the material which, under the hand of the Lord, will

come to its adjustment and place in relation to the body ultimately. If we go to the gospel of John I think the sample man is in chap. ix. The Lord indicates of him that he was blind in order that the works of God might be manifest in him; that is true of every believer. What are you? You are a monument to the love of God. It is the grace of God, through Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that has brought you to a point where you have said: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, I have sinned." And so with any one of us in our blindness being brought into the light, it is with the intent that the work of God should be made manifest in us. Every one of us has to take account of himself in those ways.

J. S. Would you say that a sample man has a history?

F. L. Yes, a spiritual history.

J. S. The man that got his sight had a history afterwards.

F. L. If you look at him, he begins with a knowledge of Jesus as the One who brought him relief; and he is led on until he does Him homage, as the Son of God. There is a piece of finished material. That board has been put through everything that is necessary to remove the knots and the imperfect parts, and has come to the full stature of the knowledge of the Son of God. That man is ready to be put into his place in the flock,

which follows next; morally he becomes Lazarus who lives in resurrection. Now follow through in that way the verse which we read in John, "While you have the light believe in the light, that ye may become sons of light." (John xii. 36.) The man of chap. ix. has been brought along through resurrection into association with Christ, so that he is identifiable as of the "sons of light"; there is something in the hand of the Lord which He can lead on into the knowledge of divine relationships.

G. A. T. Would you say as a natural man he had a history, but in what he was spiritually he had no history?

F. L. In John we are not on the line of responsibility. Therefore, when the question is asked of the Lord, "Has this man sinned or his parents?" the Lord says, "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents"; we are privileged to look upon a believer as singled out in the purpose of God from before the foundation of the world, that he should make manifest the work of God, and, therefore, in John you do not get the side of responsibility. It is the gift of the Father to Christ, taken up and brought on to resurrection ground, dignified with the position of "sons of light." Now the Lord takes them in His hand, and says, I will give you part with Me to enter into divine relationships. (John xiii.) It is the side of privilege and not of responsibility.

S. T. Peter is brought out here in Luke xxii. as a pattern man on the line of responsibility.

F. L. I would go a little further and say that Peter is one with others. What we get in this part of Luke xxii. is adjustment on the ground of responsibility, but in the sweet light of the supper. That is, the Lord views us in relation to Himself and in relation to one another, across the supper table, and, therefore, there is assembled in Luke xxii. a number of things which did not necessarily occur at the time of the supper. For instance, they dispute as to which should be greatest, which took place some time before. Luke's gospel does not attempt to follow historical lines. For instance, in the fourth chapter you get the imprisonment of John the Baptist long before it occurred and so all the way through the Spirit of God takes things and groups them for their moral setting. When the supper is introduced you see the Lord taking account of all that lay before them during His absence, taking up each aspect of things that would come in upon us and bringing them to adjustment in the light of the supper.

R. S. S. That is very encouraging and helpful.

S. T. I was thinking more of how Peter begins his history with the Lord and goes on through, and how he is singled out by the enemy to be tested. And how it all turns out with him so that he becomes a pattern man in that way.

F. L. Yes, he is, but really the setting that

follows the supper in Luke xxii. is in a way prophetic. It is the Lord's view of what would come in during the time of His absence. The first thing that comes in is apostasy. We see by John xiii. that during the passover supper Judas had gone out. He had gone to his native darkness, but apostasy will grow up in Christendom. Therefore the Lord exposes it to us in the light of the supper. Then there comes up the issue of who shall be greatest. It is the perversion of the grain of mustard seed which comes up in Christendom, and the Lord brings us to contemplate it in the light of the place which He has taken. "I am among you as Him that serves." Then during the time of His absence there is companionship in His rejection, and He brings in the light of the compensation of the world to come. They would reign. Then there is the attempt of Satan to overthrow the testimony, as identified with Peter, and the Lord brings into view both His priesthood and His advocacy. So in all that, we get the whole period of responsibility from the time of His giving the supper until the rapture,—and the preserving power of His love.

S. T. You made a remark a while ago in connection with the grace in the gospel. That is wonderfully seen here in connection with the Lord, in what He was to them at the supper table, and in what takes place afterwards. It is wonderful grace in which He deals with them.

F. L. If you have the idea of the gospel as producing material, you see the material here in the process of adjustment and formation; it has been prepared under the hand of the true David before being fitted into its collective place, but our entrance into it is through the supper. In John's gospel it is a somewhat different idea, but it reaches the same end in both cases. It purifies from the influence of the corruption about us.

G. W. H. John's line of things is connected with counsel. It should have a profound effect upon the soul, in discovering how the gospel has brought to light the man in John ix. as material that will fit in for that wonderful system that will yield pleasure to God.

W. B-t. Peter's writings deal with the Hebrews somewhat differently from Paul's. I have noticed it but I did not connect it up with the supper. For instance, take the third of Hebrews, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and this was a warning. Only two of those of full age that came up out of Egypt got through. When you come to Peter his are the writings of a shepherd, and is your thought that he got the shepherd character at the supper?

F. L. We understand the heart of Christ at the supper, and we learn Him, as well as the love of God; thus as we become warmed and pliable under the influence of divine affection and are capable of formation, we become formed and ad-

justed into place without anything betokening force, or violence, or the power of division. In the temple, the stones were to be put into place without hammer, or axe or tool of iron. They speak of violence and separation which are repugnant to that holy sphere where we are softened and made pliable under divine affection. Our largeness is reduced by coming under the influence of Christ, and, therefore, we are capable of being fitted into the place that He has in mind for us. The supper is a line through which we approach those things. The son who has had the father's arms around his neck, and has been covered with kisses, what is going to be done with him? You will discover him eventually in deep appreciation of the love of Christ. When it is thus appreciated what will there be further in evidence? That he is not an *only* son, enjoying exclusive affection with the Father, but he has brethren—really brethren of Christ. Where will this lead them? Into the assembly. In that way the individual piece of board or fabric brought for the tabernacle is seen as being taken up and made adaptable to its position.

G. W. H. I was wanting to ask a question on a most important point. Are we not slow to leave the individual for the collective?

F. L. Hence I do hope we may get a little bit of movement into us; we are accomplishing nothing for the pleasure of God unless we are

arrested to the greatness of the glory system which is established now. This postponement of it to a future day does not do. It lacks motive power with us, and, therefore, these two gateways—the washing of the feet and the supper—are the two things most essential for us to appreciate if we are to find ourselves in our collective position.

J. A. W. Mary learned that lesson when she received the message: "Go to my brethren." She found the brethren in assembly.

J. S. I was thinking in relation to Mr. H.'s question, we may take position on the corporate side when there is nothing individual with a history fit for that position.

F. L. There is no evidence of anything formed of Christ in the individual, you mean?

J. S. In the seven churches in Revelation they held the position, but there was no condition there in the individual consistent with the corporate thing (except in the overcomers).

F. L. Well, let us get stirred up about that. It impresses me that the Spirit of God marshals things as though He would say, In the assembly's history upon earth these are the things that will come in and will be your snare, will eat out vitality and destroy spiritual substance. How are you to encounter those things? You may see them across the place Christ has taken in the supper, and you will be preserved.

J. A. W. What do you mean by the place Christ has taken in the supper?

F. L. Take, for instance, apostasy, which darkens Christendom. You can say once for all, If I come under the influence of the love of Christ, who says to me, This is my body which is for you, I am saved from that. Then there is a more subtle thing! Who is to be greatest? You may see what reigns in Rome, it has expanded, until it fills a place in Christendom as the greatest. Contemplate that in relation to the Lord, who empties Himself and is amongst them as He that serves! You take two or three gathered together, but amongst that two or three you may find the desire for pre-eminence in a natural way. But the Lord says, I stand and serve. Devotion comes out in the supper. You may feel that your pathway is difficult and testing, though it is so small; you cannot make anything much of it; but the Lord comes to His disciples and He says, "Ye are they that have continued with me in my temptation." Wonderful! How would Peter or the others have dared to say, *We* have continued with the Lord in his temptation? But *He* says so. In the coming world He is going to give a wonderful answer to that. The Spirit of God puts all this with the supper, because the supper is the supreme expression to us of the Lord's affection in the place of His absence, and it is in the place of His absence that we have to go through these things.

R. S. S. There is something further before the Lord goes out to the Mount of Olives, where He speaks of "When I sent you out without purse and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything?" and they say, "Nothing!" But now, He says, Let a man sell his garment and buy a sword, etc. . . . "for the things concerning me have an end." I judge that that also is connected with what you are speaking of, in view of His absence and the changed condition of things, where it would be not so much His supporting them superior to everything, but where they would have to meet conflict.

F. L. That is true. The Lord gave them to contemplate that they were to be in the place of conflict, and so the setting of all these things in relation to the supper is most significant. We become influenced by impressions that are not like Christ, we have ambitions, feelings amongst our brethren, hard thoughts or thoughts that somebody else is taking too much of a place and that kind of thing. Can any honest soul be at the supper under the warmth of the love of Christ and cherish feelings like that? It is foreign to the place, and abhorrent to the One who puts His own blessed spirit over that scene. When you go from it—so to speak, the tabernacle board is planed and capable of adjustment into its proper place: the threads, as it were, have been spun and are woven: you are part of the curtain, in the

spirit of unity, because the boards and the curtains are unity. Now unity was just as true in the tabernacle when it was dis-assembled, to pass through the wilderness, as it was true when it was set up with the glory of God resting upon it. Once the believer is adjusted to his place in the assembly, no matter whether he is going through the wilderness or is sitting in assembly light and privilege, he is adjusted to his position, he is no longer a separate unit.

G. A. T. What you say is in a way very humbling, because I think we can say individually, I find this in my own heart; there is that spirit that I want to be a bigger man than my brother.

F. L. I do not know of anything that will cure it like the precious light of Christ in the supper, and that is why these things are gathered together here, so that the individual who has been brought into the place of privilege is constantly passed through it and under its influence. Now we are prepared to take up assembly privilege.

W. C. R. It says, "Keep yourselves in the love of God."

W. B-t. That is very helpful in connection with the gospel of Luke. It says another thing in that chapter, that the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. Do you think that recalled to Peter's mind the way he had been with Him at the supper?

F. L. Undoubtedly. It becomes a point of recovery. So in the forty days of His resurrec-

tion, when they in their own thoughts were more like loose boards, of no relation to each other,—the two going to Emmaus, some here and some there, without cohesion,—He is known unto them in the breaking of bread; not exactly the supper, but the attitude that had been His at the supper comes up before their souls and they know Him. The thing goes right through the whole time of His absence. The Lord has looked upon you some time; that has drawn you out of what is outside; and you say, I must come back under that influence.

W. B-t. As a matter of fact it says, Peter remembered the word of the Lord. It was the word He spoke at the supper, and the impression comes back to Peter.

G. A. T. You would say if we take the advice Mr. S. gave us last night, to be more in the Holiest, it would be a cure for this spirit.

F. L. I trust that we all take it to heart in that way. If one might just add in regard to Luke's line, I think doctrinally we might take it up in connection with the first half of the first epistle to the Corinthians. There was the moral state similar to what the Lord was indicating here, where they were striving as to who should be greatest. He brings them back to the supper there.

J. W. D. Would you think the supper is the power by which the soul is transferred from Romans to Colossians?

F. L. Yes, I think so. In Romans we get deliverance. We get deliverance from Adam in the fifth chapter, in the sixth chapter from the flesh, in the seventh chapter from the law—you are to another, to Christ. You know Him as in marriage affection, and in the eighth chapter we come to the Spirit of adoption, whereby we say, Abba, Father. Now you are free for anything. You have reached the purpose of God in the eighth chapter, and you see the believer as ready, in the hands of the Spirit of God under the Head, to be put into any relation; so that Colossians and Ephesians naturally bring into collective position under the Head.

R. S. S. What you have said is I think especially helpful in calling attention to the fact that what is recounted after the observance of the supper in the twenty-second of Luke really did not necessarily take place there, but is brought in there as connected with the supper, showing how we should be affected in connection with all these things; as you said, as though the Lord had spoken of them all across the supper table.

F. L. That is it, as though He would say to us, How can you have thoughts like that? Therefore it comes in in Corinthians (where there is a state and condition of things most terrible) as though the Lord on high had said to Paul, Now, if they will answer to the supper they are saved; if they do not answer to the supper they are gone

forever. And they did answer to it.

W. C. R. Do you think that is the reason He brings the supper in in Corinthians?

F. L. It is brought in in the epistle where, of all others, the state of things was the worst, and it becomes a kind of touchstone. If there is a writing of Christ upon the fleshy tables of the heart it will respond. If they do not respond to that their case is hopeless. So it is recovered to us at the end of the age. If our hearts respond to that the Head can do something with us. If not, there is no hope.

Ques. I was going to ask if the supper in Corinthians would lead on into the outward aspect of the assembly, and that which is parallel to it in John xx. to what is inward? As I get your thought, in Luke the outward aspect of things is in view, but John xx. is in connection with what is inward.

F. L. In Luke it prepares the way for the ministry of the assembly as given by Paul, and, therefore, it goes through the kingdom (which is responsibility) before you reach the sphere that is pure privilege—that is, reconciliation, new creation and in Christ, as we get in II. Corinthians; then association with Him, which we get in Ephesians. You pass from the ground of responsibility to that of privilege, but in John's gospel we are on the line of divine relationships. We are established in the good of the Father's house, and the

supper does not come in because the new covenant hardly belongs to that side of things. The new covenant leads on to the counsel of God, which is reached in Ephesians, but the gospel of John leads you on to a somewhat different line, it is on the side of privilege.

Ques. Do you think the man in the ninth of John and the responsible man meet in Peter when you come to the living stone?

F. L. "Builded together for a spiritual house," but I doubt whether in John you get just that thought.

Ques. In John He goes on, "My sheep hear my voice," and Peter speaks of the shepherd.

F. L. I know, "The shepherd and bishop of our souls"—the thought of the shepherd is in both; but the line of John is taking us into the enjoyment of heavenly relationships with the Father, and then putting us back, so to speak, into the place where the Lord was, that the thing should be enjoyed in the power of eternal life, where only, in the saints, can be known that out-of-the-world, heavenly condition of things, as Mr. Darby expressed it.

R. S. S. What is your thought of what the Lord had in mind when He said, "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with Me"?

F. L. The thing takes a turn when the Lord says, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me. Father, glorify Thy name."

There was the glory sphere in view, and the Lord says, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all unto Me."

R. S. S. That is the twelfth chapter.

F. L. And then from that He speaks as it were to those in His hand, and He identifies them as "sons of light," a new generation which had not heretofore been discovered and brought into view. "Whom He justified them He also glorified." You might say He glorified them in dignifying them as sons of light. Then it says, "Jesus went away and did hide Himself." He has gone in to the Father. Then the thirteenth chapter says, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father—that is where He has gone to hide Himself. Now then He turns to them as sons of light, and says, in effect, My place is your place. But then they actually had their feet on this earth, as we have. They had been purified in connection with the passover, and nothing that God had ever given on earth was more sanctified, but the Lord says, in effect, It is not equal to the place where I am going. "Part with Me" opens up a new sphere in association with Christ, with the Father. Then the apostate element is excluded and thrown out into its native darkness; then the Lord embraces the sons of light, and says, "Now is the Son of Man glorified." That is to say, God had given Him the

nucleus of His own divine purpose in sonship. They were of His order, sons of light, and He pours out to them all the wealth of what is in the heart of the Father. That is in chapters xiv., xv., xvi. and xvii. For the sons of light there is nothing too great and too good.

W. C. R. Is there not a suggestion that there is a moral obligation to one another?

F. L. The new commandment. "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." That is, the boards set upon the sockets of silver are together in unity, there is no tabernacle unless each board is in place. Do you love one another? The boards are covered with gold—they are covered with the divine nature.

Ques. The assembly in that aspect is vital, is it not?

F. L. Of course in John's epistle you will find you are on family lines, you get fathers, young men, and babes; "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God." Not the line of responsibility, but of privilege.

G. W. H. I was wanting to ask you, Has not John's line in a broken day a very special place?

F. L. I am sure it has. Some reference was made to it yesterday, there is no evil that is discoverable in Christendom today but the seed of it was already in evidence while John was still upon earth; and it is as though the Spirit of God said to

John, Before you pass off the scene you must give this pure expression of the Person of the Son of God; so that which belongs to Christ and to God is safe upon earth so long as we are right concerning the Son of God. Hence it has a very special place.

O. J. O. Would you say loving one another brings in feet washing?

F. L. Feet washing is a consequence. I do not know if you could tell me of anything which shows in a practical way a greater evidence of the Lord's affection than what He has done: I have shown you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. And then He goes on, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

J. A. W. And feet washing is a process going on all the time?

F. L. When I get in contact with things outside, and I come under malign influence then I see my brother W. and he speaks some refreshing word about Christ, some fresh impression of Him, something he received in his meditation; or I see him as he is on some little service of love and devotion to the saints; it pulls me up. I say, That is just what I wanted; I am thankful for that example. You do not know that you have done anything, but you have washed my feet. If you had started in to question or rebuke me in some

sharp manner you might weaken or repulse, but an impression of Christ, or an example of His Spirit—I may be impatient and you may be very gentle, you show the Spirit of Christ—my feet are washed. I have the Spirit of another Man brought in upon my spirit.

Remark. You get that in the supper.

F. L. That is an effect of the supper as well as of feet washing.

G. W. H. Referring to John xii. as to the sons of light, we assemble at the supper as such. You assemble in the light of what you are in divine purpose. It is not difficult for me to love my brother in the light of what we are as the brethren of Christ.

F. L. That is it. One hesitates to say it in a way, but at times one sits down at the supper table with a sense that there is a glorification resting upon one's brethren; they are sons of light, companions of Christ, and those that He is not ashamed to call His brethren; they expand in one's sight; and you do not need adjustment if you appreciate your brethren like that.

G. A. T. Does that include all or some special ones?

F. L. You are looking from the point where Christ is looking, and you see them covered.

J. A. W. Balaam's view from the mountain top.

F. L. But I prefer Christ's view from the place where He is with the Father.

THE COLLECTIVE

John xx., 17-22; Acts ix., 1-6.

W. C. R. You said something about taking up what is collective?

F. L. We have to seek grace to keep in contact with Christ personally or we shall not get very far; it might become just an enumeration of great things; one feels the importance of getting what is in the power of life.

We have had before us an outline, expressed in material things, of the sphere which is filled with divine ideas which waited their final expression in the coming of Christ. When first given, they were but shadows, but when we come to Christ we reach what is final, and out from Him flows the consummation of every divine thought. There are two lines which run concurrently—one the line of purpose, and the other the line of responsibility, but they equally came out of Christ and take character from Him. So that, while we enumerate the different phases, yet every one of them, expressed in living beings, is the fulfillment of a divine idea and of something on which the divine mind has set its pleasure; all that in

the main comes out in what is collective. If we turn to contemplate Christ in resurrection He was alone, and no eye saw Him but the eye of God, and no eye could see Him but those the eyes of whose hearts had become enlightened. The natural man could never see Jesus in resurrection, be he keeper, passerby on the highway to Emmaus, or the like. When Jesus joined Himself to the two going to Emmaus the passerby on the highway would see two—they would not see Him. He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, but then in Him was contained the surety of the fulfillment of every divine promise. The church was there in Him, so the kingdom is in Him. He is the Sower; it is all in Him. Everything at that moment was in Him, and it was nowhere else. There was no living thing in the sight of God; as yet it was all in promise, but it all had to come *out of Christ*. So that to understand the system of glory one must understand what was represented in Christ personally before He met with Mary; because when He meets with Mary then things begin to move and to be given effect to.

R. S. S. How about those that were then upon the earth—the remnant in Israel—the disciples, for instance, in whom there was a work of God even at that moment? How do they stand in relation to what you have just been saying?

F. L. If Christ was not raised from the dead

they had no status; their life was wholly conditional upon His being brought out from amongst the dead, and if He is not brought out from amongst the dead they have no life.

R. S. S. Their faith was vain.

F. L. They had followed in the days of His flesh One to whom they were attached; but He had died, and, according to the scriptures, was buried. Most important! Because, as in the flood the ark is closed up, the "buried" gives the idea that the end of all flesh has come before God; until the ark is opened, there is no sign of life. So that He is solitary and alone, and unless the gospel could go on that the third day He arose again according to the scriptures, they, as we, have no life, because it is only in Christ.

W. C. R. So in the chapter we read (John xx.) He breathes on them. That is the first movement of life here after His resurrection. He is the last Adam, a quickening Spirit.

G. A. T. So up to this time it is "my friends," "my disciples," but now it is "my brethren."

F. L. He claims them as His brethren. One wants to grasp the dignity of Christ as He stood alone before all the precious treasures which were wrapped up in His Person were opened out and took form. The hymn we had is very much along that line, "Bone of His bone; flesh of His flesh." He had fallen into the deep sleep, but as yet the outward evidence of all that was in Him, Who is

the beginning of the creation of God, had not taken its first form. Everything behind had been closed up and was forever gone in the death of Christ. Now then the vision opens up of what will come out from the last Adam. . . In the first Adam all died, and now here in the last Adam, all are to be made alive. All is to come out of Him. Out of Adam proceeded all the stream of death and corruption; it was out of Adam and yet it was all in Adam. Christ stands there alone, the beginning of the creation of God, and the first movement is through Mary.

Ques. Then is it correct to say that in the death of Christ everything ended of the first order; and on resurrection ground everything that is to be for the glory of God opens up?

F. L. So when we speak of the system of glory we see what was in the mind of God has its start in Christ standing in resurrection, but morally in ascension. "I ascend"—the starting point is in the place where He has entered, with the Father; so that the assembled brethren become the concrete expression of all those divine thoughts which are wrapped up in Christ risen and *ascended*.

The new sphere is here in all its elements, the eyes of our hearts are enlightened in respect of them, and had we the viewpoint of the principalities and powers in the heavenlies, we should see the thing itself.

R. S. S. Why do you emphasize so much ascension, as in contrast with resurrection.

F. L. Everything must be taken up on the ground of resurrection: a new condition for Christ; a new order for us; but then we, being identified with this day of the Spirit, have our status in relation to ascension, which is not thus true of other families. It is the peculiar place of privilege which belongs to sonship as we enjoy it—ascension. Therefore, when we greet the Lord on the Lord's Day morning, we are in the privilege of sonship through ascension.

R. S. S. So that is the season He says to Mary, "Touch me not." Touching Him at that moment would rather be in connection with the renewal of the old relationships.

F. L. The taking up of relationships in connection with the earth. So in the twenty-eighth of Matthew they come and hold Him by the feet, and He says, "Go tell my brethren." He uses the same formula, but adds that they go into Galilee. He will yet take up relationships in connection with earth, with His brethren, but the peculiar privilege which we should hold to, is that our place is in connection with ascension, He goes in to the Father and comes from the Father; then He may be touched and embraced.

W. C. R. Would the fact that the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified, mean that Christianity as we understand it had

not been inaugurated? Until He ascends He is not glorified, is that right?

F. L. We do not get it actually worked out until the Holy Spirit has come from the glorified Christ. But the thing is there in the essence, so that when the same day at even the attractive power by which He puts all in relation to Himself and to each other is operative and they are together, then He appears in the midst. He speaks peace; He breathes on them; He says, Receive ye Holy Spirit; and He introduces the name of the Father. Thus all that is vital to this day of the assembly and of sonship is in essence expressed then; and so, "As the Father hath sent Me so send I you." He contemplates that there is left here that which is adequate to take up the expression of Christ here upon earth from henceforth until the end.

W. C. R. We were noticing in Exodus xxv. that which was contributed to the building of the tabernacle and the ark, the gold, silver, brass, blue, purple, scarlet, fine twined linen, etc. All that material would suggest the elements which are formed in believers now in view of the moral universe. They all found their expression in the Lord Himself here—every one of them—but now these elements are distributed in various people, so that the sum total of it all is the *Christ*.

F. L. It is Christ in connection with living beings, so they are capable of adjustment into

every form which is suited to the divine purpose. If you look at Christ, He was the house of God; He was the testimony; He was the temple; He was the kindom. So long as He was here, there was no unfulfilled thought of God. But now when He passes into the heavens, the material which has been formed under His hand is viewed for a brief moment in John xx. as adequate to be expanded, but it is all out of Christ and in Christ, and is never contemplated apart from Him.

G. W. H. Dr. R. was speaking just now about the elements. Our brother was saying last night in the gospel address that His death and resurrection hinged, I think, upon the incarnation. I was thinking of what a place incarnation has: how profound it all is as viewed in the light of incarnation coming in there.

F. L. So that in incarnation, so far as the heart of God is concerned, finality is reached when He who was the Son, was pleased to bring about the divine pleasure. So the corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies: not exactly the question of meeting the need of our souls as sinners, but the much greater one of bringing to pass the purpose of God, the transference from Adam to Christ; and so the assembled company on that evening became identified with the working out, in a subjective way, of what had been in the mind of God from before the beginning of the world.

C. M. Y. I was wondering if we could not

look at the Lord on the morning of resurrection as the architectural drawing of God?

F. L. He was *it*, the ark and the tabernacle were the divine drawings, but Christ in Himself contained all. So with Adam falling into the deep sleep, there was taken out from him that which is builded into woman. We are here today as natural beings as fruit of that which took form from the side of Adam. We were there in Adam. Take the thought up spiritually in connection with Christ and the assembly. The assembly and every other divine thought *was in Christ*, so that when the assembly is brought into view, she becomes the mother of children and she, spiritually speaking, is used to bring into being those whom the Lord can take in and say, "Behold, I and the children whom God hath given me."

Ques. Is the Lord showing His hands and side parallel to the supper?

F. L. It is in this way, that it would profoundly stir the affections. Showing His hands and side served as identification, as we get in Revelation v. "I saw a Lamb as it had been slain,"—so that by the marks of identification as we get them in the emblems the affections are profoundly stirred. Mr. S. said last night that the greatest power there is in the physical universe is heat. Perhaps heat is the only power, because all other power can be traced to it, and therefore in the evolution of the glory system, everything is the

product of love—that is warmth. Life itself is an expression of warmth. His appearance to Mary was a response to warmth. Warmth begets warmth, and that is vitality. And so the inauguration of things is in the power of warmth, which is love, and love is life.

Rem. It has often been said and is well known amongst us, that the supper is introductory to the assembly.

F. L. That is very true. In John xx. we get the nucleus of the fulfillment of every divine thought: everything in heaven and earth gets its start in relation to the ascended One who comes to claim His brethren, to energize them as the last Adam, to give them Holy Spirit, and put the name of the Father upon them. In the xviith of John He says, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them *into the world*"; but here He leaves it more unconditional: "As the Father hath sent me, even so have I sent you."

R. S. S. That is quite significant.

F. L. It is a great thought.

G. A. T. You could not call the company in John xx. a witness; there was no public testimony; but in Acts ii. there is. They were the same people, were they not?

F. L. I think they were. You take a corn of wheat, it lies very small in the palm of your hand, but put that corn of wheat out in millions of acres

in the west, and give it time, it will fill those millions of acres with what is expanded out of it. What was in Christ personally was every intention of God and eventually it will fill all things, but it is worked out through living material which is of His origin, partakes of the divine nature, will expand until it fills heaven and earth, and will be spread over all with the characteristics of Christ. But here is the beginning. If we go on in the Acts and epistles we see how it ramifies—it takes form in many ways as the kingdom, as the assembly, as the temple, as the flock, the spiritual house, the priesthood—holy and royal, in sonship, but all these things are of the same essential material.

J. W. D. But apparently the power of this lies in the power of ascension in the soul. How do you arrive at that?

F. L. The epistle to the Ephesians connects us with Christ in His place. We are set down with Him in the heavenlies. It is "Together with Him"—there is no incompatibility, it is the dignity that is peculiar to sonship.

If we go on to those verses we read in Acts ix. we will see how the Lord keeps His own personal touch on what was being done. Those men and women were very precious to Him; He was not a bit ashamed to call them brethren. The first words in the opening of His glorious lips in that new order of things were "My Father"—"My

brethren." If you know of any greater thought in the moral universe than that, I do not. It fills one with holy delight.

R. L. C. In connection with the material for the building of the tabernacle, the wisehearted men and women contributed it.

F. L. There was the material gathered. There ought not to be any difficulty about getting those boards into adjustment: yet (if one might descend from what is very great to what perhaps is very small) we are woefully warped, as boards, and when we get in contact with each other we find we do not fit, but it is because we have not been under divine warmth. Warping is due to the cold and damp which there is outside; if we are brought under divine warmth we are "seasoned," we can fit together.

G. A. T. Would the divine warmth be the sanctuary then?

F. L. It is the sphere where the love of God and of Christ rests upon us, and we are brought into that warmth in the Lord's supper.

G. W. H. The apprehension in the soul of the material you were speaking about being of His own order, brings the warp out of you a good deal.

W. C. R. Once we learn the place that Christ has in the thoughts of God, what He is for the pleasure of God, and then apprehend that we are of His order and nature and have derived what

we have from Him, and we get some apprehension of what we are for the pleasure of God and our part in it all becomes wonderful to our souls.

F. L. It takes us out of our narrow individuality, or our own snug little meeting, and expands us into the fulness of the divine sphere; we are greatly enlarged. The kingdom subdues the individual will to the Lord; adjustment to Christ and to one another comes in the measure in which our individual wills are subdued to the Lord. The kingdom originates in time and ends in time, and it remains as a power to subdue the individual will as we get in Romans: "For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. For both if we should live (it is) to the Lord we live; and if we should die (it is) to the Lord we die: both if we should live then, and if we should die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ has died and lived (again), that he might *rule* over both dead and living." (Romans xiv. 7-9 N. T.) That is very important, because we have really reached the sphere of things where we have lost the right to independent decision of things for ourselves. To give it a practical turn, I have no right to decide where I shall go and live, or what I shall do. I must take things up in relation to the Lord's sphere of things. I cannot decide that I will go off from my brethren and live in some lonely part in isolation. As material begotten in Christ we belong to a sphere of things where all

is viewed in adjustment one to another, and if I exercise the right of private will I go athwart the whole. Christ died for us, that we that henceforth live should not live unto ourselves, but unto Him that died for us and rose again.

J. S. The kingdom is a protection in a certain way, or a bulwark. In passing from Lordship to Headship, or from the kingdom to the assembly, I suppose it is the safety valve. You might open that out a little for us.

F. L. I remember how it impressed me when Mr. Raven several years ago pointed out that if one of the families in the wilderness had decided to move off by themselves, they would perish because they would be out of the sphere where food and water would be provided. Now when we move out, subject only to our own will, we are liable to perish in the wilderness spiritually. The end of Matt. xii. was the closing up of an old order; Israel was apostate, now the Lord says, Here is a new generation, them that do the will of My Father, they are my brother, and sister, and mother; immediately He begins to open the mystery of the kingdom. Then in chapter xiv. He presents Himself, as much as to say, Is the power of movement with you?—He walks on water—death, that which is beyond the power of nature. Peter says, "Lord, if it be *Thou*, bid me come to Thee on the water"; the Lord says, "Come," and he walks to the Lord. Now then, the Father

commits to Peter what can be known as to the Lord Jesus. He says, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Flesh and blood" did not give it to him, but His Father which is in heaven. The Lord will build His assembly upon the revelation of the Father to the man that walked to Him on the water.

W. C. R. The kingdom is individual, whereas the assembly is collective.

G. W. H. The best subject of the kingdom is the assembly individual.

F. L. For a very good reason; if my will is subdued I must begin where my Head has put me with the brethren, and if I am in that circle of divine love, where there is growth in the divine nature, I must be subject to the reasonable rule of such a Lord, and so it acts and reacts.

J. W. D. Is not the rock upon which our spiritual house is built the principles of the kingdom?

F. L. It might be so taken, but I rather take it the Rock is Christ personally, and Peter as of the same nature.

R. S. S. Were you not thinking of the rock at the end of the seventh of Matt. not in the sixteenth?

J. W. D. Yes.

F. L. I think the Rock is the same in principle. The wise man builds his house on the rock; and Christ is both Rock and Builder; He also is the Wise Man. He puts the house on a Rock, and if

you have any building to do you will be wise if you do your building in that connection.

W. C. R. Emphasizing as you have been doing our relation to Christ, as kindred to Him, greatly helps us when we come together in assembly.

F. L. It does. That is, appreciating ourselves as in the kinship of Christ.

W. C. R. Therefore, if this were understood there would be the absence of distance, and of such terms, for instance, as bowing the knee to Him; all these expressions and phrases which are used, once they are employed, bring in distance and show that the soul does not touch nearness of relationship.

Ques. In that connection, I would like to ask where it is that the Spirit baptises into one body? Is it not at that point where we come together, in the light of that?

F. L. In essence the thing is presented in its completeness in John xx. In actuality the true David first spends forty days (a complete period of time) in assembling His material for the house and giving it cohesion, binding it together in attraction; and so He passes in and out amongst them touching every element which needs adjusting, either to God, to Himself, or amongst the brethren. The general effect is cohesion. The bars which were to run along the side of the tabernacle, covered with gold, were essential to bind together in love, and the Lord was getting them ready, so

that when the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all together in one place. There was no idea of any being absent; they were *all together* in one place. The fruitful ministry of Christ had produced that result. Now then comes the Holy Spirit, in the mighty energy and power which belong to Him, and takes possession. They are all baptized into one body by one Spirit. It is not yet actually called the assembly, but it is the assembly in embryo. There is still a waiting, because Israel must first have its opportunity to accept the rejected and crucified Messiah, but, while that interval is there, there are being added three thousand, and many others besides. The assembly as such first quietly emerges into view, without parade or anything of the sort, in Acts v.

J. W. D. There are five times in the Acts when the Spirit comes upon them collectively. Would you think it an extension of the thought of baptism, when He fell on the twelve men at Ephesus?

F. L. It is characteristic. The thing is looked at as a complete thing on the day of Pentecost, but presently everything of Christ is brought into the good of it, as we are brought into it; it is not a new baptism of the Holy Spirit.

G. A. T. Before this thing takes place Christ must ascend and the Holy Spirit come down. He takes charge and there is going to be testimony.

F. L. So the power in heaven is equivalent to the power on earth—one equal to the other, and

the assembly as such is clearly brought into view in Acts v. in a very significant way.

R. S. S. How in the vth chapter?

F. L. It is brought into view (I think it is the first mention of the assembly) in connection with the attempt of Satan to bring in what was unholy and polluted through Ananias and Sapphira; as the Holy Spirit asserted His own divine sovereignty and exposed that element of corruption, then "fear fell upon the assembly."

R. S. S. Yes, the 11th verse of the vth chapter: "And great fear come upon all the assembly and upon all who heard these things." Is that the first mention of the church?

F. L. In the translation from which you are reading it is said at the end of the iind chapter, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," but "to the church" does not belong there. The first definite introduction of the assembly is where the holiness and sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in the tabernacle which He has occupied is challenged. He defends His holiness in that way.

G. A. T. I was wondering if you would say that the full truth of the assembly comes out at Cornelius' house, where both Jew and Gentile are allowed into it? In the assembly there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

F. L. All the families of the earth were represented in the assembly even before Cornelius,

but the ministry of it awaited the vessel of the testimony, Paul, who was now coming under the observation of the Lord. The assembly was already formed before the vessel who was to bring the light and ministry of it, had himself been drawn out from the power of darkness, and turned from Satan to God. So if you turn to Acts. viii., 1, "On that day there arose a great persecution *against the assembly* which was in Jerusalem." It takes a definite locality, but the point of the thing, as I understand it, is that Paul, of whom it is said, It pleased God to form His Son in me, was brought to observe the Spirit of Christ which was in the assembly. He saw it in Stephen. So that the ixth chapter prepares us for what is brought into view here: how the Lord from His place in ascension is keeping His eye and finger on every atom of that which was the gift of the Father to Him. That is how He meets Saul.

R. S. S. Referring to the question our brother G. T. raised in connection with the xth chapter, where you get Cornelius, I had thought that was rather connected with the kingdom. Peter exercised what had been committed to him—the keys of the kingdom indeed—at the day of Pentecost in the second chapter, and in connection with the bringing in of the Gentiles in the xth chapter. It is not so much a question of the church, but rather a question of the kingdom.

F. L. It illustrates again what was said, how

close is the connection between the kingdom and the assembly; what is broken down by the kingdom is educated for the assembly. In the assembly we are free from racial or national ideas, so the work done in the kingdom is preparatory to the assembly. When Peter has turned the keys of the kingdom he virtually disappears from view, and Saul, who also was called Paul, henceforth becomes prominent. He enlarges as he unfolds the mystery of the assembly. The middle wall of partition is broken down and Christ has made of twain one new man; Cornelius must go, the Ethiopian must go, just as Saul must go, through the kingdom, to become such as are of His order in the assembly.

W. C. R. And that is what he calls "ME."

F. L. Yes, "ME." The Holy Spirit had prepared the circle here. The Lord meets Saul and says to him, Your persecution has been of Me; Why persecutest thou Me? Paul refers to it afterwards in his spiritual history, and takes the lowly and abased place, not worthy to be called an apostle, the least of all his brethren. He says, I persecuted the assembly of God.

W. C. R. In a way that principle comes out in the Old Testament. The Lord says, They have not rejected thee, but have rejected Me. (I. Sam. viii., 7.) The point was, in the rejection of the prophet they had rejected the Lord Himself.

F. L. Samuel was grieved at his heart because

they wanted a king instead of the Lord. One feels that all this is in a way preparatory work, but I hope it is on right lines and will help us from what is individual; if we are in subjection to the will of the Lord, and then find ourselves in connection with the assembly with a much larger viewpoint than we are accustomed to perhaps in our little locality, it might be that we should be helped a bit to get further on to the lines of the assembly.

R. S. S. There is nothing that would do more for us than the knowledge and the consciousness that the Lord looks upon us collectively, as indicated in His first words to Saul, "Why persecutest thou Me?"

F. L. It is very touching, and it shows how the one great power in God's universe is warmth, divine love.

G. A. T. What is your exercise? You seem to have made quite a few remarks about local meetings.

F. L. We might perhaps begin there this afternoon. We should be profoundly affected by the light of the greatness of the thing in the divine mind. It should not work the other way. If I get with a nice lot of brethren I may work up to an understanding of Christ, but it should be the other way, from the mind of God through Christ, through the brethren; then if I have somebody

to walk with in a place I am going to value that person very much.

G. W. H. I greatly enjoy what you have been saying, but the joys of the kingdom will not sustain you.

F. L. No, that is perfectly true.

G. W. H. God never intended that you should be a kingdom subject alone; that you should remain a kingdom subject.

F. L. Therefore one has rather tried to emphasize that so far as we are concerned, the place of the kingdom is to subdue the individual will in order that we may enter into assembly privilege and sonship. That is where our joys really are.

R. S. S. In Romans xii. it says: "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Now that is a good way on.

G. W. H. Yes, but not far enough for God.

R. S. S. What is beyond that?

G. W. H. I would speak with the greatest reverence, but God would never rest outside of the sphere of relationship.

F. L. Of course kingdom joys are really millennial, in connection with the earth—righteousness, peace and joy. We have that, and then we have the greater also.

GLORY IN THE ASSEMBLY

Eph. iii., 8-21.

F. L. In the inauguration of things there is a moment when all is seen in divine perfection, whatever may eventually result; so when there was the completion of all in Exodus (chap. xl.) there was a moment in connection with that system when everything was there in its perfection, and the Shekinah of glory came, not as an unwilling visitor, but with pleasure, into that which was the product of the heave offerings, the emotions of love towards God. For the moment everything was there in holiness and beauty, and God added the glory. At the outset there was the same perfection in the glory system of this day of the Spirit; it has been under the eye of God, and God has connected Himself with it. We get the suggestion of these things in Ephesians.

R. S. S. Was that seen on the day of Pentecost, or was it seen in the height of Paul's ministry at Ephesus?

F. L. I think the latter. At the day of Pentecost it was more the promise of things to come, but Ephesians is the height. There was a place

where the fruit of the ministry produced the results, so that the Spirit of God was free to express Himself with regard to what actually existed in Ephesus. Therefore, he begins from the divine side, the light of purpose, and comes to the mighty power that wrought in Christ; then the fruit of the work, breaking down everything that is of the flesh, so giving access to the Father—"By Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father,"—then the witness to the all-various wisdom of God in the assembly throughout this age, and then the consummation in the eternal day, as well as in the world to come. Then he comes down through the gifts from on high which have wrought to bring to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ—truth is learned as it is in Jesus—and then he descends to the various relationships in which we touch the kingdom; every relationship of the household and the like are all in perfect order, in support of the testimony, and then there flows power for the conflict. That is a very brief outline of Ephesians.

R. S. S. This never could have been unfolded unless there was the answer in the fruit you spoke of to Paul's ministry, this special revelation as to the church which had been committed to him.

F. L. Therefore, we understand what was in the mind of the Lord when, walking amongst the candlesticks, He had to say to Ephesus, "Thou hast left thy first love." That is pre-eminent love,

which in its character and fulness was beyond all other. You have left *that*. There is never recovery to that again.

J. W. D. It mentions "the Christ" so many times. Would you think that included the whole divine system as set forth in the tabernacle?

F. L. Undoubtedly it does. The word of the Lord, "I have against thee," takes on a very solemn meaning when we see that the assembly had receded from its height and lost that pure light which was wrapped up in the love of the One who "loved the assembly and gave Himself for it," to present it to Himself in imperishable purity. They had receded from that.

W. B-t. You were saying that the twentieth of John begins with darkness: "When it was yet dark." Resurrection was an accomplished fact, and the first day of the week had come—Matthew says, "As the day was dawning," a little light—but in the book of John it was yet dark. Now in Ephesians you come to the full light.

F. L. We get everything set up morally; we have come to the consummation. We apprehend the light of purpose from different viewpoints. God would have it rest upon our spirits now, while we look not at the things that are seen but the things that are unseen; it is easy enough to get under the influence of seen things, but they are temporal, the things unseen are eternal, and their light is given because of formative power.

Another point of view is that the assembly is to nourish and feed the heart of Christ in His affections, even as He nourishes and cherishes it. Another point is that there must be preserved here, open to the universe, what had been seen in Christ. It must not fail. Then the continuity of the ways of God has to be carried through. So that the needs-be for the assembly in the divine ways is understood. What a thing of infinite blessing if in a sense this is recovered to us!

G. A. T. So we need Paul for the recovery.

F. L. Paul was the minister of the mystery, and the recovery comes through him; but we should never recover what we get in Paul unless we appreciate the position on the bosom of Jesus which John brings before us.

W. C. R. In Ephesians you get the power of God active; everything is in death; His power moves to bring out of death One who went into it. Then we get the power of God active in bringing in a people pleasurable to Himself. Then the power of God is within us, to fill us unto all the fulness of God.

G. A. T. I thought, referring to what we started off with, that we got our lesson from what God had before Him in connection with Israel. Then the Son comes in and we hear what He has to say, and we get our lesson through Him.

F. L. This is historically true, but the epistle to the Ephesians begins at the height of what was

in the heart of God from before the foundation of the world, when Godhead takes its Own counsel, Where shall its pleasure eternally rest? It shall be in man; and that in sonship. That is the supreme thought, as I understand it, in counsel; then for the effectuating of it He who was God becomes incarnate in order that He may take up man. The epistle to the Ephesians begins at that height; it is sonship from the very outset.

R. S. S. Why do you say that the Ephesian position will never again be recovered here upon earth? We see the state of things abroad, and you might say it is hopeless, but then I was wondering if there was any scripture that would justify our making that statement.

F. L. That which was true in connection with the tabernacle system at its inauguration was never again repeated; and if you take the Lord's own review of things as walking among the candlesticks, weighing things and putting His estimate upon them, there is no indication from Ephesus all the way through to Laodicea of a going back to what was at the outset; in the place of it there does come in the counterpart of it in Philadelphia. Everything which is of spiritual value is in a sense recovered in Philadelphia, but it is not the thing in its primal glory.

R. S. S. Expressed here on the earth?

F. L. Yes, but not re-established again *in that way*. We have presented to us in Ephesians the

thought of the assembly complete in its eternal aspect, adequate to fulfill every divine thought, furnishing to God what is in His mind to secure both now and eternally; the assembly is viewed complete, according to purpose. He presents it to Himself in that way. From another viewpoint an assembly is identified with a locality—Ephesus, Detroit or elsewhere, there is what belongs to Christ in a locality at the moment; the Spirit calls that the assembly in such a place, for it is of the character and substance of the great assembly. There is yet another aspect of the assembly as that which is upon earth at a given moment which lives in the power of life Godward. The world over, there is that which lives as begotten in Christ, and that is indicated as "My assembly." (Matt. 16.) In its eternal character the assembly is chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world and is parallel to sonship in that way. In its aspect of a day, it is that which is on earth of Christ at the moment. In its aspect locally, it is what there is of Christ in that locality. I take it that every one of our interests will be warmed and engaged as to what really belongs to Christ in the locality where we are.

G. A. T. You would let me add that that includes every Christian.

F. L. Yes, it is the measure of the divine work. It could be identified when Paul came into Corinth; there had been nothing there but what was

heathen or Jewish, but after he had been there a bit there was something formed of life in Christ, a new element gathered out of both Jew and Gentile. You cannot identify things today in that way.

G. A. T. Coming into a locality, you have in your mind every Christian when you mention the assembly. Am I right?

F. L. Surely.

G. A. T. Now then, what are you going to do?

F. L. I am going to try to do what you are trying to do—get along as best I can with a few who have the light of it in a practical way. That is what it comes to.

G. A. T. In what way do you look upon them as different from the others?

F. L. I do not. They are all of one. The only thing is that I can get near to some, there is response to the light that you have got in connection with Lordship and the assembly and a desire to be consistent with it; if that exists in both of us in any little way, we can go so far together.

R. S. S. But there is the other still further and greater aspect of the assembly, is there not? I suppose it is taken for granted. That is, when all will be brought in, when the whole company will be formed, when the Lord comes for His people here?

F. L. That is the light of the purpose of God as in Ephesians, an assembly for the moment true

to Christ, and to assembly position. It is competent to fill its position in the world to come, and in the eternal age.

R. S. S. And that is really our conception of what the assembly is. What you have now been speaking about as true in a locality, or true in regard to the whole world at the present time, simply takes character from what is abiding and eternal, and embraces the whole company of the Lord's people from the day of Pentecost until His coming.

F. L. They take character from it. So, referring to the corrective epistles, if the Galatians are going wrong the Spirit of God brings in sonship to correct them; the Corinthians recovered have the new covenant, new creation, and the place in Christ brought in to strengthen them. Thus the light of that which is beyond the power of evil to affect is brought in for its corrective power, where conditions are contrary. So the corrective epistles are based on the light of what is set out in the purpose of God. If we are not established in the purpose of God we shall not know how things ought to go in our local company and it will not amount to more than a nice little company of Christians.

R. S. S. Viewing the epistle to the Ephesians in the way in which you have been speaking, it shows what an immense and important epistle it is; what marvellous truth is unfolded in it.

G. A. T. I want to get at the thought of how I am going to get along in a locality; and I have often been comforted by that scripture in Mark which says the Lord was in the ship, and there were other little ships on the same lake. Now what I feel is that I want to be exercised to be where the Lord is. Is that going too far?

F. L. I wish we could all be aroused that way.

G. A. T. I find in localities different companies of Christians; the exercise is, Which ship is the Lord in?

F. L. Yes, but there is a good deal of force in stepping out upon the water *from* the ship to go to Christ. The one who does that does not have very much difficulty about his position. "Lord, if it be *Thou*, bid me come to Thee upon the water"; if he is walking on the water to Christ he will not be asking many questions about the ships. What we are called to is so altogether outside of the elements of human expediency, or sufficiency, or any such thing. We are cast so wholly upon Christ. The height of all comes in Ephesians, but you are maintained in your little locality in the height of that light.

R. S. S. The simple answer is, Where do you find the Lord? Mr. Darby was asked that question by a man (you have heard the story no doubt) who had been impressed by his ministry, and he said, What would you advise me to do? thinking he might suggest to him severance from

his religious associations and making some alteration or change in that way. Mr. Darby's simple answer to him was, "Seek the Lord's face." I thought that was wonderful. Really I think that is the practical solution of such questions that do come up in all of our meetings.

G. A. T. Luke xxii. might help us to begin with the Lord Himself. He would send you where you should go. They had no question in their minds as to where they should go.

R. S. S. That is, follow a man carrying the pitcher of water, which I think has been suggested is where you get refreshment for your soul. You will not be very far wrong there.

F. L. It is very evident the place that the assembly fills in the mind of God. We were saying this morning it is in the assembly that everything for God is begotten. Christ was solitary and alone, the firstfruits, afterwards them that are His at His coming; but consider the myriad number which go to the making up of the assembly! They are secured by and for the assembly, so that the meaning of out of "the Christ" becomes profoundly significant. Fruitfulness for God is the product of the assembly. The more one looks at it the more one sees the necessity from the divine side of the assembly. For instance, Israel must not perish. Israel is to fill a place dear to the heart of Christ. The assembly becomes the ark to perpetuate Israel and to carry it through to

the world to come. So there are so many sides which should greatly interest us, that we may be in the light of what the assembly is to the heart of God.

R. S. S. In what way would you say Israel is being carried through now?

F. L. Paul, in speaking to Agrippa, referred to the twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night. They are to be found in the assembly. The promise to the fathers never lapses. No failure on their part causes a lapse of promise on God's part. But where are they to be found today? In the faith of Jesus, in the assembly. The line is carried through, and so the revival of Israel after the assembly is gone will be the proof that God has not allowed a single promise to lapse.

R. S. S. You mean (to speak of it in a practical way) that it is carried in your heart and mine, in our knowledge of God's purpose?

F. L. I was rather meaning it is carried in our brethren converted from the Jews. I think God never leaves Himself without the line of the twelve tribes. So that, when Christ was brought into the temple, a representative of what we call a "lost tribe" was there to receive and to be identified with Him. Anna of the tribe of Asher was there. Where would you find the tribe of Asher? But the Spirit of God, when Christ is here in incarnation, brings in the tribe of Asher, as saying, I have not lost it. If you take Romans ix.-11 the thought is

there that Israel according to the flesh is held in abeyance, but faith in Christ brings from them in to the assembly. So Paul speaks of himself as a Hebrew and he speaks of Peter in like manner in Galatians ii., 14. When the rapture comes, and we go, there is no break in the continuity, as it were. Sovereign power works upon the remnant, as it wrought upon Saul of Tarsus after the death of Stephen; there will be an instantaneous, sovereign work that will turn from darkness to light. They will instantaneously take up the testimony where the assembly has dropped it. Israel is carried through; every divine thought is secured in the assembly.

W. C. R. Our brother S—— told me he belongs to the tribe of Benjamin.

F. L. That is identifiable, or Levi, or Judah, but we cannot find the tribe of Manasseh or Asher.

W. C. R. But you think somewhere, hidden away in the assembly, these men are there? Is that your thought?

F. L. Yes, faith discerns that the assembly becomes the instrumentality with God for preserving every divine purpose.

R. S. S. It is not that these men will be part of the remnant, they are part of the church and will go when the church leaves; but, as you say, the work of God immediately following the rapture of the church will be similar to what took place with Saul of Tarsus. An instantaneous and per-

factly marvellous work took place in him, which no doubt foreshadows what will take place then.

F. L. Zechariah prepares us for that, and Paul shows us the manner of its working. Therefore, the testimony is carried through to the world to come, there is no lapse, but it is carried now through the assembly.

O. J. O. "They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced." Will that occur after the church is taken up?

F. L. Yes, immediately after.

R. S. S. Of necessity, right through from the very beginning Noah and others held things by a very slender thread, and I think that is the way the blessing is taken up when the church is gone. What you have suggested is very helpful on that line.

F. L. Doubtless through godly, pious Jews, who, like Paul, had zeal for God but not according to knowledge. One looks upon the Jews we see today with interest, because of the near approach of the remnant days. The light from heaven that is above the brightness of the sun will smite them down so that they will at once recognize they are looking on Him whom they have pierced; the Spirit of grace and supplication will be upon them, and the remnant will be in view so soon as we are gone.

G. W. H. I was wanting to ask if we do not get the eternal day in the third chapter?

F. L. We do, and taking up what was previously said as to recovery to first love, we get an interesting suggestion of the eternal day in connection with Philadelphia. Philadelphia expresses the revival of bridal affections to Christ.

G. W. H. It is beautiful to see there is no difference between the power at the beginning and at the end. The power that has put Christ in the heavenlies has put us there.

Do you think we can get along locally or maintain the path rightly apart from Ephesians?

F. L. That is what I was trying to suggest, that if the company in which the grace of God has put us is to be glorified in our eyes we must see it in its proper relationship to the assembly according to purpose, and that is in Ephesians.

G. W. H. I have thought we were somewhat cramped in our own little sphere. We need the light of Ephesians to take in the whole, do we not?

F. L. I feel it very much. The reason I have ventured to suggest the line we have been on is that we might get away from narrow individuality, the sectionalism of a little local company as an end in itself, instead of keeping us under the light of the purpose of God in the assembly. If one is broadened in that way we have something to thank God for.

R. S. S. You were speaking about Philadelphia, that there we get the suggestion of what is eternal?

F. L. In Ephesians, where we get the height of purpose undimmed and unmarred by condition, we get eternity brought in; one of the rare instances. In Philadelphia where there is recovery to first principles we also get a suggestion of what is eternal. (Rev. iii. 12. N.T.) "He that overcomes, him will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more at all out." That, I take it, is millennial in its aspect; but what follows: "And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from my God," has reference, I think, to what is eternal and connects itself with Revelation 21: "And shewed me the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God." I have enjoyed the thought that where the Lord recovers bridal affections prior to His return He gives as a part of the reward the light of that which is eternal, as it had been presented to the assembly at the outset. Would you go with that?

R. S. S. I think that is very encouraging.

F. L. So when the Lord gives the parable of the ten virgins, five were wise. At the end, at the final going in the Lord speaks of them as virgins. It is not a polluted company, it is a pure company and they go in bridal affections; they are ready; the light of the Holy Spirit, the oil, is in the vessels, and they go in. There is no suggestion of failure and breakdown, involving a mean end, as

though what was divinely wrought had broken down and failed. What one loves to think is that when the Lord comes the affections in the assembly ring true, they are bridal affections, they are unpolluted, virgin affections. They are *ready* and the light of the Holy Spirit is with them.

W. C. R. "That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

F. L. So Philadelphia prepares us for that, and the heart of the Lord lets itself out. It is easy to be discouraged by what one sees, but it is something to be encouraged about that the Lord says in effect, All that is intrinsically true will be carried through by the Holy Spirit.

Turning back to Ephesians iii., he speaks of the administration of the mystery hidden through the ages in God: "Who has created all things, in order that now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies might be made known through the assembly the all-various wisdom of God, according to the purpose of the ages which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access in confidence by the faith of him." In the world to come there is a day which God has reserved in which to justify Himself to the universe, but the point presented here is that in the assembly—*now*, to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies there is being known through the assembly the all-various wisdom of

God. It is an amazing thought when one contemplates their viewpoint with God; they look down and their vision is disentangled from all the corruption about. They see that which is pure, in vitality, being put together piece by piece, with the holy design before them, and thus they learn the all-various wisdom of God in the assembly *now*. It is a wonderful word.

W. C. R. As we are linked up together—men of various temperaments—and move together without will acting in our relations with one another,—I have wondered if that would be the all-various wisdom of God coming out in forming the vessel here for His pleasure; and they look down upon that and see such a thing down here?

F. L. They see, for instance, such a man as Saul, the best instrument Satan had upon earth, the danger of it being that he had a zeal for God. They see a touch and that man is subdued, he turns to Christ: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and tomorrow he proclaims Jesus as Son of God. To him there is committed the mystery of the assembly. The principalities and the powers are in the secret of it; they see the working of it out. They see men and women such as we are, given over to the lust of the world, to alienation from the life of God, one and another brought out from the power of darkness and put over into the kingdom of the Son of His love and then through them the characteristics of Christ brought into

view; they look down and see it; and all through the process of formation they have before them the light of the completed thing, that which Christ loves and for which He has given Himself. They see the assembly as producing children of God, the fruitfulness that every instant is giving the fresh stream of life in the assembly.

J. W. D. Do you apprehend there are distinctive measures? Is that worked out in connection with our individual beings?

F. L. In the work there are measures. You look at Paul or J. N. D. or others, the measures are differing; "Created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has before prepared that we should walk in them," the working out of these things is as pouring into the furnace and out flows the pure gold into the moulds and shapes. In the world to come there is a reversal of the viewpoint. There is a restful scene, the kingdom of God, and those upon earth *look up* and see the glory of the heavenly city. That is the end of the third of Ephesians. Instead of principalities and powers looking *down* and seeing the universe in the making,—the new Jerusalem, living material which has been made Christlike,—people look *up* to see it; they learn Christ and God by looking up.

Ques. What do the principalities and powers represent?

F. L. The sphere of God is a great one, and in this chapter He takes the place of the Father,

of whom every family in heaven and earth is named. We do not know what are the numbers of the families. The indication is that in angels, ministers of His to do His pleasure, who minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation, there are differences in intelligence and rank, what we should call princes and rulers. There are the spirits of just men made perfect; one does not doubt that those who have gone before are profoundly interested in what God is doing now. We see how what is *above us* looks down with interest on what is here.

So when Moses and Elias came on the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, and James, and John could not talk to the Lord about His decease; they did not know what it meant; but Moses and Elias talked to Jesus about His decease which He should accomplish. They were intelligent; they knew what was coming.

W. C. R. At Jerusalem.

J. S. Where did they learn the detail? It has been said that the Christian's measure is learned here; do you mean there is advancement even in the sleeping condition that Paul is in at present?

F. L. No! Surely not advancement, but knowing even as they are known.

In our sphere of responsibility we learn things and are formed in relation to the world to come, but with regard to the eternal day I see no thought that anything is established in a limited or an imperfect way.

J. W. D. While there will be nothing incomplete in eternity, will every individual believer not be a different moral vessel?

F. L. Yes, and surely identity is not lost. At the same time when we come to purpose and counsel we must not admit the idea of imperfection or limitation.

G. W. H. But saints mature in time.

F. L. They must be secured in time.

G. W. H. That gives great place to time, does it not?

F. L. Of course it does; so that when in the beginning God created, the eighth of Proverbs tells us why His rejoicing was in the habitable part of the earth, because His delights were with the sons of men, and therefore time furnishes the limited sphere in which purpose secures its object; but we must not confuse what was chosen in Him from before the foundation of the world with what is set up in responsibility in time. So all that is in Christ, a new creation, belongs to that side of things and is apart from responsibility, which suggests imperfect development. We could not think that the Father would present to Christ that which is imperfect in development. In connection with my responsibility I am very imperfect in development, but that is limited to time.

G. A. T. There is another question, Where are the saints now?

F. L. They are with the Lord. "To depart to

be with Christ," "Today shalt thou be with me." "We have come to the spirits of just men made perfect." It means that my spirit, as I understand it, claims unity with the spirits of those that have gone, we are all of one. There is a unity in the divine system; we have come to them. Of course we are greatly hampered by our bodies, but even now we get rid of our bodies sometimes (morally) and become "in spirit."

R. L. C. "Waiting to be clothed upon," we think of that as the climax of everything,—manifestation; but I suppose God graciously took up Moses and Elias as His instruments and He could clothe them and bring them into manifestation.

F. L. Waiting to be clothed upon is another thing from waiting for intelligence. It would be a sorry thing to think of all our departed ones as going into a position of non-intelligence and ignorance of the working out of the ways of God; but one would welcome departure to be unclothed to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. And is not the Lord going to show us anything? Is not He going to keep us informed? We shall know even as we are known.

H. W. D. I should like to think I should reach a state of perfection some day. If I should die now I should not be in that.

F. L. You are perfect in Christ and will never be more perfect from the side of purpose.