

SERMONS OF C N SNOW

by C.N. Snow

Snow's sermons on 1 Timothy examining the house of God and Christian conduct, distinguishing between law and Gospel and showing how grace overabounds in salvation, emphasizing love, pure conscience, and unfeigned faith.

9 Chapters

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00.00. Articles

Snow, C. N. - Articles

S. A Few Observations on the First Epistle to Timothy

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S. A Few Observations on the First Epistle to Timothy.

A Few Observations on the First Epistle to Timothy. The subject of this epistle is the house of God — the Saviour God: conduct that is suited thereto in relation to the mystery of piety conserved therein (1 Timothy 3:16). The maintenance of Ephesian doctrine is enjoined, yet is not the subject of the epistle. Fables, other doctrines, and genealogies are warned against as inimical to "God's dispensation which is in faith." God is our Saviour in the epistle, the Lord Jesus Christ our hope, Who will bring to pass at His appearing all that piety looks for and maintains meantime in faith. The law, while fully owned in its authority and proper application (it is not for a righteous man) is risen above as the standard of morality by "The Gospel of the glory of the blessed God;" God rising up in the blessedness of His own nature, and Being, in His Son above all the wickedness of man, and bringing in thereby salvation for all; a remarkable expression. What is therefore looked for is, "love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and unfeigned faith," which the sticklers for law "missed." Certainly the law saved no one. What, then, had saved Paul, erstwhile a blasphemer and persecutor and insolent overbearing man? "The grace of our Lord" overabounding towards him "with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus:" — a totally new moral being the law could never (nor was it proposed that it should) supply. Truly, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," the only hope for any and every other poor sinner. Glorious word! "Life eternal" is the issue for those who believe in Him.

"Now to the King of the ages, the incorruptible, invisible, only God, honour and glory to the ages of ages. Amen."

Timothy is to enjoin these things, warring the good warfare, maintaining faith and a good conscience. This according to the faith; and then that which is inseparable and necessarily connected with it, as having to do with GOD, — "a good conscience." Some had cast this latter away, and made shipwreck of faith and become blasphemers: that is, the very opposite of the piety enjoined here throughout.

Thus we have, so to speak, the material of the house of God: the product of the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God, sinners saved by the grace of the Lord, by the Christ Jesus Who came into the world to save such. Now we have the first functioning of the house of God; "Supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings . . . for all men" (1 Timothy 2:1); "confiding intercourse with God on the part of one able to approach Him" (see note in N. Tr.). This is the Christian's position, through grace. This intercourse, then, with God, is on behalf of "all men; for kings and all that are in dignity, that we (Christians) may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all piety and gravity." Note the word, "Kings and all that are in dignity;" not here "The King," for the house of God is universal in its bearing; nor is it "authority" as elsewhere, but "dignity." But this being secured, "all men" are prayed for. What for? That they might "be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." Let us remember this: saved right out of the overwhelming judgments which await this guilty world, saved for Christ's glorious appearing and eternal glory. But let us pause a moment and consider the position in which this places the assembly as the house of God.

We may be assured that, while holding His hands over all things, even the poor brute creation, God's interest today on the earth is His assembly. Do we enter in upon His thoughts and, as we should also, for all men for salvation? Men out of Christ are viewed in Scripture as "senseless" (1 Peter 2:15); the great monarchies, established on earth, after God had taken His throne from the earth in His just rejection of Israel, are, in Daniel, likened to four ravenous beasts. It is indeed true that He gave this universal dominion to Nebuchadnezzar, the rest receiving it through Babylon the first, but He became known under the title of "The God of the heavens" (Daniel 2:37). Israel once had the "Ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth," and God will establish His title thus in the latter day. God's house will be a "House of prayer for all nations" (Matthew 21:13; Isaiah 56:7); but where is God's house today, His house of prayer? Where shall intelligent utterance be made before Him in His house for kings, etc., for all men? In the assembly, formed by the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost! Has God abandoned His thought in this? Impossible! The assembly, a thing wholly apart from this world, in the very constitution of it, as we have seen in the first chapter of this epistle; meddling with nothing in it, its politics, its social institutions or national interests; but set in confiding intimacy with God. Prayer is made there and God orders the affairs of the world in favour of His people, even Christians, that they may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For 'men' the prayer is made there, and God answers in saving men right clean out of this world and all its interests; likewise, for heaven and His eternal purpose. It has truly been said that the church is the seat of the power of God in the world. Are we up to our place and privilege is the question? Have we given it up by our earthly-mindedness and worldliness? All is ruin indeed, but this in no wise hinders "Men praying in every place, lifting up pious hands, without wrath or reasoning," as we shall see. But let us revert to our immediate Scripture.

"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony to be rendered in its own times (1 Timothy 2:5-6). Now Israel had the truth of the one, true, invisible. Jehovah. Maker of heaven and earth: not revealed indeed, but truly such. Further, the mediator, Moses, was between that same Jehovah and His people, and there was no ministry. But now, God is revealed, the Mediator established between Him and men (not just Israel), and there is a ministry towards all men, spoken of here only as far as Paul being "appointed a herald and apostle, a teacher of the nations in faith and truth" (1 Timothy 2:7). The gifts for ministry are not otherwise spoken of in this Epistle. To conceive of God's house today therefore, after the pattern of what was established in Israel, is to miss the mark altogether, and to lapse to the narrow ground of an unrevealed God: no Mediator, and an unevangelical ministry: unevangelical and inoperative, as the blessed Lord plainly shows in the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:1-42 Levitical ministry does not concern "all men," which can be the only true scope of God revealed. "In Him (the Word) was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). "The true light was that which, coming into the world lightens (or is light to) every man" (John 1:9). Christ, in the rejection of Him by Israel, becomes the light of the nations, God's salvation to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 49:1-26). Nothing can be of more importance than this, whether as to the functioning of the house of God in prayer, etc., as we have seen, or in direct ministry, however much but "a little strength" (Revelation 3:8) may cause us to act circumspectly as to this. The responsibility however remains, and he who restricts it flies in the face of Scripture, and damages his own soul; not to speak of the account to be given at the judgment seat of the Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10).

How, now then, does the house of God function? Let 1 Timothy 2:8 answer: "I will therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up pious hands, without wrath or reasoning." It is no question of our being convened therefore; still less is it a matter of a building, but "men everywhere." We can function in the street (in lifting up the heart anyway) or elsewhere. But may we not remember the precious Saviour here, "Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared" (or "for His piety") (Hebrews 5:7). And this really introduces the "mystery of piety", in Him of whom it speaks. Piety — pious hands (compare Psalms 134:2) lifted up, are here called for; piety in the woman, in dress, etc., in the end of this chapter. Suited qualifications and piety in both the "bishop" or "overseer" and "deacon" and their wives, in the third chapter, because the house of God, in which they exercise their local office, is "The assembly of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth," of the mystery of piety. If the house of God supports and displays this mystery, of necessity every one composing it, or in office in it, must bear that self-same character. And what is this mystery of piety? "God has been manifested in flesh, has been justified in the Spirit has appeared to angels, has been preached among the nations, has been believed on in the world, has been received up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16).

What words are these! Of old, the seraphim (holy burners) covered their faces and feet in the presence of Him whom we now know in this mystery as the lowly Jesus. With what reverence do we need to regard Him. The burning bush of Exodus 3:1-22, the flaming fire and Shekinah glory; and Oh, how much more lie so far hidden, save as the "Godhead glory shone through the human veil" of necessity, which enables us to gaze in adoration unrestrained and unrebuked, as the very life and joy, eternal joy of our souls. God is there, the "I AM," the eternal Son of the Father. But this passage is not a setting forth of His Person, but one cannot but speak thus as in the presence of Him who has thus met us in our sins, and from Simon's house (Luke 7:1-50) to the Father's house on high, fills every nook and cranny with an inestimable glory; yet suited always and everywhere to the deepest need of the sinner, of the saint, and utterly beyond his highest aspirations. Jesus, the Lamb of God, our own precious Saviour: glory be to God eternally in the church in Him! "Confessedly great" is this mystery: "Justified in the Spirit." Who has been so justified? Who is here presented? "God and Man, One Christ," as has been truly said. Nothing else suits the sense here, or fits with the statements which follow. Everything then this blessed Person said and did — words and works — received the sanction of the Spirit. He is declared Son now, in power and resurrection, but it is "according to the Spirit of holiness" (Romans 1:4): object of the highest created intelligences in the heavens; preached among the nations; believed on in the world (our precious and only link here, however the Spirit may seal it); received up in glory. God indeed has come down; and Man has gone up in Him, eternally ONE. "Confessedly great" is this mystery. But it is the "Mystery of piety:" hence all that precedes and follows. We have now briefly to deal with the apostasy from this, and with the provision for these "latter times." The opposition is a false piety. Things good, and to be received and enjoyed by the faithful, are declared by the seducing spirit necessary to be abstained from. We receive them by the word of God, not in mere nature, where all is indeed fallen through Adam. Received thus, and in free and happy intercourse with God, they are for our enjoyment: this is of all importance. (But see too, in the previous chapter, how the order of creation is maintained, in the creation of the man and the woman; and then provision made for the fallen condition of things then obtaining: yet again God's sure promise to those who "continue in faith and love and holiness with discretion" 1 Timothy 4:12-15). Laying

these things before the brethren, Timothy would be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished with the words of faith and good teaching, which he had fully followed up. The rest of the directions to Timothy are of like character. Further, his directions as to behaviour with his brethren; then as to widows, who were to be ministered to; all referring back to this same mystery of piety; then as to bondmen, etc.: all sound words, words of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it had not been our intention to enter upon the details of the epistle. Let it suffice therefore if we pass on to the end of 1 Timothy 6:1-21, Timothy is to lay hold of eternal life; the rich on what is really life, because riches seem to give what only can be found in eternal life; "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things" (Ecclesiastes 10:19). In this passing scene eternal life needs to be "laid hold of." All else soon will pass. But God is about, to introduce the appearing of our Lord Jesus, which will give effect to all that faith and piety have looked for, and bring in through all, things that have been preserved in the meantime. "God Who holdeth all things in life." It is not merely as Israel, who say, "He holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved" (Psalms 66:9). This will doubtless bring them through to the fulness of their blessing. Here it is "all things." It would surely embrace the creature, of which it is said, "For thy pleasure they are and were created;" but it could not be restricted to this. The appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring to full fruition and display the whole harvest of glory, which the God of glory has destined in the ages. We are those upon whom the end of the ages have fallen." Now the "good confession" is just the acknowledgment of this supreme authority, which even enabled Pilate to judge the Saviour, "The Lord of glory" indeed (1 Corinthians 2:1-16). This, He confessed. Well, God will show His appearing. And who now is He, here spoken of, who will do so? "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." Elsewhere, the Saviour is described as King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16), but here it is One dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen, nor is able to see, who is spoken of as showing the Saviour's appearing. What, indeed, will that appearing be? Let us pause here for a moment. Here is One spoken of as dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen, nor is able to see. How this impresses the gravity also of the revelation vouchsafed to us in Christ. God is alone revealed to us in Trinity, as we speak: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. Three Persons, but One God. That revelation has been made to us in the Person of the Son, co-equal, co-eternal, with the Father and the Spirit. If we have the Son, we have all: all the fulness (of the Godhead) dwelt, and dwells in Him (Colossians 1:19; Colossians 2:9). "No one has seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father. He has declared Him" (John 1:18). This revelation in the Son is our present and eternal joy: outside it there is no revelation of God; and, as we have seen, God, otherwise unknown, dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man hath seen, nor is able to see. The thought or desire to so know Him would be but a fallen nature seeking to exalt itself out of creature place, as Adam under the tempting of the serpent. The renewed nature we have, taught of God, shrinks from the bare idea, and clings to the faithful word and the mighty grace which have been vouchsafed to us. In the SON we have all, and infinitely more, than the creature can conceive, now, and for ever. The Father's glory will soon all shine forth in Him: glory be to God.

How blessedly does this epistle, in its doctrine, stand suspended (so to speak) between these two mighty statements of ascriptions of praise in 1 Timothy 1:17, and here 1 Timothy 6:15-16. The epistle concludes with, "O Timotheus, keep the entrusted deposit, avoiding profane, vain

babblings, and oppositions of false-named knowledge, of which some having made profession, have missed the faith. Grace be with thee." C. N. Snow.

S. Christ All Things and in All

"Christ All Things and in All."

"It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God. Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto Me" John 6:45.

"But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, Which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me" John 15:26. So prophetically, before the Son came, if the heart indites a good matter and speaks of the things it has composed, it is "touching the King." And the Spirit taking it up proclaims that it is "To the Son, He says, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows" (Psalms 45:1-17, Hebrews 1:8-9). Thus the mystery of the Person of the Son stands prophetically announced also.

Truly, "great is the mystery of piety: God was manifest in flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Timothy 3:16).*

[*Note: or "that which," for it is that manifested which is presented to the heart. None but God could, of course, be so manifested; but it is what is so manifested, that is "justified in the Spirit," etc.; so again, the mystery of the Person is declared by the Spirit.]

He, then, is the subject of all divine testimony. And then, "He must be everything (or all things) and in all" (Colossians 3:11). Hence, the new man, where this is consummated — so far. But He is "the characteristic power, active instrument and end" (J.N.D.) of creation. The Son, thus, shall shine in the manifestation of the mystery of God, in the whole creation. But what is God working now by His Spirit?

He writes Christ, by the Spirit, on the fleshy tables of the heart for new covenant liberty in life and righteousness (2 Corinthians 3:1-18). The truth stated at its height as liberty from sin and for righteousness, is "If Christ be in you" (Romans 8:10). For the commission and power of service in the Gospel for Christian liberty and privilege, it is, "But when it pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him, etc." (Galatians 1:15-16). This following the Gospel in treatise as "Concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 1:1-4). Further, for authority in His service, as disputed at Corinth, it is, "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me . . . examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith" (2 Corinthians 13:3-5). If we would learn the full power of the mystery and be filled to all the fulness of God, it is by "Christ dwelling in the heart by faith," as "strengthened by His (the Father's) Spirit, in the inner man" (Ephesians 3:14, etc.). And here again, it is the Son, the Centre of His eternal counsels. Again, full growth consists in the "arrival at the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God" (Ephesians 4:13). The work of God, therefore, is to assimilate us to these things, He revealing the truth at the height of it according to Him Who lives before His face. But each state and measure of growth is taken up and Christ

presented to the saint — a full Christ, but appropriately to that state and measure. But always and everywhere, it is CHRIST, whether as dispelling the clouds of legalism in the Galatians; meeting the carnality and disorder in the Corinthians; the philosophy and Judaism — the principles of the world, religious flesh, in the Colossians. Then, positively, in the full untrammelled declaration of individual blessing for the responsible man set up justified and in Christ down here, the Romans declared the same glorious theme; while in the epistle to the Ephesians, it is the Calling in sonship, on the one hand, and the unity of the Assembly, on the other, in the mystery.

It is CHRIST Who fills it all, determines its character in fullest blessing (how could it be otherwise?), everywhere and always. What blessedness in the God Who can thus act towards us So, surely, if the heart express itself (as it must!) in worship it is:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3, etc.). But if Paul (in part) thus, so John, for the circle and wealth of divine love:

"And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God, and eternal life."

"Children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

C. N. Snow.

S. Faith and Love.

Faith and Love.

Faith and love are as the very life-breath of the saint. We find that they are communicated, as a new moral being, at the outset, as taking the place of the old life of sin, in the antagonism to both God and man of that life. Saul of Tarsus was, as he tells us, "a blasphemer and persecutor and an insolent overbearing man" (1 Timothy 1:13). Towards both God and man he displayed the whole force of the nature he possessed; blaspheming upwards, persecuting outwards, "in ignorance and in unbelief." Then, in the fulness of his energies "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1-43), the blessed, blessed Lord intervened: "The grace of our Lord surpassingly overabounded with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 1:14). Faith and love are communicated, "faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." They spring thence, are one there (the verb is in the singular): "faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." Further, they are never separated from their source, we possess them in Him. The whole man, thus, in his moral being, in the in-breathings of his soul, and the outgoings of the same, and in his whole actions, is now characterised by what he has thus derived from Christ in the overabounding grace of the Lord and possesses in Him. Well does he add, "Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first." It was a plant which would grow indeed, as he himself traced its development in his epistles to the saints; but it was now planted livingly. This, then, stands at the outset of the christian career, that which he has received in the overabounding grace of the Lord, and it traces its way through that career until the end when faith will be changed to sight and God known as love. In the development of faith and love this is seen in its brightness and freshness with the Thessalonians, in their "work of faith, and labour of love, and enduring constancy of hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father" (1 Thessalonians 1:3). Paul saw in them thus that which assured him of their election: "Knowing," says he "brethren, beloved by God, your election" (verse 4). And if, in his second epistle it is manifest that their "hope" was in somewise wanting, he can yet speak of their faith and love: "Your faith increases exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all towards one another abounds" (2 Thessalonians 1:3); so that he boasted in them (verse 4). But further in 1 Thessalonians 5:8, he would have these very two things put on as armour: "But we," says he, "being of the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as helmet the hope of salvation." They are as a robust nature in exercise (for we must remember that while the breastplate is "put on" it is faith and love which are so) to resist attacks upon it, just as a healthy body does the germs which would invade it. What could Satan do in assaulting them as to the tribulations they were witnessing in the apostle and enduring with him if each was characterised by faith, hope and love? But without attempting to trace fully these two precious things, it may be indicated that they stand at the gateway of three great spheres of development of the mature christian. I refer to (1) the glory of Christ, (2) the counsels of God in Christ, and (3) the family of God.

Let us look at them briefly.

First then, if we take the Colossian epistle; and if I speak of the mature christian here, it will be realised that the term is used; bearing also in mind that there was a certain immaturity in evidence in that Assembly, and which the apostle sets himself to correct. But there is a maturity here also which justifies the term. What, then, is the ground of the apostle's thanksgiving when praying for them? It is their "faith in Christ Jesus, and the love which ye have towards all the saints" (Colossians 1:4). He gives thanks, as basing his prayers upon that, "for the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens; of which ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Glad Tidings, etc." So again, faith, hope and love are found also together and the Gospel. Let us hold fast to that. Faith and love then stand at the outset for the development, in doctrine, of the supreme glory of THE SON. It is not to go into this development here, but to note the fact.

Then in the Ephesian epistle, to which indeed we might attach the term of maturity as to the christian state, it is the same thing: these two things — faith and love — are the very basis of his prayer for them in the first chapter. "Wherefore I, also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is in you, and the love which ye have to all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you at my prayers, etc." (Ephesians 1:15, et seq.). Hope, one might say incidentally is not brought in here, because the form of the mystery in this epistle is not as in the Colossian "Christ in you the hope of glory," but in the present communion of the saints in the power of the Spirit.

Finally, in respect of the family of God in John's first epistle, we have, when the christian state is brought to completion so far by the words "He that keeps His commandments abides in Him and He in Him," we have "And this is His commandment, that we believe on the name of His Son, . . . and that we love one another even as He has given us commandment" (1 John 3:23). Then immediately, after a parenthesis as to proving the spirits, in 1 John 4:1-21, we get, "Beloved, let us love one another; because love is of God, and every one that loves has been begotten of God and knows God." And then follows the, manifestation of that love in God, in the Son; its perfecting in the saints; and its perfecting as to us as giving "boldness in the day of judgment" because "even as He is, we also are in this world" (1 John 4:17); the whole wealth of love for the family of God. The Lord give us by His present grace to be maintained in faith and love, so that we may breathe and move in our own proper sphere, and enjoy HIM who has communicated the nature that we might so know Him. C. N. Snow.

S. Follow thou Me

"Follow thou Me."

Substance of an Address at Rothbury, 6th August 1945.

Scriptures read: John 21:1-25 and Revelation 3:20.

I see no reason to depart from the usual interpretation of this passage of Scripture (John 21:1-25); but I wish to give it a special application, and I am assured as "By faith our eyes are seeing Christ at Thy right hand in heaven," it is a legitimate one. The passage, as usually taken, is prophetic, and refers to the great Gentile gathering in the last days. I doubt not the 153 fishes refer to 2 Chronicles 2:17-18. All is on earth of course: there are seven disciples, a spiritually complete number of Israel will be the fishers. Their boat will not sink, nor their nets break, as in Luke 5:1-39. Neither will the haul be put into the boat, but dragged to the shore. But it is at the crisis of the history I would touch it.

They had toiled all night, the risen Saviour stood on the shore in early morn. Had they any meat? "No." "And He said to them, Cast the net at the right side of the ship and ye shall find." Now they can no longer draw it for the multitude of fishes. "It is the Lord" says the disciple whom Jesus loved, first now manifested in this character so familiar to us. Now, brethren, what have we to show for our fishing during the night of His absence? Look at the professing Assembly. Is it not enough to humble us? Unless we take sectarian ground, it is impossible not to be humbled. Where is "His beautiful flock?" What permanency has there been? Has not the history been one of defection, scattering and sorrow from this point of view? Deeply so: indeed, it is just this very thing, pressed upon the spirit, which finds its answer in this passage. What have we? Nothing: my heart thoroughly submits itself to the thought, the conviction. But, "I know WHOM I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." And what at once comes before the heart? A glorious work is going on from the right hand of God, where Christ sits. The net is full: no breaking there; nor is the haul put into a boat. Never mind our little "administrations," brethren. I believe we can get obsessed with them — a subtle form of selfishness and indeed, sectarianism. We are passing — administratively, so to speak, from this scene; and as one passing thus obtains a view of what is unseen to mortal vision, so may we indeed get one of that glorious "administration of the fulness of times," when "He will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and on earth: in Him." Nor do I say these things to, for one moment, weaken our necessary, absolutely necessary, separation from evil on the one side, and the thorough and honest recognition of the unity of the assembly on earth on the other. Indeed, the whole thought of such separation is that we may truly recognise, and practically own that fact; while it humbles us in the dust, as I have said. No, but the heart needs comfort when it honestly faces the situation, and surely the blessed Lord would give it us in this passage, without us wresting its interpretation; and we can see a glorious work going on, silently, surely. Not one of the least of the labourers, or their labours, will be forgotten; for while full provision meets the fishermen in the blessed grace of their Master, it is also at once said, "Bring of

the fish ye have now caught." O brethren, "our labour IS NOT IN VAIN IN THE LORD." What inducement, in the sense of His grace to labour still, unknown, isolated, facing the "going away" it may be of this one or that. And what is the next thing? Is it not "THE LORD HIMSELF?" Is not this the touchstone to our hearts? And is it not this that brings to light in his true, full character, "the disciple that Jesus loved?"

Well, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me," makes it surely appropriate to the present moment; for whatever abides, if it abides, does so in the sovereign "If I will" of Christ. We do well to thoroughly adjust our thoughts to that. Peter is the "Mr Will-be-will" of John Bunyan. Well, if so (and both principles are here), "Follow thou Me." John is as the shadow to the substance — "the disciple whom Jesus loved . . . who also leaned on His breast at supper and said, Lord, who is it that betrays Thee." Where else could he be than "following?" (John 21:20). C. Norman Snow.

'Tis not far off — the hour When Christ will claim His Own!

We soon shall hear that voice of power, The Lord Himself shall come!

S. More than Conquerors.

More than Conquerors.

There is a difference between the conflict referred to in Ephesians 6:1-24 and that in Romans 8:1-39, conformably with the doctrine of each epistle. In Ephesians — if also one speaks with a necessary diffidence — it is that the saint might stand in the truth, power and communion; testimony to the authorities in the heavenlies of his heavenly standing in Christ, in a walk consistent therewith. In Romans 8:1-39 it is different. The question is whether, the saint is to languish under the distresses which characterize this desert scene, through which he passes, under the shadow of him who once held the might of death, or whether in the bright shining of the power and victory, and above all, the love of Him Who passed through everything in that love to secure us; and the love of Him to whom everything and every one is creature. In what triumph, in the light of Christ, do those words come, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." So, accusations met by Christ's intercession on high, and the light of this two-fold expression of love in the valley below, with what sweetness of embrace do the words meet us, "The love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Yes, beloved, we are no longer in Adam, with its entail of sin and death, but we are in Christ for life, righteousness, Christian standing: a new circle in which we are made to feel at home, with the immensity potentially of that wondrous term "In Christ" before us; but at home there with God, who has so acted towards us, as developed throughout in the doctrine of the epistle. Death has proved to be our liberator on the one hand, and the exposition of the mighty all-prevailing love of God, on the other.

Psalms 44:1-26, from which verse 36 of our chapter is a quotation, could hardly go as far as this in an as yet unaccomplished redemption. Yet the faithful remnant there find themselves the companions of the KING in Psalms 45:1-17 (our position, too, through grace: Hebrews 1:9; Hebrews 3:14); and in Psalms 46:1-11 find the covenant Name of Jehovah restored to them. But what a God is ours, and how truly is it "The Gospel of God . . . concerning His SON, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 1:1; Romans 1:3).

C. N. Snow.

We triumph in Thy triumphs, Lord;

Thy joys our deepest joys afford. The fruit of love divine.

S. Some Serious Considerations.

Some Serious Considerations.

It is difficult to conceive of anything more important today, on the negative side, than the thorough acceptance of the fact of the ruin of the Assembly in its responsible course here. One says "Thorough acceptance" though assured of the necessity for divinely given intuition in the matter. The ruin is complete. If it is thought otherwise, it is because the eye has before it something less than the Assembly of God. Such a conception is sectarian and self-condemned, twice ruined in obduracy of heart. In Jeremiah's day, he alone in Jerusalem proclaimed the ruin, weeping, as he did so: complaining at his persecution, not inconsistently with the dispensation of earthly administration in which he did so. A sighing Baruch, or an Ethiopian Ebed-melech may accompany him in his sorrow and affliction, that was all: witnesses indeed to the faithfulness of God in their tears. It is to him, Jeremiah, that "hidden" or "unattainable" things were revealed (Jeremiah 33:1-26). But so far did the truth of the ruin penetrate at long-last even the unrenewed mind, that such say: "The two families that Jehovah had chosen, He hath even cast them off" (Jeremiah 33:24). And there is a similarity between Jeremiah's and Paul's commissions in the radical character of their ministries and reference to the nations; and while Paul's ministry included, exclusively to himself, the "ministry of the Assembly," he has himself to speak of its ruin: "All seek their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ" (Php 2:21). Eternal purpose alone meets his heart where the ruin is thoroughly under his eye with his beloved child Timotheus (2 Timothy 1:9). John has his back towards the Assembly, and turns to view it in a new way in its responsibility, only to find it as having left its "first love" and "fallen" (Revelation 1:1-20; Revelation 2:1-29). And if he would see the heavenly city descending out of heaven from God having the glory of God, it is "one of the seven angels which had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues" which spoke to him saying "Come here, I will show thee the bride the Lamb's wife;" a fact full of moral instruction to our hearts. The various revivals which have taken place down through the centuries, and the good that the all-seeing eye of Him like the Son of man (Revelation 1:1-20) sees, altered nothing of the fact that the Assembly was ruined, fallen and falling still; until the "lukewarm" state in Laodicea crowns the loss of first love in Ephesus and is about to be "spued" out of His mouth. Thenceforth the Assembly is only seen in heaven (Revelation 4:1-11 et seq.).

It is the in-wrought sense of these things which is needed by all our poor hearts. Revival, especially such as a hundred or so years ago, awakened evanescent hopes but to be necessarily disappointed: and so it must prove concerning any refreshings which, in the faithfulness of God are vouchsafed. Such were never intended for one moment to remove from the soul the ruin in which the tiny refreshment — taking in in its scope and thought, the whole Assembly of God — was given. Present blessing must never betray us from soberness of mind and watchfulness against Satan in this respect. And this sober judgment in the state it must produce, will lead to the very place of blessing before our good and gracious God. And let it not be forgotten that while Israel, renewed in heart, nationally resurrected, re-united, will be restored under an everlasting covenant in the land, and Jehovah's tabernacle with them and He Himself there —

Jehovah-shammah; the professing Assembly will not be so restored. While the nations of the world, purged by the judgments of God, also individually renewed in heart, will become, or come in under "The kingdom of the world of our Lord and of His Christ," no such regeneration will place the christian Assembly again in the scene of its failure. On the contrary, spued out Christ's mouth, it will become the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth — Babylon, riding the scarlet beast full of names of blasphemy and eventually, fallen, be destroyed by it and the confederated ten kings, overwhelmed, destroyed with judgments from God more terrible than all the rest of the world to which she really, in spite of her profession, belonged: the false bride, never, any more at all, to arise; while the true bride is seen in her own proper place in heaven, the bride of the Lamb, the true light, through Him of the world to which the glory of the nations will be brought. But there is another serious consideration in the subject dimly being traced, viz., the part the individual plays in all this, for the stream of ecclesiastical confusion is formed and fed by individual failure in the watershed of man's ruined nature, if we may so speak. How far have we contributed to the final catastrophe?

Paul's Gospel is radical, and complementary to that new-creation ministry in which the Assembly consists according to God. In this latter he may and does speak of what is administrative, and that also fails; but ever with that which pertains to new creation contained therein. In the Galatian lapse indeed, new creation and as many as walk according to that rule alone meet the case: but in Corinthians, the evil and the good run concurrently for a while here below. How serious then, appropriately to our consideration here, is chapter 3 of the first epistle. What are we, each one, building? Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, straw. But the "day will declare it," the day revealed in fire. The corrupter of the temple of God is destroyed, while the faulty builder will be saved yet so as through the fire. We need to become fools to be wise in this respect of building. And Paul's Gospel underlies this matter. If, in our ministry — and also taken in the widest sense of our whole course here — it is not "Christ speaking in us" (2 Corinthians 13:3), we but reproduce ourselves (" wood, grass, straw" sure enough!) What a thing it is that God has given us Christ's death! Baptised to Him, we have been baptised to it, whether to sin and the law in Romans, or the world in Colossians. Jesus Christ came by water and blood, and the Spirit bears witness (1 John 5:1-21). Not only is our guilt removed, but God has condemned sin in the flesh in Christ's death: and we are also risen with Him so as to be clear altogether from that man and place where he disports himself, not only carnally and secularly, but religiously "to the satisfaction of the flesh" (Colossians 2:23). So that church questions do not merely concern the ecclesiastically-minded, but such in which each Christian is deeply involved.

"But wisdom, where shall it be found? and where is the place of understanding? . . . Destruction and death say, We have heard its report . . . God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth its place: . . . and unto man He said, Lo, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom: and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:12-28).

Let us, then, survey the ruin, our ruin; our uprightness of heart is in it. Let us remember that "The Most High dwelleth not in (places) made with hands" (Acts 7:48) that it is written in the prophet, "But to this man will I look: to the afflicted and contrite in spirit, and who trembleth at My word" (Isaiah 66:2). And as we do so, with the Cross upon our spirits (1 Corinthians 1:1-31; 1 Corinthians 2:1-16; 1 Corinthians 3:1-23), we may get a view according to God indeed of that fair new creation, into which sin cannot enter, or man's hand or foot defile. And are not "all the treasures of wisdom

and of knowledge" found in the "Mystery of God?" that vast system of glory including the Assembly's peculiar place in it by virtue of her relationship with Him Who is the glorious Centre of it all, even "the Son of the Father's love." How appropriately can we see here that "destruction and death say, We have heard its report." That — destruction and death — is God's answer to man's way; and as we are with God in spirit; our eyes anointed with the eye-salve obtained alone from Him (Revelation 3:18), our minds and hearts submit to His holy judgment, our walk and our ways, "ecclesiastically" also, become conformed thereto; we cease from our own efforts to "repair" the ruin, we "With-draw from iniquity . . . and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Timothy 2:19-22). Should not the faith and love of the Assembly in these last solemn moments, be as the unclouded view of a dying man, looking out of his "earthly tabernacle house" to that "building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?" (2 Corinthians 5:1-2). It is a present, ecclesiastical deliverance, just as the hope that "He that has raised up Christ from among the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies also on account of His Spirit that dwells in you" (Romans 8:11), is the completion of the personal deliverance. But our paths often are, alas, like Jacob's in this respect. He spent twenty odd years outside of the land of promise, with many experiences indeed, as we, but all to break down his planning, plotting mind and way (and have not we had many ecclesiastical expedients? and of what use have they been!!) Abraham and Isaac, the risen man in type, dwelt with God in God's land of promise and were fruitful therein. And this leads to a brief view of Paul's own position and mind and outlook in this connection. No doubt he had (though we speak with the utmost diffidence here also) to feel personal failure in connection with his own work; no doubt such thoughts may have been mixed with his feelings as, after the shipwreck and the brethren from Rome met him, he "thanked God and took courage" (Acts 28:1-31). But the energy, faithfulness of his path and devotedness, so wholly governed by the divine testimonies, left his heart free in his Roman prison also for other thoughts. What does he say as he surveys, beyond the ruin, how "God; Who has saved us, and has called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to (His) own purpose and grace, which (was) given to us in Christ Jesus before (the) ages of time, but has been made manifest now by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who has annulled death, and brought to light life and incorruptibility by the Glad tidings?" (2 Timothy 1:8-10). He suffers, but is not ashamed, and he says "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep for that day the deposit I have entrusted to Him" (2 Timothy 1:12).

He sees Him whom he had believed and "that day." And may not our eyes, beloved, each in his tiny measure, do the same? Paul's greater faithfulness may enable him to so speak, we in our lesser. Further, in the "crown of righteousness" he awaited from the "righteous Judge . . . in that day," he also links "all those who love His appearing with Him" (2 Timothy 4:8). And again, mercy is looked for "in that day," for one, even Onesiphorus who being in Rome had sought him out very diligently and found him (2 Timothy 1:17). And has not this a word for us today? Whilst standing and surveying the ruin which we have brought in, is it not an essential part of faithfulness to, metaphorically speaking, seek Paul out very diligently and find him? And has the real Paul changed, either in doctrine or manner of life, or suffering? Evangelical christendom may think so, but indeed it is not so. The true" Paul "is as rejected today, as then; and this is a solemn consideration for each of us." The testimony of our Lord and of me his prisoner," still stands before our responsibility, even if it do little else than to humble us. No "fragments" are to be "lost" in this the Spirit's day. Nothing will help to keep us apart from acquiescing in the ruin, in the way of

submitting our ways to the general decline, like such a consideration. God does not change, nor does the world, whatever its fashions. As long as the word stands "Till He come" in regard of the Supper, Paul must be thus "sought," however alone in the power of life (2 Timothy 1:1) it may, and must be so. The sovereignty of God will see to it that this "door" will not be "shut" "Till He come," as it is written.

C. N. Snow.

S. The Mind in Divine Things.

The Mind in Divine Things.

It is well for us, as also it is essential for the glory of God in us, that in the acquisition of truth, a bar should be set upon the energy and pride of the mind of man. God has Himself directly to do with us: it is He "with Whom we have to do;" and the heart that knows Him at all and knows itself, could not wish it otherwise. Satan can make sport of the flesh, in whatever way it may present itself: he has a certain title over it as is seen in the case of Peter, in his "demand" that he might have him that he might sift him as wheat (Luke 22:31-34). The intercession of the Saviour supported his faith, for that was there, but the disaster of the denial was not averted, or meant to be by the faithful Lord.

It is not difficult for an active mind to acquire the doctrines of deliverance and even to speak of them to others, but this alone is not enough for the acquiring of the separated "mind:" ("I with the mind serve the law of God; but with the flesh sin's law;") and for liberty from the "law of sin and of death." The "bar" is wretchedness "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" GOD meets the soul in its wretchedness, its impossible struggle after what is right its hopelessness, so that it says not How? but "Who? —" Who shall deliver me out of this body of death? The wretchedness is the fruit of the new nature and of sincerity in the man; but the point to be observed is that it is wretchedness; and turned by Him Who "turneth the shadow of death into the morning" (Amos 5:8). He thanks God for deliverance: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:25). Life in liberty and power is now enjoyed. The man is in Christ and Christ is in the man: "There is then now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and of death" (Romans 8:1-2).

Further, take the crossing of the Jordan in the antitype. It is not difficult for the mind to disport itself in the doctrines of Colossians. Nor would one seek to hinder it, for the truth lays hold of the heart even in spite of the mere mind. But the "mind:" — "set your mind on things above, not on the things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2), is not acquired by such a process. Is there not a divine road, experimentally, which is a check to mere mentality, imagination — religious flesh if it presume so high? Does not the prayer in Colossians 1:1-29 open that road to our hearts? What is its order? Paul says that he does "not cease praying for you, to the end that ye may be filled with the full knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so as to walk worthily of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing by the true knowledge of God; strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory unto all endurance and longsuffering with joy." Now I am not seeking to unfold this prayer, but noting the order of its requests for the saints. Why is this stated first? What does it mean? What is it to be filled with the full knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding? Is it not to have our lives formed and regulated by our heavenly hope, "the hope that is laid up for us in heaven; of which ye heard before in the word of the truth of the glad tidings, etc." (Colossians 1:5, preceding)? And this is a very practical thing; but it is easily possible for the mind to be occupied in the doctrines, while

the path is anything but being determined and regulated by the heavenly hope. Indeed, the active mind that is looking well after itself in the affairs of this lower world, could be the very one that disported itself mentally, if not sentimentally in the doctrines. How are we shaping our lives here below? Is it in the immediateness of the hope that is laid up for us in the heavens? Well, in the order that Scripture presents things for us, this is what is first secured before the soul rises to the next part of the prayer, "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us fit for sharing the portion of the saints in light" and into the range of the glories of the Son of His love, He who is the centre of the mystery of God (Colossians 2:2); in Whom is all the fulness of the Godhead (Theotes not Theiotes — Godhead in the absolute sense, not merely divine in character — J.N.D.); and into that fulness which is for us, for our place (Colossians 2:9-10). It is a wilderness cry in Moses when he said to Jehovah, "Show me now Thy way that I may know Thee" (Exodus 33:13). Where did God's way lead? Was it not to that fair land of promise? But all is of grace: the "hope" came to them in the Gospel, was inherent in it. And at conversion often the hope of glory is bright indeed. So Israel on the banks of the Red Sea sang, were truly, for the moment, circumcised to God. And God does not forget this, but on the contrary recalls it through Jeremiah: "I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, the first-fruits of His increase: all that devour him are guilty: evil shall come upon them, saith Jehovah" (Jeremiah 2:2-3). How long did the song last at the Red Sea? What was Israel's condition when Jeremiah thus spoke? Are not these lessons which each heart of us must learn? Jehovah will bring Israel to His end and the good He has for them according to their hope, as He is leading us NOW to the realisation of our heavenly one; for deliverance is not under the law, but from it; and crossing Jordan is not "dying and going to Heaven" according to the popular idea; but entering NOW, as dead and risen with Christ, where we can "seek the things that are above, where the Christ is sitting at the right hand of God," and to have our mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth; for ye have died and your life is hid with the Christ in God. But in what is experimental, the lessons of the wilderness must also be learned.

Well, God's grace alone produces these things and we learn both the power and the wisdom of the Word of God in the path that He outlines for faith. There is no royal road to these things. We learn ourselves therein and that is not flattering; but we learn GOD, so indeed the prayer says in Colossians 1:10 — "Growing by the true knowledge of God," as also Moses in the passage quoted, "Show me now, THY way, that I may know THEE."

All this is necessarily a principle of the ways of God with us, as given throughout Scripture. In perfect harmony with it, is that one of the most remarkable prophecies is uttered by one who prefaces it with, "Truly I am more stupid than any one; and I have not a man's intelligence. I have neither learned wisdom, nor have I the knowledge of the Holy" (Proverbs 30:1-4).

C. N. Snow.

S. The Testimony of our Lord

"The Testimony of our Lord" A brief word as to the character and course of "The testimony of our Lord" 2 Timothy 1:8.

It has been said, to the effect, that the whole course of the testimony of God has been under review by the Spirit of God in Scripture with all the evils that beset it until its completion, so as to provide divine wisdom for us in every exigency. The character and principle of all has been shown, all coming to light before the canon of Scripture closed. The attack of the enemy upon that testimony may vary in form, but the underlying principle in each case is laid bare by the word of God and provided against. True we need the power of the unction from the Holy One for spiritual discernment; but this is not only not denied us, but assured to us, if we will take the course prescribed: "Think of what I say, for the LORD will give thee understanding in all things" (2 Timothy 2:7, N.T.). This is a great comfort for faith; and let us beware of that state which Jude has to warn the saints of: "Ye who once knew all things" (Jude 1:5 N.T.). The passage in 2 Timothy 2:1-26 quoted above continues "Remember Jesus Christ raised from among the dead, of the seed of David, according to my glad tidings, in which I suffer even unto bonds as an evil doer; but the word of God is not bound." Then, after Paul has enjoined Timothy to put these things, and the solemn considerations of 2 Timothy 2:11-13, before the remembrance of his brethren, the peculiar form of the attack of the enemy is manifested. Coupled with impiety, we have the evil teaching of "Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who as to the truth have gone astray, saying that the resurrection has taken place already; and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Timothy 2:17-18). The course of the man of God is then clearly prescribed. But what is the character of this attack of the enemy? It is subversive of Christianity itself as being God's administration which is in faith (1 Timothy 1:4), and overthrowing the faith of some. It also denies the true character and course of the testimony. It therefore behoves us to pay close attention to the wisdom furnished us here in this whole passage and indeed in the whole epistle, and that in regard also of the testimony of God. In one word the apostle gives the true character of the testimony: "Be not therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but suffer evil along with the glad tidings, according to the power of God; Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, etc." (2 Timothy 1:8-9). This true character of the testimony of our Lord has been, in the wisdom of God for us, thrown upon the screen, so to speak, of Paul and his course in connection with it. How easily might the term "The testimony of our Lord" (not that it could do so truly) pass through our minds; but how arresting the words inseparably connected with it, "nor of me His prisoner!" What does this mean? Ah, it is the secret of the whole matter.

Timothy is called upon to remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead of the seed of David, according to his (Paul's) glad tidings; and then he adds, "In which I suffer even unto bonds as an evil doer." "Jesus Christ raised from among the dead." Now if the resurrection had taken place already as the heretics stated, it is clear that it would not have been added here by Paul, "I suffer unto bonds." No, Christ was raised, but not Paul yet; but on the contrary, he was suffering unto bonds as an evil doer in his prosecution of the testimony of our Lord. And so with us, in this poor

world, if the testimony we render be divorced from suffering, it proves itself not to be the testimony of our Lord and is, in effect, saying that the resurrection has taken place already. Thank God, one is assured that this is not so; but it is a truly exercising consideration in these days of conventional living and popular preaching. Has the salt of our responsibility lost its savour? The word remains, (John 17:14) "I have given them Thy word and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world." In everything, the enemy would seek to falsify this, in practice and in testimony.

Well, if Paul was bound, the word of God was not. He could not move freely about and preach it as once he had been able, now he was a prisoner; but he could endure: "For this cause I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Timothy 2:10). Does not this also give the true character of the testimony, the testimony of our Lord, as to its circumstances and spirit in these last days? Assuredly it does. When the Lord comes to take us from our post, the place He has set us in to "Trade while I am coming" (Luke 19:13, N.T.), it will be time enough for us to leave it and our occupation, conditioned as they are by but "a little power" (Revelation 3:8, N.T.). May we indeed, as that passage also speaks, "keep the word of His patience" (endurance). In Matthew 8:1-34 a brief outline of the passage of the testimony across the world, in the path of the blessed Lord is furnished. In verse 18, after the exhibition of His grace, fulfilling the prophecy of Esaias, "Himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases," he commands to "depart to the other side." Ah, that is it. At once his practical destitution is manifested in verse 20, as against the perhaps not insincere desire of the scribe to follow him: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the heavens roosting-places; but the Son of man has not where He may lay His head." Then comes the agitation of nature, which His word quells; and then on making the land full demon power is manifested in the two Gergesenes, "exceeding dangerous." This word is only otherwise used in 2 Timothy 3:1, of the last days: "In the last days, difficult days shall be there." Now no doubt Matthew 8:1-34 refers specially to the testimony rendered in connection with Israel, but in their great features of the natural and the supernatural these outline what Paul and we also have to meet in the maintenance of the testimony.

While proper christian warfare is carried on in the heavenlies, the place of our seat in Christ and our testimony, there is also the wide sphere of nature, where the natural man disports himself, but where our minds also often move when higher considerations should characterize us. And here it is necessary to distinguish between the action of a spirit using an apostate from the truth, and a christian who fails to judge himself according to the light vouchsafed to him. We may thus become ready tools to Satan, as Peter in Matthew 16:1-28, who, elevated perhaps by the revelation made to him, and in a kindly nature, refused the cross to His Master and was rebuked by Him as Satan: "Get thee behind Me, Satan." In the service of the Lord how easily may nature come in in unjudged motive, and the enemy take advantage of it to damage the work done. Well for us if the thoughts and intents of the heart are judged by the Word of God in all His service, as in all else. How apart was the blessed Master from the start of His service in "What have I to do with thee, woman? mine hour has not yet come" (John 2:4, N.T.); but how tenderly does He care and provide for her when His work is done, in "Woman, behold thy Son" designating the disciple whom He loved, and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother" (John 19:27).

Surely, the testimony of the Lord, in whatever little way we may have it entrusted to us, calls for the utmost watchfulness in this connection. How, too, has that testimony been clouded in perhaps some careless behaviour after the particular service has been rendered. Nature, while fully owned, or it is but apostatizing (see 1 Timothy 4:1-16), must not lead in the service of God. All the sources and occasions of our service should be scrutinized and judged by us surely. We can afford to wait HIS promptings and guidance in it all.

C. N. Snow.

God's Voice in the Scriptures.

"I know Whom I have believed."

They cannot hide from our souls the heavenly beams of our Father's revelation — God has spoken and His voice reaches the heart. It makes itself heard above the din and confusion of this world, and the strife and controversy of professing Christians. It gives rest and peace, strength and fixedness to the believing heart and mind. The opinions of men may perplex and confound — we may not be able to thread our way through the labyrinths of human systems of theology: but God's voice speaks in Holy Scripture — speaks to the heart — speaks to me. This is life and peace. It is all I want. Human writings may go now for what they are worth, seeing I have all I want in the ever-flowing fountain of inspiration — the peerless, precious volume of my God.

C. H. Mackintosh.

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