

WRITINGS OF NORMAN B HARRISON

by Norman B. Harrison

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Norman B. Harrison, compiled for study and devotional reading.

56 Chapters

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02. His Promised Inner Presence

03. His Incoming—our Salvation

04. His Indwelling—our Sanctification

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Chapter 2

01.00.1. HIS IN JOYOUS EXPERIENCE (PHILIPPIANS)

HIS

. . . IN JOYOUS EXPERIENCE The Christian's Joy Book

Paul's Epistle to the Philippians

by

Norman B. Harrison, D.D. Pastor, Bible Teacher and Evangelist Author of "His Salvation as Set Forth in the Book of Romans"

01.00.5. Introduction

Introduction

Practical-Historical-Analytical

The Practical Approach The Epistle to the Philippians has no doctrines to expound. It has no errors to correct; no issues to refute. It has a living Christ to introduce and commend to human need. Not a Christ disassociated from life's living, but a Christ experienced and proved in the utmost stress of life.

Christian doctrine such as one meets in the Epistle to the Romans is here transmuted into life and experience. In Romans we see the why and how of our salvation-its technique; in Philippians we see it at work, put to the test in life and action.

The difference of method and approach is much the same as when one studies a flower. We may take it to the laboratory to examine its structure and cellular secrets under the microscope; or we may go into the garden and see it in life, growing in simple beauty, exhaling its sweet fragrance. Free from scientific concern we see it as it is. It speaks to our heart, rather than to our head. Such is the Epistle to the Philippians. Yet, as the laboratory knowledge quickens the eye to detect added beauties in the garden, so the one who has mastered the doctrines of Romans will have the keener appreciation of Philippians as he detects these doctrines transmuted into living experience.

The Need of Knowing God

Man today knows something of everything-everything but God. Through a multiplication of schools and books, of papers and magazines, of mechanical inventions and devices, the heavens above, the earth beneath, the facts and forces at work around us, all things perceivable by the five senses, have become matters of universal knowledge. Yet, even today, man is still ignorant of God and His Christ. True today, as when John first spoke them, are the words, "There standeth one among you, whom ye know not" (John 1:26). Men of our day have not seen "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2Co 4:6). The result is gross ignorance, darkness and blindness.

There is a remedy for this in the message to the Philippians. Here is the Christ of God, as found of those who trusted Him, as experienced by men like ourselves; lifting, strengthening, cheering; proving Himself the greatest boon of life. Such experimental knowledge is incontrovertible. It is the greatest need of our day.

Proving Christ Under Test

Philippians is the furthest removed from theorizing. Paul has his feet on the ground all the while. Through years of adversities and testings, the stress of which is still upon him, he writes of the proven, practical value of Christ to the one who has learned to appropriate Him under all circumstances. There has been ample occasion for disillusioning if this faith were mythical or mental; but instead, each new tensity of testing but added to his clarity of conviction and tenacity

of trust. Of purpose Paul was compelled to fathom the deepest of waters that he might prove the worth of Christian experience to the very depths and bring the findings back to us. What Paul found of Christ, any child of God's grace can prove for himself today. The Antidote for False Faith

Modern unbelief in its varied forms must stand baffled and abashed before the Christ of Philippians. Here He is, beyond the reach of false theories that would alter His person or limit His power; the real Christ, the historic Christ, the living Christ of today, built, beyond misrepresentation, into human experience.

The life that has possessed itself of such experience is safe. It knows the Son of God. It has plumbed spiritual reality. By contrast it knows the counterfeit. It will not leave the Living Bread for proffered husks. This soul-anchorage of experimental certainty is the one safe refuge for these perilous, delusive days.

Many examples could be cited. We give but one that comes to us through a ministerial friend. A preacher of the Gospel went abroad for further study. He spent some years in such institutions and under such instruction as have served to undermine the evangelical faith of many. Upon his return it was observed that he preached the old Gospel of Grace, as the power of God unto salvation, with the same fervor and the same fidelity. Asked how this came to be, his reply ran somewhat thus: "When a man has known Christ in His Word, has met Him face to face on his knees, has proved Him faithful in his hours of need, he cannot turn his back on his Saviour for any modern infidelity."

How many disciples would the cults draw away by their vagaries if all had a Pauline experience of Christ, as reflected in his Philippian Epistle? It would make us moderns a race of spiritual stalwarts; "steadfast, unmovable," "faithful unto death," like the sainted Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. Threatened with martyrdom at the age of ninety-five, unless he renounced his faith in Christ, Polycarp gave as his reply: "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any injury. How then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" With a prayer for his slayers he gave up his life for the One whom he had known and loved and served. May his spiritual seed increase.

Section 2-The Historical Approach

From Prison to Prison: Nevertheless "Rejoice" The Philippian Church came to its birth in a prison at Philippi. The Philippian Epistle found birth some ten years later in a prison at Rome. The intervening years have been tense with the vicissitudes of privation and persecution, of hardship and suffering. It is this setting of circumstances that floods the message of the Epistle with a wealth of meaning. What is it that causes one thus circumstanced to continually rejoice? And to call on others to rejoice? If the Christian faith has in it that which finds normal expression in such Christian experience, we may well ask ourselves whether our experience measures up to the standard. Is ours the real and the genuine? By Divine Constraint The story of the entrance of the Gospel into Europe is one of divine interposition. Read Acts 16:6-12. Man did not plan it. His thought was to continue in Asia. But they "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost" so to do. They attempted to enter another Asiatic province, "but the Spirit suffered them not." Then appeared "a man of Macedonia" with a clear call, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." "And immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to

preach the Gospel unto them.” (The “we” in the narrative indicates that Luke, the writer, has now joined Paul and Silas).

They were following the Lord. It was His plan and undertaking; His, too, was the responsibility. In the Lord’s work the prime requisite is that we know we are in His ordering. Then He goes before, and we but follow Him. Then we can face any and all difficulties, undiscouraged and undismayed. Christian worker, “follower” of the Lord Jesus, have you the daily sense of being in His will? Of really following His leading?

Woman’s Place of Prominence The narration of the Gospel’s beginnings at Philippi next calls our attention to the prominence of women in its reception. Read Acts 16:13-18.

1. Certain women met regularly for prayer (Acts 16:13). It would seem that the Gospel owed its rooting at Philippi to this prayer gathering. Nay, more; the Lord’s calling of His messengers into Europe is in response to this prayer. Eternity will have a great story to tell of the trophies, down through the centuries, won by the fidelity of women in prayer.

2. Lydia, a business woman from Thyatira in Asia Minor, becomes the first convert, the Lord opening her heart to His Word (Acts 16:14), and she has the added joy, as many another wife and mother since, of seeing her entire household become a part of the household of God (Acts 16:15).

3. A young woman, demon-possessed (Acts 16:16), yet discerning the divine nature and saving power of the Gospel message (Acts 16:17), is delivered from bondage “in the Name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 16:18). In keeping with the place taken by women in the planting of the Philippian Church is the mention of them in the letter.

Whereas but one man of Philippi is alluded to, namely Clement, two women, Euodias and Syntyche, are mentioned by name (Php 4:2), followed by a touching reference to the helpfulness of the women; “Help those women which laboured with me in the Gospel” (Php 4:3). All this is prophetic of the state of liberty and esteem into which the Gospel has brought womankind in Europe and America and wherever its message has sounded forth, in contrast to her persisting degradation under heathenism.

Through Persecution and Imprisonment

Read Acts 16:19-40. The conversion of the damsel, through the monetary loss to her masters, occasioned the arrest of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:19); but it also occasioned the experience that is most deeply characteristic of the Philippian Church and the message concerning Christian experience that is now passed on by the Apostle, through them, to all posterity.

Six noteworthy results are discernible:

1. Paul and Silas, the evangelists, had opportunity to show the temper of the Christian faith while suffering under the indignities and physical smartings of their unjust treatment (Acts 16:19-25). The “many stripes laid upon them” had left them with bleeding backs. They were in torture, unable to sleep. At midnight they were heard “praying and singing praises unto God.”

It was the turning-point of the cause of Christ in Philippi. Had they complained; had they claimed their citizenship rights and called for their release; had they simply failed to overflow with holy joy,

how different the story. Doubtless no Church would have been established; perhaps no male convert in that city, and a group of women left to carry on a prayer meeting.

2. God heard and heeded, in a remarkable manner, attesting His approval of His servants and His pleasure in their praises (Acts 16:26). Their preaching of the Gospel was confirmed; it was “not in word only, but also in power” (1Th 1:5). Hitherto man had been speaking; now God has spoken.

Just as electricity yields its power to the law of a perfect contact, a complete circuit, so the power of God manifested itself in response to the spontaneous joy and praise of His servants. What this means to Him- joy under suffering akin to His own Son’s-we humans have yet to learn. So dear to Him is the continual “sacrifice of praise to God,” it should never, under any circumstance, suffer extinction upon the altar of our lips. Read Heb 13:15.

3. The Jailor was so profoundly impressed that he straightway sought the way of salvation (Acts 16:27-34). Note the earnest directness of his question, “What must I do to be saved?” It has voiced the hunger-cry of many thousands of souls since his day. And the simplicity of the apostolic direction, whereby he found peace in his Saviour, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” has pointed the way for thousands of thousands of faltering feet down through the centuries.

But the promise was more inclusive: “Thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

The divine plan and provision is “A Lamb for an house” (Exo 12:3). Thus the word of the Lord came savingly to the jailor “and to all that were in his house.” A whole family saved for Christ; their life and influence added to His cause at Philippi.

Was it this midnight experience that assured the first Church in Europe? We think so. We have always surmised that the jailor became its first Elder, and that gathered around the nucleus of this household, added to that of Lydia, many saints were drawn to a like sound faith and satisfying experience.

Query: Have we in our lives that vital something of Christ, which the jailor saw in Paul and Silas, to cause an unsaved soul to seek and find the Saviour?

4. The Community, from the rulers down, had a beautiful demonstration of the quiet confidence and unashamed dignity of the Christian life (Acts 16:35-40). These servants of Christ are no criminals. Citizens of the earthly realm, as well as the heavenly, they have acted within their rights. Mistreated, they are now vindicated, before leaving the prison and finally departing from the city.

5. The Church at Philippi received an impress that sufficed to turn its life into the channel of deep Christian experience and satisfying Christian fellowship. In all the galaxy of New Testament Churches this at Philippi is outstanding for the manifest exemplification of the grace of God in their midst.

6. The Apostle and the Philippian Church are drawn together in a sympathetic bond, strengthening through the years. They suffered together at the start; they share each other’s sufferings to the end. The Apostle was poor, so also were the Philippians; yet out of their poverty, such was the tender tie of sympathy, they sent loving help, as did no other Church, “once and again” (Php 4:15-16).

All this explains much of the personal and experimental nature of the Epistle we are studying.

“Rejoice”-the Dominant Note In reading the Epistle its recurrent note of “Rejoice” constantly resounds in the ear of the soul. Some eighteen times it occurs in varying forms. Surely it is the soul of our faith sounding out its call to all who follow our blessed Lord-“Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice.”

Between that first Philippian prison experience and the one now his as he writes from Rome, Paul had undergone a series of almost unbelievable severities. They are set out before us in 2Co 11:23-32. One is amazed as he reflects upon all this being packed into ten years of one man's life as he went about preaching the Gospel. Were this all, where were the joy? Nothing here to produce it! But this is far from all. This is superficial-the mere experience “in the body.” There is another sphere of experience-“in the Lord.” By a divine paradox what humanly spells sorrow and suffering, “in Him” is turned to joy and peace.

It is this experience that Paul is now, in his letter, seeking to share with the Philippians, who so sympathetically shared his sorrows. An Invincible Faith

If this is the Christian faith, it is invincible. No Roman tyrant, no prison cell, no privation, no combination of circumstance, can touch or cut off the flow of experience “in the Lord.” While they are doing their worst against His servants, He can continue to do for them His best. This more than compensates.

Our Lord Jesus, confronted by the most terrible experiences of the Cross, while men and Satan were cruelly and unjustly plotting against Him, could speak of “My peace” (John 14:27) and “My joy” (John 15:11), as imperishable realities He was bequeathing in that very hour to His followers-all because He was Himself “in the Father” (John 14:10), His inexhaustible source of supply.

So in the early Church: “They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name” (Acts 5:41).

It was this that made the Church invincible in martyr days: They gave themselves to death, while their tormentors witnessed in them a strange joy and exaltation of spirit. They were rejoicing “in the Lord.” Of this the Scriptures often speak. E.g.

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (Jas 1:2-4).

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified” (1Pe 4:12-14).

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than

conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:35-39).

Section 3-The Analytical Approach

The Contents Reduced to Chart

We turn our attention now to the actual contents of the Epistle Paul wrote to these Philippians, the background of which we have already examined. What is it about? What does it seek to say to them, and through them to us?

Believing that the Holy Spirit has so prompted and guided the writing as to give to us a definite deliverance upon a theme of vital concern to all followers of Christ, we owe it to Him to adopt a mode of approach that will best bring to our minds what He Himself had in mind. This cannot be accomplished at a glance, nor yet by a cursory reading.

Read; Re-Read; Repeat the Reading

We wish to insist upon this method. Do not read this little treatise until you have treated fairly the Epistle it seeks to elucidate.

First-Read it. Second-Read it again. Third-Repeat the reading as frequently as may be possible while engaged in the study.

One of the most serious mistakes, a truly fatal one, in Bible study, is to suppose that one knows what is in a Scripture because he has read it. The experience of Bible students is entirely to the contrary. Such is the hidden wealth of God's Word that new light breaks forth from its pages after years of frequent meditation and familiar acquaintance. To have read it is to merely know its structure, its outer form of words, what it says on the surface. We say we "know" a man upon once meeting him. In reality we scarce know him at all, only his form and appearance. The wife, after years of intimacy, may truthfully affirm her knowledge of him.

The necessity for re-reading lies in us-to develop a capacity for seeing the truth that is there. We had once a parishioner who was condemned, for the sake of his eyes, to sit for days in the darkened rooms of his home. We called to see him. Upon entering, we could see nothing, but stumbled our way through the furniture to a chair. Our conversation was in the dark. We supposed it would continue to be so. Did we not have all the light available? But no. After some fifteen or twenty minutes a new light suddenly seemed to break. We were amazed. We began to see things, and fairly clearly. We now saw the features of our friend whose voice we had heard hitherto. It was a happy experience, a reward for tarrying in his presence.

Our spiritual eye is subject to a like adjustment to truth. We err grievously when we judge the truth in a portion of God's Word by what we see in a first hurried reading. Listen longer to His voice; you'll soon see the face of Him who speaks.

Read it again-continue to expose the mind, the retina of the soul, to its rays of truth. You will see more. Note carefully what you see. Repeat, again, and again; and perhaps suddenly, perhaps

gradually, a new light seems to break, a second sight seems to come. You wonder you did not see it before. The book, or portion, is yours; you “know” it.

A suggestion: Time yourself in the reading of Philippians. How long does it take you? The writer has asked this of audiences. Some report, “Twenty minutes”; others, “Only twelve minutes.” The average is about sixteen minutes. Not long to spend, and re-spend, in knowing God’s mind on a great Christian theme. Any one can afford that. If they think they cannot they do not deserve the Name they bear.

Three Chief Considerations The writer, in following the method here recommended -one open to all who can read-was impressed as he read and re-read, with three considerations of prime importance in grasping the contents:

1. The Theme. What is it about? Very evidently it is not dealing with doctrine-doctrinal discussion is entirely lacking. Nor yet with error-there is scarcely any warning. Nor is it concerned with unworthy living-the very word “sin” is noticeably absent. It is a personal letter familiarly presenting the essential elements of vital Christian living.

Its theme is Christian Experience-what should be, and may be, the experience of the believer in the Lord, under whatever circumstances.

2. “Christ” the Divine Source. A further reading calls attention to another feature-the prominence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Seventy times in this brief Epistle reference is made to Him by name or by pronoun. The teaching is clear and striking. Christian Experience is not a thing in itself. Christian Experience is a matter of relationship to Christ. He is its Source.

Take two illustrations, of many, from the Epistle:

(1) The exhortation to “Rejoice”; we are not bidden to rejoice in or of ourselves, nor in our circumstances, nor apart from Him, but in Him-“Rejoice in the Lord.”

(2) Christian attainment is a matter not of independent effort on our part but of entrance into His attainment for us-“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain,” etc. (Php 3:10-11).

In other words, the Christian life is the furthest possible from being a mere system of ethics, a question of doing right. It is a life that flows from Him and finds its rightness in Him.

Blind ignorance of this fact has caused many to fatally misjudge the Christian faith, and many more to call themselves Christians when they were not at all-merely moralists, strangers to the living Christ.

So extremely vital is this that we desire to stress it by quoting from Masson’s remarkable critique in condemnation of Carlyle’s misconception of the Christian faith:

“Most important under this head, of course, is Carlyle’s attitude towards the Christian religion. Here it is necessary that I should be precise. Christianity, as it has been professed by all the greatest spirits that have really believed in it anywhere on earth through the nineteen centuries of its duration, has consisted of two things, united but distinguishable-a metaphysic, or system of

doctrines respecting the relations of God to man, and an ethic, or system of instructions for human conduct. Now, the essence of Christianity, when it offers itself as a supernatural revelation, lies, I hold, in its metaphysic. It lies in the belief that at a particular time in the history of mankind a miraculous shaft of light out of the unseen infinitude struck our earth in Judea, revealing to the Jews first, and afterwards to the Gentiles, certain things about the Divine Being and His procedure with men which men could never have found out for themselves, in the form of certain definite doctrines or propositions astonishing and almost stunning the mere human reason.

“The ethic without this metaphysic may call itself Christianity, but is not, I hold, Christianity in any sense worth so special a name. To tell men, however earnestly, not to tell lies, not to commit fraud, to be temperate, honest, truthful, merciful, even to be humble, pious and God-fearing, is very good gospel; but it did not require the events of Judea, as Christian theology interprets them, to bring that gospel into the world. The modern preacher who sermonizes always on the ethic and omits the accompanying metaphysic may sophisticate himself into a belief that he is preaching Christianity, but is preaching no such thing. Wherever Christianity has been of real effect in the world, and has made real way for its own ethic, it has been by its metaphysic-that set of doctrines respecting things supernatural which was to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.” *

* From “Carlyle, Personally and in His Writings,” by David Masson, pp. 84-86

This finding concerning Christ-the central key position assigned to Him in the unfolding of the theme-prompts a revision of our wording, from “Christian Experience” to “Christ in Christian Experience.”

3. “Mind” the Human Channel. Upon re-reading, our attention is arrested by the recurrence of the word “mind.” It appears twelve times in the English translation, while the Greek student finds it supported by a wealth of reference to the inner state or thought-life of man.

It is the human key to Christian Experience. Christian Experience flows from Christ as its Source; it flows through the mind of man as its Channel. It is experienced through the mind yielded to Him.

Christian psychology contemplates a mind made over- “born again”-made responsive to the mind of God. Thinking with God, we will then act in harmony with Him, and consequently with each other-“like-minded.” Only as we are “transformed by the renewing of our mind” will we “prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom 12:2).

This is the grip God wants to get upon us.

We cannot get into the stream of God’s will and purpose, reflecting His likeness, until our minds become the willing channel of His thought-currents. Chart. See opposite page.

PHILIPPIANS

CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

CHRIST - The Source MIND - The Channel

Php 1:1-30

Php 2:1-30

Php 3:1-21

Php 4:1-23

WHERE HE IS

WHAT HE IS

HIS MIND IN US

APPEAL

Sectional Chart - Introductory

Let us now begin to form our findings into a Chart, thus to visualize and make definite the progress of our study. Taking the results of our reading thus far to be the outstanding features of the Epistle, we incorporate them into the headlines of the chart.

Next, the Chapter divisions. It is not often the case that the chapters mark the natural and logical divisions throughout a book, but our reading persuades us that this is true of Philipians. So in the next space under the headlines we place the four chapters, ranging across the chart.

Three Corresponding Questions

Having found what we conceive to be the main thought-currents, we now propose to ourselves three questions bearing upon them, the answers to which will reveal to us their development through the successive chapters.

1. Since Christ is central to Christian Experience; since it grows out of relationship to Him, what is that relationship? That is, Where is Christ? Where is He pictured as being with relationship to us in each succeeding chapter?

Any one can answer the question, Where is Christ? He is in Heaven (Acts 1:11; Heb 9:24). But He is also here with us, nay, in us (Mat 28:20; Eph 3:17). One can readily see that these two positions of Christ, heavenly and earthly, represent two entirely different relationships for us and therefore two very different possibilities and aspects of Christian Experience. What Christ does for us because He is dwelling in us is very different from what He does for us from Heaven.

Then there is the historic Christ, the Christ of the Gospels, He who lived here among us in the past. Likewise, the prophetic Christ, He who is to be revealed in the future.

Here are four aspects of Christ as He relates Himself to His followers-within, behind, before, above. As we read the Epistle it becomes evident that these four aspects, or angles of relationship, determine the varying viewpoint of Christ in each of its four chapters.

And these four will be found to yield for us four phases of Christian Experience. They are the four phases essential in the mind of the Holy Spirit to the rounding out of Christian character.

2. A second question: Since Christ is the Source of Christian Experience and He relates Himself to us for this purpose in the four aspects above mentioned, What is He to us in these successive

relationships? What does He bring into our lives? Evidently this question, asked of each of the four chapters, will bring us into the very heart of the teaching.

3. A third question: Since our Christian Experience progresses in terms of a transformed mind, made over by relationship to Christ, What mind does He beget in us in these successive relationships? This question is the focal-point for the definite results we may expect to accrue to us in our experience of Christ.

When we have ranged these three questions down the left side of the chart, and added a space for the summing up of the Appeal, we have completed the skeleton of our chart.

The answers to these questions are to be filled in, chapter by chapter, as we proceed with our study. A Four-Fold Arrangement Each chapter will receive a uniform treatment, consisting of:

1. Outline.
2. Chart.
3. Note.
4. Comment.

We earnestly urge that each chapter be read through, thoughtfully and prayerfully, with the Outline, before proceeding with the further features of elucidation.

01.01. Christ the Life of Life

Christ the Life of Life The Inward Look

Php 1:1-30

Outline

1- The Salutation, Php 1:1-2.

a-By Servants of Jesus Christ (Php 1:1 a),

b-To Saints in Christ Jesus (Php 1:1 b),

c-From God and the Lord Jesus Christ (Php 1:2). Conveying Grace and Peace.

2- Paul the Pastor, Php 1:3-11.

a-His Prayerful Remembrance of Them (past) (Php 1:3-5). b-His Confident Expectation for Them (future) (Php 1:6). c-His Loving Devotion to Them (present) (Php 1:7-8). d-His Prayer for Their Spiritual Progress (Php 1:9-11).

A four-fold petition: a love so discerning (Php 1:9) - that they choose only the excellent (Php 1:10 a)-thus being sincere (in character) and without offense (in conduct) (Php 1:10 b)-thus made complete in the fruitage of righteousness (Php 1:11).

3- Paul the Prisoner, Php 1:12-30.

His Supreme Concern for the Gospel Outweighs All Other Considerations.

a-He Rejoices that his Bonds have furthered the Gospel (Php 1:12-18).

(1) Giving it Wider Publicity (Php 1:13).

(2) Emboldening others to Speak without Fear (Php 1:14).

(3) Even though with Mixed and Varying Motives (Php 1:15-17).

(4) Nevertheless Christ is Preached (Php 1:18).

b-He is Care-free whether his Imprisonment Issues in Life or Death (Php 1:19-24).

(1) In either case Christ shall be Magnified (Php 1:19-20).

(2a) To Live is "Christ" (Php 1:21-23)

(2b) To Die is "To Be with Christ" (Php 1:21-23)

(3) While the latter is "Far Better" for him (Php 1:23 b), the former is "More Needful" for them (Php 1:24). c-He is Confident of "Continuing" that he may be of Service to them (Php 1:24-26). d-He Exhorts them to Stand Fast in the Face of Suffering (Php 1:27-30).

PHILIPPIANS

CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

CHRIST - The Source MIND - The Channel

Php 1:1-30

Php 2:1-30

Php 3:1-21

Php 4:1-23

WHERE HE IS

WITHIN US PERSONAL

WHAT HE IS

OUR LIFE Php 1:21

HIS MIND IN US

GOSPEL MIND Php 1:5, Php 1:7, Php 1:12, Php 1:17, Php 1:27

APPEAL

SURRENDER TO HIM SUFFER FOR HIM

Sectional Chart - Chapter 1

We are to find and summarize the answer Chapter 1 gives to the three questions set for us in the left-hand column of the chart.

1-WHERE HE IS. This chapter presents Christ as WITHIN US. It is the INWARD LOOK.

Whether Paul speaks of the Philippians' experience of Christ or of his own, the Source of that experience is a Christ dwelling within the heart that believes and trusts Him. We have a Christ PERSONAL to each one of His followers.

It is in this fact that the doctrine of Romans finds its climax- Rom 8:1-39. The experience of Philippians begins where the doctrine of Romans leaves off.

Now note carefully: Christ WITHIN is the only place where Christian experience can begin. Many say they believe in Christ. They do believe in the Christ of history- the Christ of Bethlehem, Galilee and Judea, and Calvary- but it is only an HISTORICAL FAITH, just as we believe any fact of history.

I believe that Caesar lived and wrought, but all that I believe of him has never affected or changed my life a particle; he is still back yonder in history. So it is with historical faith in Christ. He remains outside of me, and apart from me-merely an historical personage.

But when I believe ON Him, with a SAVING FAITH. He more than saves me; He moves into my life and becomes a part of me. This is the beginning of Christian experience. There is no substitute.

Dear reader, do you know this personal Christ? Has He come in? And coming in, has He opened this fountain of the experience of Himself in your nature?

“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be IN HIM a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38). That is, from “within him.” As this tact unfolds in experience, how wondrously PERSONAL He becomes. Christ is in Heaven; yes. Christ is common to all Christians; yes. But-He is mine. He is all mine, personal to me. As I kneel in prayer, though a thousand others be similarly engaged, I do not share my Christ with them, claiming but a thousandth of His thought, His time, attention and love. I have it all, undivided. He is mine, all mine. Yet this is just as true in the experience of the other thousand, if they are truly His. How wonderful!

2. WHAT HE IS. There within He is OUR LIFE. See Php 1:21.

In salvation He imparts His life to us-we who were “dead in trespasses and sins”; now WE LIVE IN HIM. But by His indwelling presence He imparts Himself to us; now HE LIVES IN US. And that for practical purposes. He becomes the ROOT of our living, and we say with Paul, “. . . not I [that live], but Christ that liveth in me” (Gal 2:20). Life finds a new center, takes on a new purpose in its outgoings. It views everything from a new focal-point. “For to me to live is Christ” (Php 1:21).

That is Christian experience realized. How is it with you, dear reader? Do these words of Paul falter upon your lips for lack of reality? Let Christ be to you both the Source of life and the Center of life’s living and you too will soon express your spiritual biography in these self same words.

3. His MIND IN US. He lives in us. Then, He thinks and wills in us. The result-we have His own temper of mind; we are interested in that which interests Him.

Christ’s supreme interest is THE GOSPEL. It is the epitome of His incarnation, life, death and present intercession for its furtherance.

This mind is perpetuated in Paul. Personal interests, or reversals in prison, cannot for one moment dislodge it from its dominance of his life. Six times the word “Gospel” occurs in the five verses: Php 1:5; Php 1:7; Php 1:12; Php 1:17; Php 1:27. Still more is his thought saturated with it. Nothing can swerve him from it. It is not only on his mind; it is his mind, even as it is the mind of Christ. It should be the mind of every Christian. It WILL BE as Christ comes to normal experience in us.

1-The Salutation, Php 1:1-2

Note

Contrary to his usual custom, Paul does not refer to himself as “an apostle,” but only as a “SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST” (Php 1:1 a). This for three reasons:

First, and primarily, he is joined with Timothy in the salutation (see opening words of First and Second Thessalonians for similar variation).

Second, he has no need to defend or exercise his apostolic authority with this Church.

Third, as a servant of Jesus Christ he is at once on common ground with his readers; no barrier of position between them; no reason why they too, as servants, should not share the experience of Christ of which he writes.

“SAINTS in CHRIST JESUS at PHILIPPI” (Php 1:1 b). A dual description that tells the whole story. God’s people LIVE in Christ; the relationship is VITAL. They RESIDE on earth; the place is INCIDENTAL.

This duality is the key to victorious living. “In Me . . . peace. In the world . . . tribulation; but . . . I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). To live in the world is to be subject to its vicissitudes, which are many. To live in Christ, merely resident in the world, is to live in His complete, perpetual victory.

“In” Christ is the key expression of Ephesians, unlocking its lofty teachings. Philippians, following, immediately picks up this heavenly note and carries it into the sphere of earthly living, “at” Philippi or wherever it be.

“THE BISHOPS AND DEACONS” (Php 1:1 c). Whatever purpose prompted their special mention as in no other Church Epistle, we are grateful to the Spirit for the knowledge that the Philippian Church was fully manned, that it included men found worthy of these official positions. “Bishops” is used interchangeably with “Elders” (Cf. Acts 20:17 with Acts 20:28; 1Ti 3:1-2 with 1Ti 5:17; Tit 1:5-6 with Tit 1:7). They, as spiritual “Overseers,” with the Deacons, constituted the local officary.

“GRACE” AND “PEACE” (Php 1:2). This is the divine order, never the reverse. There is no peace to a man in his natural state. First he must receive the Grace from God that provided salvation and from the Lord Jesus Christ that purchased it; then follows Peace (Eph 2:4-8; Eph 2:13-15). The divine order, logical and chronological, is also the experimental.

Comment

HUMILITY OF SERVICE VERSUS PRIDE OF POSITION.

Paul’s first word, styling himself a servant, pushing his apostolic position wholly out of sight, opened every heart to a cordial reception of his message. If he was a servant, how much more should they all be. They would grow in Christian grace together.

“Flesh” ever prides itself in position, thus claiming the attention of men, but it is a cheap substitute for spiritual power in service. The Church is languishing under it. The parading of position is a covering for the lack of power. Let service be the criterion-what changes would follow.

It is thoroughly un-Christian as well as un-Christlike. Service is meant to be the Christian criterion of standing: “Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you” (John 13:13-15). See also Mat 20:26-27. And one day, let us note well, the service test will be applied, with startling results:

“But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first” (Mat 19:30).

“His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Mat 25:21).

“JOY” AND “HAPPINESS”-A VITAL DISTINCTION. The Christian’s dual sphere of life, “in Christ Jesus at . . .” involves a paradox of experience. He may have Joy in the Lord while utterly lacking in Happiness at (the place of his residence). The paradox rests upon the separateness of the two spheres.

Happiness is external. Etymologically, it is derived from “happenings.” So is it practically. If the external happenings of life suit us, we say we are “happy.” If they shift or become uncertain, we are unhappy. It is a miserable chameleon existence. Yet it is the lot of all who merely live “at” their physical abode.

Joy is inward. It is “in the Lord”-in the inner sphere of the heart where He indwells. Its source is spiritual. Its resources are independent of circumstance. The degree of joy is often heightened and accentuated by the adversity of circumstance.

Nor is this accentuation merely subjective or psychological. “Joy in the Lord” is joy from the Lord Himself. He pours in His exhaustless joy at the hour of need. It was so with Paul and Silas suffering in jail at midnight. It was so with thousands of His martyrs, dying in His name, their faces lit up with heavenly light. It has been so with unknown and uncounted multitudes, plodding on against earth’s unequal odds.

It is not a call to “Endure” under adversity. That is the best philosophy the world has to offer. Christianity’s call is to “Rejoice.” And it has a Cause, personal and precious, adequate to secure this effect for all who live in Him.

This distinction is at the root of the bold, positive assertion of Rom 8:28, “We KNOW that all things work together for good to them that love God.”

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS THE ONLY KNOWN SOLUTION FOR THE MISERY OF SHIFTING CIRCUMSTANCE. ITS SECRET SPRINGS OF REJOICING ARE ABOVE EARTH’S VICISSITUDES. SHAME ON US, CHRISTIAN BROTHERS, IF WE FAIL TO RADIATE OUR LORD’S PERENNIAL JOY.

2-Paul the Pastor, Php 1:3-11

Note

Here is an inspired glimpse of a pastor’s relation to his people, the more remarkable because Paul had not been locally present with them for ten years.

1. A PAST REMEMBRANCE (Php 1:3-5). This embraces:

- (a) a thankfulness to God for them;
- (b) a faithfulness in prayer;
- (c) a joyful petitioning on their behalf;

(d) all rooted in a continuous fellowship in the Gospel.

2. A FUTURE EXPECTATION (Php 1:6). A pastor’s confidence is that, as he works, the Lord works also and will continue His work, carrying it to completion, “until the day of Jesus Christ.”

3. A PRESENT DEVOTION (Php 1:7-8). He still has them in his pastor-heart (Php 1:7 a). The bond is mutual. As for them, they are fellow-partakers of all his experiences (Php 1:7 b). As for him, he longs for them with a “tender yearning” more than human—that of Jesus Christ in him (Php 1:8).

4. A PRAYER FOR THEIR SPIRITUAL PROGRESS, athrob with warmth and tenderness, embodies his pastoral concern for them (Php 1:9-11). See Outline.

Comment

WHEN DOES PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY CEASE?

Ten years had elapsed since Paul ministered among these people. Yet he calls God to witness that in this interval he had not only retained his love for them but had never ceased to pray for them. What a tribute to the pastoral tie! What vitality attaches to it. Ten years separated, yet most truly united.

Have I rightly interpreted my ministerial office? Could God intend that spiritual roots, so richly intertwined through years of sacred intimacy, should suddenly be uprooted by some providential removal, the spiritual ties be severed, the prayer responsibility cease? Never.

The pastoral office, as ordained of God, is perpetual. Its responsibilities know no bounds; they reach into eternity. God grant us hearts, with Paul, large enough to hold the cumulative congregation of the entire span of our ministry, with faithfulness to uphold them in prayer to a triumphant end.

MAKING MINISTERS. Unquestionably these Philippians, by their “fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until now,” had contributed to Paul’s spiritual sturdiness and stoutness of heart to a degree beyond compute. He prized it highly; it was precious to him. But for it he might have failed. What their fellowship did for him was bread cast upon the waters, now returning to them in the experimental truths of this Epistle.

It has ever been so. The writer rejoices to recall the many saints to whom he has ministered, whose deep spiritual life-currents have constantly flowed into his own soul through Christian fellowship, who had the Gospel always upon their hearts, who talked freely of the things of Christ, who prayed as faithfully for him as he for them. Such are a spiritual tonic. They are “the salt” of the present situation in the Church. Should a minister be caught by the insidious under-currents of thought in our day and drift from his Gospel moorings into the “modern” waters of doubt and unbelief, let “the saints in Christ Jesus” devote themselves to definite believing prayer, coupled with loving fellowship in spiritual things, and our faithful God will bring him back.

THE CHRISTIAN WORKER’S CONFIDENCE is that results are not limited to his efforts, that as he works Christ works too, and will carry the work to completion (Php 1:6). It is the confidence of the sower that, as he scatters his seed, God will use soil, sunshine and shower to cause it to spring up into an abundant harvest.

THE SECRET OF PASTORAL SUCCESS lies nowhere so much as in having his people in his heart (Php 1:7). Genuine love is the price of his success. The mother pays it in the home, and succeeds with her task; he must pay it in his parish.

Through it the mother finds her abundant compensations; so must he-and without them any salary is poor pay. Love is its own reward.

THE HEART OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER-SINCERITY. From Paul's prayer we select but one word for meditation -"sincere" (Php 1:10).

The Greek is a picture-word, occurring only here. It means "clear to the light," as when one holds up a bottle of honey and the light streams through unobstructed. Subjected to test it is just what it seems to be, genuine through and through. So is the Christian with abounding love in the heart (Php 1:9), cleansed from within out, conscious of nothing to conceal, an open book of God's grace. He is just what he appears to be; he appears to be just what he is. God give us more through-and-through Christians.

Our word "sincere" tells the same story, though derived through the Latin, from the words "sine cere," meaning "without wax." Its practical derivation was in this way: In the making of furniture, wax was used to fill in pitch-pockets and conceal imperfections. Thus treated, it looked well for sale; but hard usage revealed the covered-up fact- it was "in-sin-cere," not without wax.

So honest dealers came to write upon their wares, "sine cere," the assurance of genuineness, nothing to conceal.

Christian, are you living so close to your Lord, in that fellowship with Him and fellow-believers wherein His blood keeps cleansing from all sin (1Jn 1:7), that you can write "sincere" over every phase of character and conduct?

3-Paul the Prisoner, Php 1:12-30

Note

The capabilities of the Christian faith to triumph under all circumstances come into clear relief in Paul's account of his imprisonment. There is here no suggestion of defeat. The body is bound; the spirit is free.

1. His ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GOSPEL (Php 1:12-18). It has been furthered (Php 1:12). The Good News has had an unusual hearing (Php 1:13). It has been preached more boldly (Php 1:14), even though with a mixture of motives (Php 1:15-17), yet in it all the magnifying of Christ makes His servant rejoice (Php 1:18).

2. His ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS (Php 1:15-16). These men were envious of Paul and preached in a spirit of envy, contention and insincerity, but by it all the servant of Christ was unaffected. "Great peace have they that love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

3. His ATTITUDE TOWARD HIMSELF, throughout this narration, is one of self-forgetfulness. It is the priceless by-product of absorbing interest in a great Cause.

4. His ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS RELEASE (Php 1:19-26). In thought of self (Php 1:19-20 a)-really forgetfulness of self in zeal for Christ (Php 1:20 b)-he has no choice between life and death (Php 1:20 c).

If he lives-to live is Christ (Php 1:21 a). If he dies-it is the gain of being with Christ (Php 1:21 b, Php 1:23 b), and the prospect arouses in him "a desire to depart" (Php 1:23 a).

However, in thought of them, he is left "in a strait betwixt the two" possible outcomes. As he considers their need of him (Php 1:24), he is moved to confidence that he will continue with them for their "furtherance and joy of faith" (Php 1:25), causing them "to rejoice in Jesus Christ over his coming to them again" (Php 1:26).

5. HIS EXHORTATION TO STEADFASTNESS (Php 1:27-30). "Only"-never mind what happens-the one matter of chief moment is, that their "walk as citizens" of the heavenly state be worthy of the Gospel of Christ (Php 1:27 a), that, whatever the Apostle's lot, he may know of their steadfast-ness, striving together as one man-"in one spirit, with one soul"-for the faith of the Gospel" (Php 1:27 b).

That the Philippians are unterrified in the face of their enemies should be a double token: "of their perdition, but of your salvation" (Php 1:28). To them is being given the double honor: to believe on Him and to suffer for Him (Php 1:29). And in this they are following in the footsteps of the great Apostle (Php 1:30).

Note further: At this point in the Exhortation we reach the transition to Chapter 2. Through the mind, humbly to accept their sufferings, they will also follow in the footsteps of their Lord and Saviour.

Comment

ABSORPTION IN A GREAT CAUSE: THE SECRET OF SUCCESS. With Paul the Gospel was so much greater than himself and so much more absorbing than any or all of his interests.

Herein lay his success, even in prison. "I do all things for the Gospel," we hear him say; and he did. What could Caesar's chains do with such a man? Nothing! He is still succeeding. But the man who is half-hearted in his purpose-how easily stopped, diverted, discouraged, defeated by circumstance. An Edison succeeds, but not without the same secret: he works with genuine relish for it, without the clock, in utter abandonment. God give us more Pauls in His service.

SELF-FORGETFULNESS AND VICTORY. The Life of Victory, like electricity, has two poles, a negative and a positive. The negative pole is Self-Negation. Paul was not thinking of himself; hence he resented no ill-treatment, he felt no ill-will, he reflected no envy or jealousy. Self did not respond. And this, because he had another Center- Christ. Christ filled his life. His climax of concern was that "Christ shall be magnified." Christ galvanized his life. "Not I, but Christ." Christ the Positive Pole. The result: a circuit that nothing can break; a current that nothing can stop. It is Victory in Christ.

"I Do REJOICE, YEA, AND WILL REJOICE." The reality of the Christian faith has always demonstrated itself best under stress of circumstance. Thousands of Christian prisoners-prisoners only in body-have experienced and expressed the same joy.

The following story of a young Korean Christian, capable of duplication many times over from Korea alone, comes to us through a friend:

After the Russo-Japanese war, when Korea fell into the possession of Japan, military occupation was assumed, with the usual results of fear and discontent on the one hand, tyranny and contempt on the other, and with mutual hatred. In the course of time the Japanese Governor was assassinated, and his assassination was followed by a reign of terror for the Koreans. Every effort was made to bring to justice all who had to any slight extent shared the guilt, and also all such as could be induced, by fair means or foul, to acknowledge sympathy with the criminals. From one school in charge of an American missionary, groups of students were arrested in succession and taken to prison where they were examined by torture. Not one of the large number so treated failed his Lord in the slightest degree during the awful sufferings they experienced. The youngest lad subjected to the test was only twelve years of age. He was suspended by his thumbs, with arms behind his back. His back was previously cut in stripes deep enough to cause great pain, and he was allowed no water or food. This was kept up for a whole day and into the night, while soldiers ate and drank liberally before him as they gambled away the time, stopping occasionally to ask if he was ready to confess his crime. The little fellow was almost insane with thirst and pain and, as it neared midnight, he cried to the Lord, begging that He would not let him fail, that he feared he could not hold out after mid-night. Just a few minutes after the cry of distress he felt strong, tender hands close over his own, his thirst ceased, all suffering left him, and he realized the personal presence of his Lord. Shortly afterward the soldiers took him down and sent him to bed and he was not again molested. His delight in the Lord knew no bounds as he told his experiences to his beloved missionary teacher, and the joy of the Lord continues to be his abiding possession. The missionary was able to count on him at all times as a faithful witness to his risen Lord.

Similarly, prisoners in invalided bodies, behind sightless eyes or deafened ears, with helpless hands or feet, yet with an irrepressible "joy in the Lord" overflowing in praise and song. But neighbor to them; with everything to be desired, Christians in health, with friends and full bodily powers; yet with no song, no praise, no joy, but with scarce repressed complaint. How do you account for it?

The only explanation is in the two spheres of life. The one is living in circumstance and even the best does not satisfy. The other is living "in Christ" and He never fails to satisfy. Nay under stress "He giveth more grace," and there is added "joy." (Recall again the vital distinction between "Happiness" and "Joy," Php 1:1-30).

"To LIVE IS CHRIST." The simplest possible defining of the Christian life.

It is not to confess Christ, not to be like Christ, not to live for Christ. Not any function, or attribute, or accompaniment, or activity of the life. Not that, but the life itself-its source, its secret, its essence, its soul, its very heart. The life "is Christ."

He is the Life of Life.

In Creation: "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:3-4).

In Redemption: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

In Salvation: "God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1Jn 5:11-12).

In Christian Experience: "Not I [that live], but Christ that liveth in me" (Gal 2:20).

In the working out of Salvation, doctrinally known as Sanctification, more popularly as the Life of Fulness, the Higher Life, the Spirit-filled Life, call it which we will, Christ moves more and more to the central place in the life, the actuating, dominating principle, an experience that is ours in actuality in proportion as self is denied control—"no longer I, but Christ." Christ is the Life and the life is "Christ"; "To me to live is-Christ."

"To DIE IS GAIN." In such intimate identification with Him who is Life-not "has," but "is"-death stands impotent, robbed of reality. We have "passed out of death into Life"-out of death into the Deathless One. To die -nothing more than the dissolution of the body-is "to depart and be with Christ."

The Apostle's desire to go Home should be instinctive in every believer's breast; it is so "far better." With us also, the one counter consideration capable of making us content with continued absence from such a Home should be the prospect of further service.

01.02. Christ The Pattern of Life

Christ The Pattern of Life The Backward Look

Php 2:1-30 With Php 2:1-30 our viewpoint changes. We are now to look BACKWARD for the roots of Christian living to the Life that was lived nineteen hundred years ago; nay, not to the Life but to the Mind that actuated that Life, a mind that is to be wrought out in us as His followers.

Outline

1- Exhortation to One-Mindedness, Php 2:1-4.

a-Positive: Qualities to be Cultivated (Php 2:1-2).

b-Negative: Qualities to be Avoided (Php 2:3-4).

2- Christ Our Example, Php 2:5-11.

a-A Pattern of "Mind" (Php 2:5). b-His Humiliation (of Himself) (Php 2:6-8).

(1) What He Was-God (Php 2:6 a).

(2) His Attitude of Giving it up (Php 2:6-7 a).

(3) What He Became-Man (Php 2:7 b).

(4) His Attitude of Humbling Himself to the Death of the Cross (Php 2:8).

c-His Exaltation (by the Father) (Php 2:9-11).

(1) A Name above every Name (Php 2:9).

(2) A Name that shall Claim Universal Worship (Php 2:10-11 a).

(3) All to the Glory of the Father (Php 2:11 b).

3- The Pattern Worked Out in Believers, Php 2:12-16.

a-The Power to Realize it-Inwardly (Php 2:12-13). b-The Exhortation to Embody it-Outwardly (Php 2:14-15). c-The Apostle's Personal Appeal to this end (Php 2:16).

4- The Human Example of Christian Leaders, Php 2:17-30.

a-Paul Embodying this "Mind" of Christ (Php 2:17-18).

b-Timothy Embodying this "Mind" of Christ (Php 2:19-23).

In Contrast-the Sad Failure of Others to be "Like-Minded" (Php 2:20-21).

c-Epaphroditus Embodying this "Mind" of Christ (Php 2:24-30).

PHILIPPIANS

CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

CHRIST - The Source MIND - The Channel

Php 1:1-30

Php 2:1-30

Php 3:1-21

Php 4:1-23

WHERE HE IS

WITHIN US PERSONAL

BEHIND US PAST

WHAT HE IS

OUR LIFE Php 1:21

OUR EXAMPLE Php 2:5-8

HIS MIND IN US

GOSPEL MIND Php 1:5, Php 1:7, Php 1:12, Php 1:17, Php 1:27

HUMBLE MIND Php 2:2-5

APPEAL

SURRENDER TO HIM SUFFER FOR HIM

WORK OUT THE PATTERN WITHOUT MURMURING

Sectional Chart - Chapter 2 We are to find the summary of the teaching of Php 2:1-30 by the answers it gives to our three questions:

1. WHERE HE IS. Not Within us as in Php 1:1-30, but BEHIND US. It is the Christ of the PAST, the Christ of history. "This mind which WAS in Christ" (Php 2:5), followed by further description in the past tense.

Why dwell upon the Christ of history? Because He is the outstanding figure of all time. By His unexampled life He challenges every man: "What think ye of Christ?"

Briefly: In His ORIGIN, "a root out of a dry ground"; that is, incapable of being explained on natural, historical grounds. History has no cause to produce Him. He came in a dark, impotent hour.

"His Star" symbolizes, with many corroborations, His heavenly origin. In His LIFE-WORK, speaking as never man spake, He set forth a standard of life unknown to the finest conceptions of any teacher or philosopher of any age.

These His teachings are still the standard, lofty, unapproached by any other. Yet more-having promulgated such a standard, beyond man, He Himself forthwith LIVED IT. He alone! This is

amazing! Yet more amazing that, after nineteen hundred years of the benefit of His teaching and example, not one man has arisen to measure up to the standard of this "Man."

You call Him merely a man. Nonsense! Then, judged by relativity, we all would be less than men. Let none dare to place himself in the class of "a man," if He is but a man.

No, He is more than man. In the FINISH of His life, its climax in Death and Resurrection, He rounded out the evidence that He is the One promised of God, embodying "all things which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Him" (Luk 24:44).

He is the Saviour of men. Your Saviour, dear reader, if in faith you received Him as such (Acts 16:31). Then, when thus received, He becomes more.

2. WHAT HE IS. He is OUR EXAMPLE. AS His disciples, learners, followers, we have Him for our Pattern, an Example to standardize our living.

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps" (1Pe 2:21). The Greek word for "Example" is another picture-word. It means "copy-head"; such as appeared in our school-day copybooks, at the top of the page, in fine Spencerian.

But the copybook plan was none too successful, for, while we began well with the perfect copy immediately above, as our lines increased we left the copy-head out of the range of influence and fell to following our own imperfections.

This is the Christian's great mistake. Today he repeats the imperfect self of yesterday, or copies some fellow-Christian, when he should go daily back to his God-given Copy-Head in whom is all perfection.

But now, what is the special feature characteristic of our Copy-Head that we are asked to note and follow? We must read carefully the context in Peter:

"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously: Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1Pe 2:19-24).

Suffering deservedly-there is nothing Christian in that; it is merely justice. Suffering undeservedly, yet voluntarily, as Jesus did for our sins-this is "acceptable with God." This is "Christian" (1Pe 4:16; 1Pe 4:13-15). This is the heart and essence of the Example He left that we "should follow His steps."

Again, when Jesus took the role, the position as well as "form of a servant" (Php 2:7), and washed the disciples' feet, He said of His act, "I have given you an EXAMPLE, that ye should do as I have

done to you" (John 13:15).

Why did He do all this? Why this humble service and voluntary suffering, undeserved and unparalleled in history? Why? Simply because He first HAD IT IN HIS MIND. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who" etc. (Php 2:5).

3. His MIND IN US. It is a HUMBLE mind. "This mind in Christ Jesus" (Php 2:5) caused Him to humble Himself (Php 2:6-8). Had He not been humble in mind He would never have been humble in life. Nor will we, as his followers. We cannot imitate Him; we must acquire His inner secret. Hence the chapter's opening appeal; it contains the word "mind" four times in as many verses (Php 2:2-5).

1-Exhortation to One-Mindedness, Php 2:1-4

Note

"IF" (Php 2:1) presents a supposition according to fact-since there are-and, coupled with "THEREFORE/" makes an appeal to the rich spiritual resources of the Christian faith from which flow Christian experience and fellowship. Four are mentioned, seemingly that they may correlate with the four exhortations that follow (Php 2:2)-four springs issuing in four streams:

(the following comparison best viewed in wide screen....) Php 2:1Any Consolation in ChristAny Comfort of LoveAny Fellowship of the SpiritAny Compassions and Mercies Php 2:2Be Like-MindedHave the Same LoveBe of One AccordBe of One Mind

NEGATIVE EXHORTATIONS, "Let nothing," "Look not" (Php 2:2; Php 2:4), seek to inhibit those states of strife, vain glory and self-interest which are inimical to right Christian mindedness. Eschewed, they give place to the "lowliness of mind" which considers others better than ourselves and others' interests before our own.

CHRISTIAN FRUIT (Php 2:1), which requires the Channel of a CHRISTIAN MIND (Php 2:2-4), must find its ROOT in the "MIND OF CHRIST" (Php 2:5).

Comment

THE MASTER-MIND. The Christian faith does not impose upon its followers a stereotyped life, bound by rules and regulations. It does not contemplate pressing all minds into one mould. But it does contemplate:

(1) The impartation of the matchless mind of Christ (1Co 2:16) by and through the New Birth (Regeneration),

(2) the working out of the qualities of that mind in practical living by and through His indwelling Presence (Sanctification).

We marvel to go into a vault of a thousand safe deposit boxes. Each box is equipped with a distinctive lock and key, no two alike, yet, as we are informed, there is a master-key which controls them all. So is the mind of Christ to those who are His own. His is a blessed control. Let His mind be in you.

Like-mindedness, so sadly needed in Christ's household, can come only in this way. As "things equal to the same thing are equal to each other," so minds like the Master mind will exhibit an essential likeness to each other.

2-Christ Our Example, Php 2:5-11

Note

We come now to a notable passage of Scripture, revealing in simple yet majestic language the person of our blessed Lord, in heaven and on earth, in relation to the Father and in relation to man, unveiling His pre-existent equality with God in eternity past, His voluntary subjection to God for the solution of sin, His consequent added glory now and on into eternity future.

1. "THIS MIND" (Php 2:5) is the source of His Saviourhood. He was minded to be before He became. When did that "mind" begin? Not in Jesus, but "in CHRIST Jesus," voluntarily accepting the office and set apart thereto long before He became Jesus: "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev 13:8). Then, as JESUS, He continually expressed the same mind: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mat 20:28). This mind that "WAS in Christ Jesus" now is to be "in you," His followers.

His Example covers both His HUMILIATION (Php 2:6-8) and His EXALTATION (Php 2:9-11)-three verses for each, connected by a significant "wherefore."

2. His HUMILIATION (Php 2:6-8) consists of three most obvious stages:

THE NATURE OF HIS HUMILIATION (Php 2:6-7 a). His SELF-RENUNCIATION; giving up the glory of Deity.

Here are three statements:

(1) "being [Subsisting] in the form of God"-His essential Deity which once having been He could never cease to be; it is in the essence of His being.

(2) "He thought it not robbery [a thing to be grasped and held on to]," this subsisting in the form of God, with all the glory and honor thereof. This He could, and did, give up.

(3) "But humbled [emptied] Himself"-a fathomless statement; eternity alone will suffice to plumb its depths of meaning-its meaning for Him and its meaning for us. He emptied Himself, not of Deity, for that was essential to His being, but of the glory of Deity, that which was His from eternity and by eternal right, that He might accomplish His redemptive purpose.

THE MANNER OF HIS HUMILIATION (Php 2:7 b). His INCARNATION: taking His place in Humanity.

"The form of a servant" is antithetical to "the form of God," setting forth His newly-chosen mode of subsisting in human form, where, as man, He could be servant to God, rendering active and passive obedience, as pre-pictured in Psa 40:7-8 :

"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart."

“In the likeness of men” conveys the full reality of His human nature. He who had said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,” is now “made” in man’s likeness. What condescension for sinful man to hold in contemplation!

The marrow of the whole matter is in the word “likeness.” It is a window through which floods the light of His redemptive purpose in the Incarnation: God was “sending His own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin” (Rom 8:3). Its anticipation in the Old Testament is in the great body of teaching clustered around the Hebrew word “gaal,” the Kinsman-Redeemer. He must be of our flesh and blood (Heb 2:14).

THE EXTENT OF HIS HUMILIATION (Php 2:8). His CRUCIFIXION; giving up His position in Humanity.

Having taken His place in the human race, “found in fashion as a man,” He was in position to display the moral glory of God in and through His human nature. Found in the position of man He did not think even this a thing to be held on to (cf. vs. Php 2:6); “He humbled Himself.”

“And became obedient,” thus to undo “one man’s disobedience-by the obedience of One” (Rom 5:19). “Obedient unto death.” The first man’s obedience would have been unto life, but having disobeyed unto death, this Man must obey unto death. Adam’s disobedience brought his posterity a harvest of death; Jesus’ obedience brought His posterity “out of death into life.”

3. His EXALTATION (Php 2:9-11) matches, yea far outdistances, His Humiliation.

“Wherefore” reflects the justness of God’s response to His obedience in self-abasement. Enfolded in it also is the sacred mystery of a covenant between the Father and the Son, a covenant which lay back of the Son’s confidence in addressing the Father when through Death and Resurrection He saw Himself at the triumphant turning-point of His Humiliation:

“I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (John 17:4-5).

Correspondent to His Humiliation, His Exaltation also consists of three stages:

His EXALTATION IN THE PAST (Php 2:9 a). “God HATH highly exalted Him.” The Greek verb means, “hath lifted Him up above.” Not merely above the earth level and the experiences through which He had passed; He was lifted “above” all that can be known or named, as is set forth in Ephesians:

“Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph 1:20-23).

His EXALTATION IN THE PRESENT (Php 2:9 b). Today, in glory, He has “a name which is above every name.” The “name” is the sum of one’s fame-all by which one is known. Here on earth for a time His name leaped from lip to lip; “His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round

about” (Mark 1:28). That was fleeting. But today-His fame fills the heavens. Not a heavenly being but knows the story and stands in awe at the Name.

His EXALTATION IN THE FUTURE (Php 2:10-11). His greatest triumph still awaits Him, when “at the name of Jesus” -His human name, so despised and heaped with ignominy-“every knee SHALL bow, every tongue SHALL confess.” It is certain, decreed, one of God’s pre-written purposes.

Confess what? That Jesus, who voluntarily gave up His place as man among men to die for us, is more than man; that He is “Christ” and “Lord.” All will acknowledge His Messiahship, the anointed and appointed of God, and His Deity, the divine Lord, even God.

“To the glory of God the Father.” God is the beginning and the end of His Exaltation. As the Son’s great aim on earth was His Father’s glory, so the goal of redemption is the glorification of the Father through the universal acknowledgment of the Son.

Comment

THE DEITY OF CHRIST. With this classic passage before us, stating as it does our Saviour’s pre-existent “being in the form of God,” we may well take occasion to refresh our mind and heart, reassuring our faith in a day of doubt, with the Church’s declarations and deliverances concerning His Deity: The first great ecumenical council assembled at Nice, A.D. 325, for the settlement of the Arian controversy, and consisting of 318 bishops, confessed its faith in “one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of the same substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who, for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; and was made man.”

And the Westminster Confession, which may be taken as the statement of all Protestantism, tells us, “The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon Him man’s nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, are inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion, which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ; the only mediator between God and man.” The person of Christ, as very Man yet very God, stands unimpeached and unimpaired. His pre-existence, antedating His Incarnation, alone suffices to explain His unique personality and place in history, His personal self-consciousness of being the Son of God, His abiding influence, undiminished through the years.

THE DEPTHS OF HIS DEGRADATION. The heights from which He came, to the depths to which He descended - these must determine the degree of His voluntary degradation.

- As God He humbled Himself to become man.

- As man He humbled Himself further, till He describes His despicable condition on the Cross by crying, “I am a worm, and no man” (Psa 22:6).

A worm! From man, with his highly organized and highly sensitized body, coupled with his intelligence, it is a very far distance down the scale of being to the worm, crawling at his feet. Yet that distance down is but a faint, shadowy suggestion of the depth downward my Saviour came from being God to being man. From Infinite to finite, who shall measure the distance? But-great as that was, He did not stop at man's level. He further descended to the worm level. History has no parallel. How could He do it? Mute in contemplation, we can never cease to wonder.

THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME. The supernal nature of "The Name" now enjoyed by our Lord in heaven, mere mortals of earth may only surmise. Yet we have two means by which to gauge its glory even now:

(1) The profusion of Names and Titles employed by Scripture adequately to set forth His august person, the many-sided nature of His mediatorial work, His wealth of relationship, temporal and eternal, reflecting the fact that in Him the Father has caused all fulness to dwell and that in and through Him all human need is met.

(2) The wealth of Christian hymnody which has gathered round "The Name" of Jesus, a galaxy of the most splendid songs of the Church, voicing the purest praises of His people, breathing the deepest gratitude of the soul and the highest aspirations after holy living.

HIS NAME IN SCRIPTURE

The following list of titles of our Lord is not thought to be exhaustive but will prove sufficiently comprehensive:

Adam, the last (1Co 15:45); Advocate (1Jn 2:1); Almighty (Mat 28:18); Alpha and Omega (Rev 22:13); Altar (Heb 13:10); Altogether lovely (Song of Solomon 5:16); Amen (Rev 3:14); An Angel (Exo 23:20); Angel of God (Exo 14:19); Angel of the Lord (Gen 22:15); Angel of His presence (Isa 63:9); Anointed (Psa 2:2); Apostle (Heb 3:1); Author of faith (Heb 12:2).

Babe (Luk 2:12); Beginning (Col 1:18); Beginning and ending (Rev 1:8); Beginning of creation (Rev 3:14); Beloved (Mat 12:18); Beloved Son (Mat 17:5); Bishop of souls (1Pe 2:25); Blessed and only potentate (1Ti 6:15); Branch (Zec 3:8); Branch of the Lord (Isa 4:2); Branch of righteousness (Jer 33:15); Bread of God (John 6:33); Bread from heaven (John 6:32); Bread of Life (John 6:35); Bridegroom (Mat 9:15); Brightness of God's glory (Heb 1:3); Bright and Morning Star (Rev 22:16); Brother (John 20:17); Builder (Heb 3:3).

Captain of the Lord's host (Jos 5:14); Captain of salvation (Heb 2:10). Carpenter (Mark 6:3); Chief corner Stone (1Pe 2:6); Chief shepherd (1Pe 5:4); Chiefest among ten thousand (Song of Solomon 5:10); Child (Isa 9:6); Christ (Mat 23:8); Christ Jesus (1Ti 1:15); Christ of God (Luk 9:20); Christ, the Lord (Luk 2:11); Christ the Son of God (John 20:31); Commander (Isa 55:4); Consolation of Israel (Luk 2:25); Corn of wheat (John 12:24); Covenant of the people (Isa 42:6); Covert from the tempest (Isa 32:2); Counsellor (Isa 9:6); Creator of all things (Col 1:16); Crowned with glory and honor (Heb 2:9); Crowned with many crowns (Rev 19:12).

David's Lord (Mat 22:45); David's Son (Mark 10:48); Daysman (Job 9:33); Dayspring (Luk 1:78); Day-Star (2Pe 1:19); Dear Son (Col 1:13); Defense (Psa 89:18-19); Deliverer (Rom 11:26); Desire of all nations (Hag 2:7); Door (John 10:9).

Elect of God (Isa 42:1); Elect Stone (1Pe 2:6); Ensign of the people (Isa 11:10); End of the law (Rom 10:4); Eternal Life (1Jn 5:20); Everlasting Father (Isa 9:6); Example of His people (1Pe 2:21); Express image of God's person (Heb 1:3).

Faithful and true (Rev 19:11); Faithful and true Witness (Rev 3:14); Faithful Witness (Rev 1:5); Filling all in all (Eph 1:23); Finisher of faith (Heb 12:3); First born (Psa 89:27); First-fruits (1Co 15:20); First born from the dead (Col 1:18); First born of many brethren (Rom 8:29); First and last (Rev 1:17); Foundation (1Co 3:11); Forerunner (Heb 6:20); Friend (Song of Solomon 5:16).

Gift of God (John 4:10); Glory of His people Israel (Luk 2:32); God (John 1:1); God blessed forever (Rom 9:5); God manifest in the flesh (1Ti 3:16); God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exo 3:2; Exo 3:6); Good Shepherd (John 10:11); Governor (Mat 2:6); Great God and Saviour (Tit 2:13); Great High Priest (Heb 4:14); Great Prophet (Luk 7:16); Great Shepherd (Heb 13:20).

Head (Eph 4:15); Head of the body (Col 1:18); Head of all principality (Col 2:10); Head of every man (1Co 11:3); Head over all things (Eph 1:22); Head Stone of the Corner (Psa 118:22); High Priest (Heb 3:1); Holy One (Acts 2:27); Holy One, and the Just (Acts 3:14); Holy One of God (Mark 1:24); Hope of His People (Joe 3:16); Horn of Salvation (Luk 1:69); Husband (Isa 54:5).

I Am (John 8:58); I Am that I Am (Exo 3:2; Exo 3:14); I Am the resurrection (John 11:25); I Am the Son of God (John 10:36); Image of God (2Co 4:4); Immanuel (Mat 1:23); Immutable (Heb 13:8); Intercessor (Heb 7:25); Interpreter (Job 33:23).

Jehovah (Isa 26:4); Jehovah of hosts (Isa 6:3); John 12:41); Jehovah mighty in battle (Psa 24:8); Jehovah's fellow (Zec 13:7); Jehovah Jireh (Gen 22:14); Jehovah Shammah (Eze 48:35); Jehovah Tsidkenu (Jer 23:6); Jesus (Mat 1:21); Jesus Christ (Rev 1:5); Jesus, the Christ (Mat 16:20); Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 5:21); Jesus Christ the righteous (1Jn 2:1); Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 22:8); Jesus Christ of Nazareth (Acts 4:10); Judge of the world (Acts 17:31); Just (1Pe 3:18); Just One (Acts 7:52).

Keeper of His People (Psa 121:5); King (Acts 17:7); King of glory (Psa 24:10); King in His beauty (Isa 33:17); King forever (Psa 29:10); King of Israel (John 1:49); King of nations (Rev 15:3); King of the Jews (Mat 2:2); King over all the earth (Zec 14:9); King of kings (Rev 19:16); Knowing all things (John 21:17).

Lamb (Rev 21:23); Lamb of God (John 1:29); Lamb in the midst of the throne (Rev 7:17); Lamb that was slain (Rev 5:12); Lamb without blemish (1Pe 1:19); Leader (Isa 55:4); Life (John 14:6); Light of the world (John 8:12); Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5); Living Bread (John 6:51); Living One (Rev 1:18); Living Stone (1Pe 2:4); Lord (Mat 3:3); Lord and God (John 20:28); Lord of all (Acts 10:36); Lord of glory (1Co 2:8); Lord of lords (Rev 19:16); Lord of peace (2Th 3:16); Lord of the dead and the living (Rom 14:9); Lord of the Sabbath (Luk 6:5); Lord our righteousness (Jer 23:6); Lord over all (Rom 10:12).

Made to be sin (2Co 5:21); Maker of the worlds (Heb 1:2); Man approved of God (Acts 2:22); Man of rest (1Ch 22:9-10); Man of sorrows (Isa 53:3); Mediator (1Ti 2:5); Mediator of the new covenant (Heb 12:24); Messenger of the covenant (Mal 3:1); Messiah, called Christ (John 4:25); Messiah the Prince (Dan 9:25); Mighty God (Isa 9:6); Morning Star (Rev 22:16).

Nazarene (Mat 2:23).

Offering (Eph 5:2); One Lord Jesus Christ (1Co 8:6); One shepherd (John 10:16); Only begotten Son (John 3:16); Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2Pe 1:11); Our passover (1Co 5:7); Own Son (Rom 8:32).

Power of God (1Co 1:24); Precious Corner Stone (Isa 28:16); Precious Stone (1Pe 2:6); Prince of life (Acts 3:15). Prince of peace (Isa 9:6); Prince of the kings of the earth (Rev 1:5); Prophet (Deu 18:15); Prophet mighty in deed and word (Luk 24:19); Propitiation (Rom 3:25).

Quickening spirit (1Co 15:45).

Redeemer (Job 19:25); Refuge from the storm (Isa 25:4); Righteous Servant (Isa 53:11); Righteousness (1Co 1:30); Rock (Mat 16:18); Rock of ages (Isa 26:4); Root and Offspring of David (Rev 22:16); Ruler in Israel (Mic 5:2).

Sacrifice to God (Eph 5:2); Sanctification (1Co 1:30); Saviour (Acts 5:31); Second man, the Lord from heaven (1Co 15:47); Seed of the woman (Gen 3:15); Servant (Php 2:7); Shadow from the heat (Isa 26:4); Shepherd and bishop of souls (1Pe 2:25); Shiloh (Gen 49:10); Son (John 8:36); Son of Abraham and David (Mat 1:1); Son of God (John 1:34); Son of Man (Mark 10:33); Son of the highest (Luk 1:32); Spiritual rock (1Co 10:4); Star and scepter (Num 24:17); Stone cut out without hands (Dan 2:34); Stone of stumbling (1Pe 2:8); Sun of righteousness (Mal 4:2); Sure foundation (Isa 28:16); Surety of a better covenant (Heb 7:22).

Testator (Heb 9:16); The Coming One (Rev 1:8); The righteous Judge (2Ti 4:8); Tried Stone (Isa 28:16); True God (1Jn 5:20); True Light (John 1:9); Truth (John 14:6).

Unspeakable gift (2Co 9:15); Upholder of all things (Heb 1:3).

Vine (John 15:5).

Way (John 14:6); Well beloved Son (Mark 12:6); Wisdom (Pro 8:1); Wisdom of God (1Co 1:24); With two or three gathered to His name (Mat 18:20); With us all the days (Mat 28:20); Witness to the people (Isa 55:4); Wonderful (Isa 9:6); Word (John 1:1); Word made flesh (John 1:14); Word of God (Rev 19:13); Word of life (1Jn 1:1); Worthy to open the book (Rev 5:9); Worthy to receive all praise (Rev 5:12).

His NAME IN SONG From among the many a few of the more familiar are noted (printed in part):

“JESUS, THY NAME I LOVE”

Jesus, Thy name I love,

All other names above,

Jesus, my Lord.

“THE NAME OF JESUS”

The name of Jesus is so sweet, I love its music to repeat;

It makes my joys full and complete, The precious name of Jesus.

“Jesus,” oh, how sweet the name!

“Jesus,” every day the same;

“Jesus,” let all saints proclaim Its worthy praise forever.

“THERE IS A NAME I LOVE TO HEAR”

There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;

It sounds like music to mine ear,

The sweetest name on earth.

“THERE IS NO NAME SO SWEET”

There is no name so sweet on earth, No name so dear in heaven,

As that before His wondrous birth, To Christ the Saviour given.

“HOW SWEET THE NAME OF JESUS SOUNDS”

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds In a believer’s ears.

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, And drives away his fears.

“TAKE THE NAME OF JESUS WITH YOU”

Take the name of Jesus with you, Child of sorrow and of woe-

It will joy and comfort give you, Take it then where’er you go.

Precious name, O how sweet!

Hope of earth and joy of heav’n.

These lines, penned by a converted atheist, carry conviction as to the need, the power, the worth of the Name to a lost soul:

I’ve tried in vain a thousand ways My fears to quell, my hopes to raise;

But what I need, the Bible says, Is ever, only Jesus.

My soul is night, my heart is steel- I cannot see, I cannot feel:

For light, for life, I must appeal In simple faith to Jesus.

He died, He lives, He reigns, He pleads;

There’s love in all His words and deeds;

There’s all a guilty sinner needs For evermore in Jesus.

Though some should sneer, and some should blame, I’ll go with all my guilt and shame;

I’ll go to Him because His name, Above all names is Jesus.

Scripture and song are corroborated by this marvelous fact: The word “Jesus,” bearing from God a message to all men, proves to be a universal word. Linguistically, it fits into every language of

earth. It does not need to be translated, merely transliterated, as though it were meant to be upon every man's lips. Friend, how often do you lisp the Name, in prayer? in praise? in the sense of His preciousness?—"My Jesus."

THE GLORY TO BE. In the progress of the divine purpose there is a glory yet to be revealed; it concerns both the Son and the Father. For the Son, a universal homage awaits. "Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess." Beginning in heaven, soon every creature of every level is voicing His praise:

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev 5:11-13).

Read also: Rev 19:11-16; Zec 14:9-21; Psa 72:1-20.

For the Father, the finality of glory awaits. The purposes of redemption converge upon the Father. The glory of the Son, accomplished through His righteous reign, culminates "to the glory of God the Father." Thus we read:

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

"For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1Co 15:24-28).

EXAMPLE FOR HIS SONS. Not forgetting that all this is the outworking of the mind of Christ, and that that mind is held before us as an example for us—"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"—the question arises: "If the Father honored thus the one Son who humbled Himself, will He deal similarly with His other sons?"

That our Father invites us to avail ourselves of the same principle on His part with a like experience on our part, appears evident from this word in Peter:

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that HE MAY EXALT YOU in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (1Pe 5:5-7).

HUMILITY, as exemplified by our Lord, must embody such qualities of heart and such experiences of life as Andrew Murray so beautifully portrays:

"Humility is perfect quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted, or vexed, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed. It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to

feel nothing against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised. It is to have a blessed home in the Lord where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret, and am at rest as in a deep sea of calmness when all around and above is trouble.”

3-The Pattern Worked Out in Believers, Php 2:12-16

Chart

NOT IMITATION, BUT IMPLANTATION. Are we to imitate the mind of Christ and the life flowing from that mind? Impossible! The product of our effort would be artificial, and wholly human. This is not God’s way.

He first imparts His life to us. He implants His life in us. Then He brings to fruition His life, His very own life, through us.

This is the divine order in Christian Experience. Note the Chart. Before He presented Himself to us as “Our Example,” He had already become in us “Our Life.” The second chapter builds upon the first. The order is logical. The process is vital. God within us will reproduce the same traits of character as He wrought in His Son, in proportion as we allow Him.

This, then, is the very appeal which Paul makes: Having seen in Christ the Pattern Life, “Work out your own salvation, for it is God who is working (also) in you.”

Note

“WHEREFORE” (Php 2:12 a). Since humble obedience in our Example was productive of such glorious results (note the “wherefore” of vs. Php 2:9) we are exhorted by a correspondent “wherefore” to a like obedience for the attaining of like results.

NOT DEPENDENT UPON HUMAN LEADERS (Php 2:12 b). So far from being disheartened or growing lax through the Apostle’s not being present with them, they are exhorted “much more in my absence” to devote themselves to Christian living, since they have the vital secret within themselves.

“WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION” (Php 2:12 c). This presupposes its possession, as one works out a garden, already his, by cultivating it and causing it to produce the finest flowers and fruits; or a ball-player works out his pitching ability, exercising, developing, training the possibilities latently his. So the Christian is exhorted, having received Christ and seen in Him the beauties of character, to work out these possibilities in a salvation peculiarly, personally and individually, “your own.” Work out in terms of your own living the beauties inherently possible in such a salvation. For its realization abundant encouragement follows.

POWER TO REALIZE THE PATTERN (Php 2:13). God supplies the power. It is Himself—“God worketh in you.” In the Greek “God” is emphatic. God in-working us, as He did Christ, is the great secret.

The entire sentence should be read in strict regard for the literal: “For God it is who is in-working (effectually working) in you both the willing and the working for His good-pleasure.”

The form of the verb makes it still more meaningful: God is “displaying His activity, showing Himself operative” in us, as He did in His Son, that we too may be His “good pleasure.”

Says Augustine: “We will, but God works the will in us. We work, therefore, but God works the working in us.”

This inward realization of the Pattern is now to find outward manifestation in the life.

EXHORTATION TO EMBODY THE PATTERN (Php 2:14-15). Now we come to the “do.” Our lives are to exhibit the same traits of character in outward conduct as were found in our Master and Pattern, seeing God is working in us the same mind and purpose. The master-key is humility.

Humble as He, we will not murmur (against God) nor dispute (with men).

The exhortation lends itself to tabulation:

God-ward Man-ward
Php 2:14 Without Murmurings Without Disputings Blameless Harmless
Php 2:15 Sons of God Without Blemish In the World Shining as Lights

PAUL'S PERSONAL APPEAL (Php 2:16). The Apostle has made an investment in them which is now at stake. Having preached to them he is looking for returns “in the day of Christ”-the day when we shall receive rewards for service (Mat 16:27; 2Co 5:10). His expectation of reward includes not merely those to whom he has personally ministered “the word of life,” but the multiplied many won in turn through their faithfulness in “holding it forth.”

To be “light” (Php 2:15) to others we must have the word of “life.” The two are indissolubly linked-scientifically, spiritually and experimentally. “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4). Lacking His life, the light in us will be but darkness.

...

Comment

Six words may well be employed to embody the comment due this section:

1. PATTERN. We have a pattern life after which the Christian life is molded and modeled. This means a standard, a norm, by which certain things may be adjudged Christian and others not Christian.

Every follower of the Lord should standardize his life by Him. We have no right to cling to that which is foreign to Him, foist it upon Him and our fellow-believers, labeling it “Christian” when it is not. To “work out” our salvation is to work out of our living all that is extraneous thereto, letting that which is germane come into power and fruition.

2. PERSISTENCE. There is a persistence of type in Christian living, whether in Christ or His follower of the first or twentieth century, secured by the self-same Spirit actuating all.

As a lad on the Atlantic coast I came to know the characteristics of a maple. Decades later and far miles distant, on the Pacific slope, I found it the same maple. The type persists because the life is the same. So with the life that Jesus lived nineteen hundred years ago; by the same Spirit His life in me should reproduce the same traits of character.

3. POWER. God's child is possessed of a power that is startling and challenging. He is inwrought by a power not man's, but God's.

Some time since one of our State institutions of learning experimented with vegetation, to test the strength of growing cellular life. A squash was harnessed and 60 pounds imposed upon its back. It kept on growing. They weighted it with 300 pounds. It kept on growing. They substituted 1,100 pounds. It kept on growing. They now ventured 2,300 pounds. What could a squash do with over a ton on its back? It kept on growing.

If God's power is such through non-sentient cell life, what should He not do through His own child, made in His image?

4. PERSONALITY. Ours is not merely God's power, as in nature, but the power of God, Himself, indwelling and in-working. In the realm of Christian experience, power is personality.

- "Apart from Me ye can do nothing."

- "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you."

- "It is God which worketh in you."

We in (union with) Him, He in (union with) us, laying hold of our being's vital processes, actuating, transforming, and energizing its intellectual life, its affectional life, its volitional life-this is power.

5. POSSIBILITY. Were I dependent upon my own human energies and capabilities, my possibilities would be bounded by the finite; but resting in and relying upon Him working in me, my horizon expands to the Infinite. What can He not do as He works in me "to will and to do of His good-pleasure," if I but yield to His working. No stagnation! No limitation. Each new day a fresh, untried opportunity for God in me.

6. PROSPECT. We live and labor in prospect of "rejoicing in the day of Christ."

The same power that has wrought in us works also through us, empowering our service, claiming, quickening, and keeping other precious souls as sheaves for the garnering. In that day He will bring them, with us, into His glorified presence. They will be our "crown of rejoicing." May the prospect nerve us to fresh, untiring endeavor.

4-The Human Example of Christian Leaders, Php 2:17-30

Note

Put to the practical test, how will the mind of Christ express itself in those who are filled with His presence and imbued with His Spirit? For answer, Paul appends a personal allusion to himself, Timothy and Epaphroditus, adding warmth of human interest to the picture. They are here mentioned as men who embody and exemplify the mind of their Lord and Master, as certain others disappointingly do not.

1. PAUL (Php 2:17-18). The mind of Christ renders him so unmindful of self that he faces the eventuality of his own obliteration in the "sacrifice and service of their faith," only to "joy and rejoice."

2. TIMOTHY (Php 2:19; Php 2:22-23). A son in the faith he has proved himself faithful. He has an unselfishness of mind and spirit that render him useful in the Lord's service and dependable on the Apostle's errand. The sadness of the picture is that none others are like him. And why? It is a matter of the mind.

3. OTHERS NOT "LIKE-MINDED" (Php 2:20-21). The teaching of the chapter enforced by contrast, and a very sad contrast at that. These are not minded, like Timothy, to "care for your state" (Php 2:20). Why? "For they all seek their own" (21a). Having the mind of Christ is the one way we will ever care for "the things which are Jesus Christ's" (Php 2:21 b). We must heed the opening exhortation:

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Php 2:4-5).

4. EPAPHRODITUS (Php 2:24-30). A sweet and beautiful testimony to a worthy servant of Christ. He combines faithfulness (Php 2:25) and tenderness (Php 2:26) in a service that is sacrificial and self-forgetful to the point of death (Php 2:30).

Loving and beloved (Php 2:26-29) his life is still a benediction in contemplation.

Comment

OUR PRESENT-DAY GOSPEL. Every follower of Christ has to face the responsibility of discipleship as a demand upon him to embody and reflect the mind of Christ. It is inescapable.

Inevitably His mind finds expression in us, or is denied such expression. We are an up-to-the-minute edition of the Gospel, "the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart"-out on the street where it is "known and read of all men" (2Co 3:2-3).

Unless we allow the Spirit to write in us His full, perfect mind, the mind of Christ, our lives are bound to bring to our fellow-men a daily distortion of His truth, a daily misrepresentation of Him.

"You are writing a Gospel, a chapter each day,

By deeds that you do, by words that you say.

Men read what you write, whether faithless or true.

Say! What is the Gospel according to You?"

01.03. Christ the Goal of Life

Christ the Goal of Life The Onward Look

Php 3:1-21

Coming to Php 3:1-21 our viewpoint once again changes. Our eyes no longer turned backward to the Christ who was, we are now to look ONWARD to the Christ who is to be, a look that infilters into all present effort a new eagerness and enthusiasm. That the Holy Spirit has included this forward look in His treatise on Christian Experience speaks volumes for its practical value to the believer.

Outline

1- Warning against the Unregenerate among Them, Php 3:1-6.

(They have not Entered the Christian Race).

a-“Rejoice in the Lord” (Php 3:1 a). The one “Safe” Course (Php 3:1 b).

b-The Marks of the mere “Professor” (Php 3:2).

Unchanged as to:

(1) Nature (“dogs”),

(2) Conduct,

(3) Reliance upon old Religious Forms.

c-The Marks of the true Believer (Php 3:3).

Circumcised of Heart, they:

(1) Worship in the Spirit;

(2) Rejoice in Christ;

(3) Renounce confidence in the Flesh.

d-Paul’s Ground for Self-Righteousness (Php 3:4-6).

Possessed of:

(1) Pride of Birth;

(2) Pride of Position;

(3) Pride of Personal Devotion.

2- The Christian Race: Its Start, Php 3:7-9. a-Renouncing Self-Righteousness as Loss (Php 3:7-8).

b-Counting Christ and His Righteousness as Gain (Php 3:8-9).

3- The Christian Race: Its Running, Php 3:10-19. a-An Experimental Knowledge of Christ.

(In His Resurrection, Sufferings, Death) (Php 3:10).

The Assurance of Attaining the Goal.

(Of our own "Out-Resurrection") (Php 3:11).

b-Pressing on Eagerly for the Goal (Php 3:12-14).

(1) Not Counting ourselves to have Attained (Php 3:12-13 a).

(2) Forgetting the Things Behind (Php 3:13 b).

(3) Reaching on for the Things Before (Php 3:13 c).

(4) Intent upon the Prize of our High Calling (Php 3:14).

c-Exhortation to "Be thus Minded" (Php 3:15).

That we may "Walk" Worthily of the Race (Php 3:16).

d-The Apostolic Example to be Followed (Php 3:17).

The Shameful Walk of Others to be Shunned (Php 3:18-19).

4-The Christian Race: Its Finish, Php 3:20-21. a-Precious Fact: Citizenship in Heaven (Php 3:20 a).

b-Present Attitude: Looking for the Lord Jesus Christ (Php 3:20 b). c-Prospective Glory: Likeness to Him, even in Body (Php 3:21).

PHILIPPIANS

CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

CHRIST - The Source MIND - The Channel

Php 1:1-30

Php 2:1-30

Php 3:1-21

Php 4:1-23

WHERE HE IS

WITHIN US PERSONAL

BEHIND US PAST

BEFORE US FUTURE

WHAT HE IS

OUR LIFE Php 1:21

OUR EXAMPLE Php 2:5-8

OUR GOAL Php 3:14

HIS MIND IN US

GOSPEL MIND Php 1:5, Php 1:5, Php 1:7, Php 1:12, Php 1:17, Php 1:27

HUMBLE MIND Php 2:2-5

EAGER MIND LOSS-GAIN

APPEAL

SURRENDER TO HIM SUFFER FOR HIM

WORK OUT THE PATTERN WITHOUT MURMURING

CITIZENS OF HEAVEN CHRIST IS COMING

Sectional Chart - Chapter 3

Applying the mode of chart analysis already adopted, a reading of the chapter yields the following conclusions concerning its contents:

1. WHERE HE IS. Not Within us, as in Php 1:1-30, nor yet Behind us, as inPhp 2:1-30, but rather BEFORE US. Christ of the FUTURE; Christ in prospect; the Christ whom “we look for” (Php 3:20); “who SHALL change” etc. (Php 3:21).

And, let us be bearing in mind, we are urged to this view of Christ, not for theoretical purposes, no theory is advanced; nor yet for doctrinal purposes, no doctrine is propounded; but solely for practical purposes, for returns in the coin of Christian Experience.

2. WHAT HE IS. Our reading reveals the fact that central to the thought of the chapter is the figure of the Christian Race. And the GOAL of this race is Christ Himself (Php 3:14), the inspiration and incentive of our on-reaching endeavor. The “goal” and the “prize” it holds forth to view are “in Christ Jesus.” Spurred on by the prospect of Him we run the race.

3. His MIND IN US. Such a race earnestly undertaken, with such a goal, is bound to beget in us what we may well term an EAGER MIND. This eagerness of mind results from an utter reversal of values-things once “gain” are now “loss,” and vice versa-causing us to readily relinquish our grasp of the worthless things for which we formerly strove, that we may lay hold of those things that are possessed of a new-found value “in Christ Jesus” (Php 3:3-9).

1-Warning Against the Unregenerate, Php 3:1-6

Note

THE SETTING for this chapter is the presence in the Church, then as now, of those who bear no evidence of having been born again.

Their presence is noted by the Apostle as a problem, enforced by his own experience out of Christ (Php 3:4-6), for which the teaching of the chapter is the divinely appointed and adapted solution. Whatever else may be said of them, they fall short fundamentally in the fact that they have not as yet entered the Christian Race.

“FINALLY” (Php 3:1) is not used by way of conclusion but by way of transition to another important phase of Christian Experience. It has the force of “furthermore” (so rendered in 1Th 4:1); a further unfolding of the theme.

“REJOICE IN THE LORD” (Php 3:1 a). To this they are exhorted as their one “safe” course. Not merely “rejoice”- this is not the point just now; but “rejoice in the Lord” as opposed to the many things in which men are prone to rejoice-a rejoicing that results either in unrighteousness (Php 3:2) or in self-righteousness (Php 3:3-6).

PROFESSORS (Php 3:2) AND BELIEVERS (Php 3:3) CONTRASTED.

“Beware”-keep your eye on-“the dogs,” those who, strangers to grace, by their unchanged lives bring the unworthy ideals of the world into the Church, contrasted with the “we” of true, transforming faith and life “in Christ Jesus.”

PROFESSORS are:

1-In character (self-ward), unchanged in nature, tastes, appetites, desires-“dogs,” degraded and degrading, wanting in spiritual nature and capacity for spiritual things (see Php 3:19, 2Pe 2:12; 2Pe 2:22; Isa 56:10-11).

2-In conduct (neighbor-ward) they are counted “evil workers.” Their being flavors their doing. Even their best efforts cannot be called “good works.” For “a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Mat 7:17-18). Not themselves partakers of the Gospel they can create only confusion of thought and perversion of truth.

3-In worship (God-ward) they substitute for reality a legalism or formalism, to which the Apostle applies a term of reproach-“circumcision,” suggesting a senseless mutilation of the flesh, going beyond the law into a heathenism it prohibits (1Ki 18:28; Lev 21:5). In all this there is doubtless a distinct allusion to Judaizing teachers.

BELIEVERS, however, are the true “circumcision”-no longer an outward form prescribed by law, but an inward experience of the heart. Out of this experience we:

1- “Worship God in (by) the Spirit”-since His Spirit now indwells us, thus rendering to God the only acceptable worship (see John 4:23-24).

2-“Rejoice in Christ Jesus” whose redemption is so abundant as to supply us with a righteousness that covers all evil works as well as lack of good works. Praise His name and rejoice in Him alone!

3-“Have no confidence in the flesh.” Self, what man is by nature, lacks all inherent capability of goodness, as the Apostle elsewhere affirms: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth

no good thing” (Rom 7:18). The believer, then, has the only true life-God-ward, neighbor-ward, self-ward.

PAUL’S GROUND FOR SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS (Php 3:4-6). If any man ever had warrant for “confidence in the flesh”- resting in his natural endowment and attainment in the accepted Jewish faith and its legal requirements-Paul was that man. “I more” (Php 3:4). If ever a man could hope to find favor with God in and of himself, it was he, as he proceeds to set forth.

Note his:

1-Pride of Birth (Php 3:5 a). Not a proselyte, needing to be circumcised later in life, but born into the very heart of the Jewish race.

2-Pride of Position (Php 3:5 b). As a Pharisee he ranked the highest for orthodoxy and strict conformity to all the law required.

3-Pride of Personal Devotion (Php 3:6). Not lacking in “zeal”-though so woefully mistaken in it, as he later discovered; nor falling short in character or conduct-“blameless” as judged by strict legal standards.

Comment

MORE THAN MERE MORALITY. All that Paul has enumerated, his stock in trade as a devotee of the Jewish religion, merely contributed to his self-approbation. It is “confidence in the flesh”-a glorying in what self is and self does. His “ego” is pleased; others approve and praise; but throughout God is not even mentioned.

Much that goes by the name Religion is merely this, an attempt to be and do what is accounted “good,” a system of ethics that satisfies a human standard but utterly fails to “justify in His sight” (Rom 3:20). True religion relates us to God, saved, justified, approved of Him. What a change from seeking the approval of “self” and “others” to being “approved of God.” Life has a new center-“No longer I, but Christ.”

SINCERITY NOT SUFFICIENT. Sincerity is no substitute for knowing and acting upon the truth. Yet how often we hear the plea, “If a person is only sincere in what he believes.” Paul was sincere, intensely so; yet his very sincerity, based upon a false belief, led him to a course of action that became the regret of his life (1Co 15:9; Gal 1:13). Note his confession:

“Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief” (1Ti 1:13).

Boasted sincerity becomes confessed ignorance. And thousands of souls, perfectly sincere in the ignorance of unbelief, have walked on into the jaws of death. To “love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity”-this is life.

“REJOICE IN CHRIST” (Php 3:3). Such is Paul’s description of a Christian. Not merely to believe in Him but to rejoice in Him, as against the things that please and pamper “the flesh.”

Many a man, professedly a follower of Christ, is today out on the high seas of a worldly, pleasure-seeking life. Why? He asked Christ to save him, but not to satisfy him.

To rejoice in Christ is to find Him our All-in-All, filling and flooding the soul with an exuberance of life to which others are strangers. There is no greater guarantee of a godly life or safeguard against a worldly one.

When we let Him satisfy, we “put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof” (Rom 13:14). The Christian Life a Race From this on the thought of the chapter is pressed into the imagery of the Race, so familiar to the Greek mind. The first step is the Start; then comes the Running; finally the Finish.

The difficulty with the unbeliever, even the most moral and most religious, is that he is not even in the Christian race. He has never made a start.

JESUS THE START AND FINISH. The Race of Faith, in which we are called to succeed the Old Testament worthies (Heb 11:1-40), is described as one into which Jesus has introduced us-its “Author”; in the running of which He is at all times the inspiration-“Looking unto Jesus”; and in which He Himself leads on to a glorious finish-its “Finisher.”

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb 12:1-2).

Note how closely our chapter corresponds in its sequence of thought: The Start (Php 3:7-9); The Running (Php 3:10-19); The Finish (Php 3:20-21). See Outline.

Here, then, is the solution sought for the problem with which this chapter opens-the problem of mere morality, or even dead religious formality, in either case a total lack of spiritual vitality. The solution is this:

A GENUINE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST-

1. Resting in His Righteousness, to the Renouncing of any fancied Righteousness of our own (Php 3:7-9).
2. Reaching on toward Perfection, to be Realized only in Him (Php 3:10-19).
3. Receiving its triumphant Completion, in the Redemption of the Body, at our Lord's Return (Php 3:20-21).

2-The Christian Race: Its Start, Php 3:7-9

Note

“BUT” (Php 3:7). This “but” is the pivot around which Paul's life became revolutionized-changed from Saul to Paul. Into it is pressed all of his Damascus Road experience. He saw Christ in personal revelation. He cried, “Who art Thou, Lord?” He there began asking, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” As he yielded, Christ revealed to him became Christ revealed in him (Gal 1:16). The light that shone about him became a transforming illumination within him. Henceforth his life revolves about a Person.

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the FACE OF JESUS CHRIST” (2Co 4:6).

RENOUNCING SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS AS LOSS (Php 3:7-8). The reversal of values is instant and complete. “Whatsoever things were gains”-plural, as enumerated above (Php 3:4-6), things he individually prized and prided himself in-“those I counted loss”-singular, lumped together in one lot-“loss for Christ” (Php 3:7).

This is the first step in the Christian life, for the Apostle and for the humblest believer:

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For who soever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it” (Luk 9:23-24).

COUNTING CHRIST AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AS GAIN (Php 3:8-9). Into this brief statement of personal experience Paul compresses the whole doctrinal teaching of Rom 1:1-32, Rom 2:1-29, Rom 3:1-31, Rom 4:1-25, Rom 5:1-21. That there is no such thing as “a righteousness of mine own” is his powerful plea, proved in Rom Ch 1:18-3:20. That the only righteousness one can ever hope to have is “that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith” (Php 3:9)-this is his great declaration, illustrated and enforced in Rom 3:21-31, Rom 4:1-25, Rom 5:1-21.

Here in Philippians Paul has given his own personal experience out of which grew his statement of the doctrine of Justification by Faith. For us the Spirit reverses the process: out of the doctrine grows our experience. Comment

SEEING THE LORD. For the early disciples, Christian experience began when they began to say one to the other, “We have seen the Lord.” Crucified, dead, risen again- and we have seen Him! Two things at once follow: A sense of “loss,” in self; a sense of “gain,” in Him. A great light breaks, before which the stars of our fancied goodness fade into nothingness. In the brightness of a transfiguration experience, His and ours, we see “Jesus only.” We wonder that the things which, since our eyes were opened by the sight of Him, seem only tawdry tinsel, could ever have enamored us. Constrained to “count them but refuse,” into the discard they go. In Him is our righteousness, our riches and our rejoicing.

“For Him I count as gain each loss,

Disgrace for Him renown;

Well may I glory in my cross,

While He prepares my crown.”

“FOUND IN HIM” (Php 3:9) has the forward look characteristic of this chapter-forward to the future coming of our Lord when all hearts will be revealed. Not to be found “in Him” in that day will mean our unspeakable shame and confusion.

“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming” (1Jn 2:28).

3-The Christian Race: Its Running, Php 3:10-19

Note

Possessed of Christ's righteousness, his further desire is for a personal knowledge of Him, in the power of spiritual intimacy and fellowship. By the former he became a Christian, entered the race. By this latter he seeks to live the life, to run successfully the race. The former took us through Rom 1:1-32, Rom 2:1-29, Rom 3:1-31, Rom 4:1-25, Rom 5:1-21; this finds us in Rom 6:1-23, Rom 7:1-25, Rom 8:1-39.

AN EXPERIMENTAL KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST (Php 3:10). Our success in the Christian life is dependent upon our knowing Him, in a fellowship, a participation in the great, initial, pivotal facts of the Christian faith-His resurrection and its antecedent sufferings and death.

All this is the familiar language of Rom 6:1-13. Here we are to "know" (three times) Him in the experimental value of our union with Him in these experiences-that "with Him" we were crucified, were buried, were raised again, and now walk in newness of life. All "with Him." The "power" of these experiences with Him lies in the privilege to "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 6:11) and to "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom 6:13).

THE ASSURANCE OF OUR OWN OUT-RESURRECTION. I desire thus to know Him, "If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from among the dead" (Php 3:11). Were we to refer these words to a present, spiritual resurrection life, we would cause Paul to contradict himself. Such resurrection, he teaches us, is an accomplished fact, a past experience; we, by virtue of our union with Christ, "were raised together with Christ" (Col 3:1).

He is looking forward to the resurrection and transformation of the body (cf. Php 3:20; Php 3:21) as a part of his "goal" prospect. The literal wording is unique, occurring nowhere else in the New Testament, and made doubly forceful: "If by any means I may attain unto the out-resurrection, the one from among the dead." Paul invents a word to express his thought. Otherwise his verbiage is the same as our Lord's: "They that are accounted worthy to attain unto that age, and the resurrection, the one from among the dead" (Luk 20:35).

The teaching of the verse is two-fold:

First, a selective resurrection, out from among those who will be left. Not out from the state of death, notice, but from among others who are dead. The Scriptures do not teach a general resurrection, but the following order:

- 1- "Christ the First-Fruits" (1Co 15:23 a).
- 2- "They that are Christ's" (1Co 15:23 b) or "The dead in Christ" (1Th 4:16).
- 3- "The rest of the dead" (Rev 20:5). *

*Tragelles, eminent Biblical scholar and critic, translates. Dan 12:2 as follows: "Many from among the sleepers of the dust shall awake; these shall be unto everlasting life; but those (the rest of the sleepers) shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt."

Second. This explains Paul's earnest longing and endeavor to "attain" the resurrection in question. Were there a general resurrection he would be compelled to participate. But he purposes not to be left out when the selective resurrection occurs.

Paul's earnest desire to "attain" implies the danger and possibility of not attaining. *

* "If by any means." The Greek expression found here "is used when an end is proposed, but failure is presumed to be possible." Dean Alford.

Doubtless many will be disappointed. Such a contingency is a great incentive to a closer walk with Him, to a present life of holy living, "the power of His resurrection," to "make our calling and election sure," that so we may be "found in Him."

PRESSING ON EAGERLY FOR THE GOAL (Php 3:12-14). "Not as though I had already attained" (Php 3:12 a). Attained what? The knowing of Him in intimate, transforming power- verse Php 3:10. Contemplating this untapped wealth of experience, he repudiates the thought that he has already "attained," or is "already perfect" (Php 3:12 b), or has "apprehended" (laid hold of) that for which he was "apprehended (laid hold of) by Christ Jesus" (Php 3:12 c, Php 3:13 a).

The lure of this unattained purpose and possibility-the purpose on Christ's part in laying hold of him for the Christian life; the possibility on his part as he lays hold on that purpose-these have made of Paul an eager, indefatigable athlete (Php 3:13-14). He is intent on "one thing." "Forgetting the behind things" (Php 3:13 b)-they have lost their grip on him, and "stretching forward to the before things" (Php 3:13 c) -one can see the alert, bent-forward figure of the runner, pressing on under a great urge.

Why does he thus "press on?" His mind is intent, his eye is fixed upon "the goal"; it holds all that he has come to count worthwhile-"the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Php 3:14). The Greek means "calling on high, above." His is double progress, in an onward and upward race.

EXHORTATION TO BE THUS MINDED (Php 3:15). "Therefore" turns us back to vs. Php 3:3, "For we are" etc. Since we are Christians, followers of Christ, have entered the race, "let us therefore be thus minded" and press on in it to gain the goal.

"As many as be perfect" is Paul's appeal to every believer, including himself ("let us"); yet he has just denied being perfect. There is no discrepancy. He is referring to different stages of "the race." As each contestant in the Grecian games was examined and pronounced fit or "perfect," so the Christian.

Every believer, on entering the race, acquires a POSITION which is perfect, complete "in Christ" and His righteousness (Php 3:9). However, in running the race, our CONDITION is "not perfect"; in attainment we are immature, undeveloped, far short of our goal (Php 3:10-14).

When we believed we became endowed with His mind (1Co 2:16), hence God can, and will, reveal to us wherein our mindedness falls short of being "thus minded." It is God who is working in us (1Co 2:13). Only we must not slip back from present attainments, but from them continue to carry on. We succeed in the "race" as we maintain a right "walk" (1Co 2:16).

EXAMPLES TO BE IMITATED AND SHUNNED (Php 3:17-19). The lofty inward aspirations of the runner must find expression in an outward walk or manner of conduct that is wholly and worthily in keeping. The pattern is Christ (Php 2:1-39). As Paul, therefore, is an imitator of Christ (1Co 11:1) he does not hesitate to bid them "Become my fellow-imitators of Christ" (Php 3:17 a), and "mark" or note with a view to following their example "them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample" (Php 3:17 b).

In contrast is the walk of many, calling forth the Apostolic warning, even with tears, "that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ" (Php 3:18). They have in practice denied its power (cf. Gal 5:24; Gal 6:14). Their forward look (in contrast to ours who look for a Saviour [Php 3:20]) is only "destruction"; a finality in keeping with their present carnality, "who," with no mind to pursue this heavenly race, "mind earthly things" (Php 3:19).

Comment

EXPERIENCING CHRIST. Merely to be a Christian should as little satisfy a man as to have bread without eating it or to possess a mine without working it. The Welsh miners commonly speak of "winning" the coal, meaning the sinking of deeper shafts to uncover fresh layers of ore in yet more abundant supply. If we are His followers in saving faith, we "have" Him; now we must "know" Him. Know the "values" there are in Him. Know Him in the power of His resurrection, in the fellowship of His sufferings, in conformity to His death.

We hear the cry, "Back to Christ." This is the way back. Here are the guide-posts to the real Christ, to His very person, presence and power. In His sufferings, death and resurrection is our meeting ground with "Him." They are our spiritual Garden of Fellowship with Him. To thus get back to Christ is the beginning of a "walk with Him in newness of life," out into a future of unfettered liberty.

"ONE THING" CHRISTIANS. It takes courage and concentration of purpose to declare one's self out for just "one thing," but the Cause of Christ is deserving of such a declaration. "Seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness"; He will add whatever "things" are needed. Moses did it, pushing many things aside for the one (Heb 11:24-27). Our Lord did it (John 4:34; John 8:28-29). Paul did it (Php 3:13-14). D. L. Moody did it. When he heard someone say, "God has yet to show the world what He can do through a man wholly given up to Him," he said, "I will be that man." The world knows something of the result; eternity will tell the rest. Some one who reads this will do it, to their present and everlasting satisfaction. Reader, are you that one?

"GOAL" "PRIZE" "HIGH CALLING" "IN CHRIST JESUS." It is a great and blessed experience to have seen all these "in Christ Jesus," luring us on. We must indeed see them and sense them ere we are moved eagerly to set out after them. It is like a telescope. Looking into it we see a "goal"-we want to run. Pulling out a section we see a goal with a "prize"-we are eager to run and "attain." Pulling out another section we see the goal and its prize involve a "high calling"-we want to run worthily. Looking again we see, not the goal, not the prize, not even the high calling, but "Christ Jesus"; they are all in Him. We run as seeing Him-"Looking unto Jesus." At the end of the race we're going to meet Him, and hear Him speak in bestowment of the crown (2Ti 4:7-8; Mat 25:21; et al).

"TYPES" OF CHRIST. "Ye have us for an ensample." The Greek is type. Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, David, etc., were "types" of Christ, their lives so molded as to picture some

phase of our Lord's person and work, pointing forward to Him before He came. But in as real a sense He has ordained us "types," our lives by His indwelling Spirit pressed into the mold of His likeness, that now, after Christ has gone hence, men may be pointed to Him by our "walk" among them. We "ought to walk even as He walked" (1Jn 2:6). What a responsibility, just being a follower of Christ!

A SUMMARY. The secret of successfully running the Race may be summarily told in just three words: To "know" (Php 3:10); to "apprehend" (Php 3:12-14); to "exemplify" (Php 3:17).

4-The Christian Race: Its Finish, Php 3:20-21 The verbiage of this section is in many respects remarkable. Those who can should read it in the Greek. What it says literally, is this:

"For the citizen state (state with free citizen rights) to which we belong, is (exists of old) in the heavens whence we are looking (away) with earnest expectation for (the coming of) a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform (refashion) the body of humbling we now have, making it of like form and nature with the body of glory He now has, according to power which is His to bring everything into subjection to Himself."

Paul at the outset expressed himself as "confident that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Php 1:6).

He has now led us on to that day. The Christian life began with Christ as its Author; the course has been run in constant looking to Christ as its Inspirer; it is concluded with Christ as its Finisher.

The chapter's conclusion is a remarkable one, in that it summarizes the past, the present and the future of the Race, yet all with a forward, onward reach to that which lies BEFORE.

Note

PRECIOUS FACT (Php 3:20 a), a long-established fact; our citizenship, the state where we hold free citizen rights, "is" in Heaven, nay, it has existed from of old (so the Greek). Compare Mat 25:34 : "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Again: "In My Father's house are many mansions [abiding places] . . . I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2).

Since our life as citizens is in heaven, we have only a life as pilgrims here. We are just passing through. Like the patriarchs, we "look for a city" (same root word, city-zen). This keeps us free from the earthly and sensual around us (Php 3:18-19). He has given us our legal "residence" over there.

PRESENT ATTITUDE (Php 3:20 b). "We look for," not in the sense of idly gazing; the word is carefully chosen and means, wait with eager expectation of receiving Him who is coming. "Look for a Saviour," in that He will then bring His redemptive work to completion in believers and in society.

Note the same wording and thought in Heb 9:28 : "Unto them that LOOK FOR Him shall He appear the second time apart from sin unto SALVATION." Also 1Co 1:7 : "So that ye came behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The lexicon says it means "assiduously and patiently to wait for." Why should any follower of Christ fail to take this attitude?

PROSPECTIVE GLORY (Php 3:21). Salvation, not an initial step (Acts 16:31), nor yet a process (Php 2:12), but a finished product-"the redemption of our body" (Rom 8:21) as necessary to our

“adoption” into the heavenly state. (See 1Co 15:50-53). The body must be, and will be, “refashioned” from what it is now, a “body of humbling,” into likeness to that which He now has, a “body of glory.”

This climax of Christian Experience is the complement and consummation of His Humiliation and Exaltation (Php 2:5-11). In Humiliation He came to share our likeness on earth. In Exaltation He eagerly awaits our sharing His likeness in glory. Every Christian should be as eager and expectant of that day as He.

Will He do it? The guarantee is the power that is His “whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.”

Comment

A RESUME. In resume of the race we discover three words that tell the whole story. (The fact that they begin with G should forever seal the three steps in memory).

1. Starting the Race-GAIN in Christ (Php 3:7-9).
2. Running the Race-GOAL in Christ (Php 3:10-19).
3. Finishing the Race-GLORY in Christ (Php 3:20-21).

Their doctrinal statement would be: Justification, Sanctification, Glorification.

One can readily correlate with these the three essential, cardinal virtues, Faith, Love and Hope.

- Faith, reaching back and resting in the Cross;
- Love, laying hold of the living Christ and filling the present with power to live and labor for Him;
- Hope, reaching on before, quickened by His promised coming again and all related experiences.

WHAT IS OUR HOPE? The Church should know the outcome of its gospelizing efforts, that it may intelligently direct them. Is it the conversion of the world? If it were, how freely might we expect Christ and the Apostles to refer to it for our encouragement. Yet we have not one single utterance warranting us to hope this. (Let the reader scrutinize his New Testament in search of one instance).

Rather, in the Holy Spirit's arrangement of the canon, He has placed last among the Church messages those that have as their theme the Hope of Christ's coming again-1 and 2 Thessalonians. In 1 Thessalonians, note the three virtues, Faith, Love, Hope (1Th 1:3), and the fact that each chapter closes with teaching concerning the Hope of His return. Second Thessalonians features the Man of Sin, whose career necessitates our Lord's personal return in power and glory, the only power known to Scripture for his destruction (2Th 2:1-12). Query: What must be man's state of mind and heart at the end of the age, converted or not converted, in a society that produces, fosters and receives the Antichrist just preceding Christ's return? Read verses 2Th 2:9-12.

Again, the General Epistles are placed last, having reference to “the last times.” James, Peter, John exhort to Faith, Hope and Love. Jude warns of the breaking down of these virtues in

apostasy and ungodliness. Then follows the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Such is the revealed mind of the Spirit.

A PROGRESSIVE EXPERIENCE. A progressive revelation calls for, and is designed to develop, a progressive experience. Some people seem to center their Christian living wholly in the past, in what Christ DID FOR US. While there is no other place or way to begin, and while we cannot get beyond or away from the Cross, this is wholly unscriptural and leads to an unprogressive experience, a going round in a circle.

Christ and the Apostles never so taught the Cross, but with it presented another center of Christian Experience- the fact of His coming again. All the Apostles hold forth this expectation in their writings; they preached it from the very beginning (Acts 3:20; Acts 15:16; 1Th 5:1-2). This, held in prospect by the early Church, largely contributed to its zeal, enthusiasm and indomitable spirit. They rejoiced in what He is GOING TO DO. They had a glorious future in view; they were going somewhere.

As His Cross calls for Faith, His Coming Again calls for Hope. This gives us two centers, a life of forward movement and progress.

The law of the ellipse is that the sum of the distances from the two foci to any point on the circumference is always equal, a constant quantity. Let the circumference represent the experience of Christians from the beginning till now. First Century believers were constantly under the power and influence of both the Cross and the Coming. It was MEANT TO BE the same in the tenth, twelfth or twentieth-a constant admixture of Faith and Hope. We have not a normal New Testament Experience if this is not so with us.

Passing into solid geometry for the moment, we add the element of Love, relating us to the Christ now in glory, flooding our lives with His presence and power, filling in the whole gap between His first and second appearing. (Rom 5:5; Eph 3:16-19). The race of Php 3:1-21 is run in the power and spur of the Love of the living Christ as well as the Hope of the coming Christ. Both are on-reaching, toward a Christ as yet not "apprehended."

THE SCRIPTURAL ATTITUDE. If the Church today could have the same clear-visioned conception of a Coming Christ, with the consequent eager enthusiasm and devotion evinced by the early Church; but-what has happened that she cannot have it? She may; and she should. It is the Scriptural attitude for every age of her earthly course.

Three considerations:

1-The Scriptures everywhere present the coming of Christ as a FACT. And all evangelical Christians believe and accept the fact.

2-The fact is a large part of our body of teaching. Christ and all the Apostles of record TEACH and preach His return, just as they do His atoning death, etc. If a man fail to teach the atonement, he is confessedly unscriptural. If he fail to teach the Lord's Return, he is equally unscriptural.

3- The fact is everywhere presented in the New Testament as the INCENTIVE FOR BETTER LIVING. Upon this fact is based the appeal for every worthy Christian grace and duty. That is, it is presented as a matter possessing large SPIRITUAL VALUES. An experience rather than a

doctrine. It is so in Philippians.

The fact that the Holy Spirit found it needful to include the Coming of Christ in His treatise on Christian Experience, as necessary to the rounding out of that experience in every believer, should be carefully considered by every Christian.

It is not a question of when the Lord will come, or whether we shall live to see the actual event; but it is a question of taking the right attitude toward His coming, for present practical and spiritual purposes.

EVERY CHRISTIAN, OF EVERY AGE OF THE CHURCH, HAS THE RIGHT, NAY THE DUTY, TO LOOK FOR HIS LORD'S RETURN.

Reader, are you the eager, earnest, expectant, enthusiastic follower of Christ that this Hope will enable you to be? Have you the Experience of His Coming? Are you running with eye fixed on the Goal of divine revelation?

01.04. Christ the All-Sufficiency of Life

Christ the All-Sufficiency of Life The Upward Look

Php 4:1-23

Once again, in this developing panorama, we are called to take another view of Christ. The full rounding out of Christian Experience comes from Christ ABOVE. Christ in Heaven, in present possession of power, sympathetically longing to exercise it on behalf of His people on earth. This He does as they avail themselves of their privileged position “in Him.”

The chapter consists of concluding exhortations and assurances for those who are “in Christ Jesus.”

Outline 1- Our Duty and Privilege “In the Lord,” Php 4:1-5.

Exhortations to

a-Stand Fast in the Lord (Php 4:1). b-Be of the Same Mind in the Lord (Php 4:2).

(To this end we should Help one another) (Php 4:3).

c-Rejoice in the Lord (Php 4:4). d-Show Consideration for All-the Lord is Near (Php 4:5).

2- His Sufficient Provision: Through Our Prayer Life, Php 4:6-7. a-Anxious for Nothing (Php 4:6 a). b-Prayerful for Everything (Php 4:6 b). c-Thankful for Anything (Php 4:6 c). d-Result-Protection of the Peace of God (Php 4:7).

3- His Sufficient Provision: Through Our Thought Life, Php 4:8-9. a-Thinking that Dwells on Worthy Things (Php 4:8).

b-Doing that Follows the Apostolic Example (Php 4:9 a).

c-Result-Presence of the God of Peace (Php 4:9 b).

4- His Sufficient Provision: Through Our Daily Necessities, Php 4:10-19

a-Their Care of the Apostle Rejoices Him (Php 4:10).

b-His Lessons in Contentment (Php 4:11-12).

c-He can “Do All Things” in Christ’s Strengthening (Php 4:13). d-They have Supplied the Need of God’s Servant (Php 4:14-18). e-God will “Supply All Your Need” (Php 4:19).

5-Parting Salutations and Benedictions, Php 4:20-23.

PHILIPPIANS

CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

CHRIST - The Source MIND - The Channel

Php 1:1-30

Php 2:1-25

Php 3:1-21

Php 4:1-23

WHERE HE IS

WITHIN US PERSONAL

BEHIND US PAST

BEFORE US FUTURE

ABOVE VS PRESENT

WHAT HE IS

OUR LIFE Php 1:21

OUR EXAMPLE Php 2:5-8

OUR GOAL Php 2:14

OUR SUFFICIENCY Php 4:6-7, Php 4:13, Php 4:19

HIS MIND IN US

GOSPEL MIND Php 1:5, Php 1:7 Php 1:12, Php 1:17, Php 1:27

HUMBLE MIND Php 2:2-5

EAGER MIND LOSS-GAIN

CONTENTED MIND Php 4:2, Php 4:7, Php 4:11

APPEAL

SURRENDER TO HIM SUFFER FOR HIM

WORK OUT THE PATTERN WITHOUT MURMURING

CITIZENS OF HEAVEN CHRIST IS COMING

PRAY AND PRAISE APPROPRIATE HIS PROMISES

Sectional Chart - Chapter 4

Submitting the chapter to our Chart method of analysis, its contents yield the following as their chief thought-currents:

1. WHERE HE IS. Not Within us (Php 1:1-30), nor Behind us (Php 2:1-30), nor yet Before us (Php 3:1-21), but ABOVE US.

All Scripture bears abundant testimony that our Christ is Above: There He was seen to ascend following His resurrection and forty days of earth tarrying (Acts 1:9-11). Stephen, in martyrdom, saw Him there (Acts 7:55-56). From Heaven He appeared to Saul (Acts 9:3; Acts 9:5; Acts 9:27). There John saw Him in vision (Rev 1:9-18). There we are taught to see Him by faith (Heb 9:24; 1Jn 2:1; Rev 3:21).

And He is Above Us, not merely spacially, but in the position and possession of a power He delights to call to our aid. For His power is fraught with love. He is brooding over us. (Cf. Mat 23:37).

In loving concern He is ever “a very present help” to all who will accept and appropriate His gracious oversight. Not the Christ of the Past, nor yet of the Future, but of the now living Present, made known particularly through Prayer and Providence.

2. WHAT HE IS. As His power is limitless and “it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell” (Col 1:19), there is an experience of ALL-SUFFICIENCY for those who are “in Him.”

Note the “All’s”: in prayer (Php 4:6-7); in strength supplied (Php 4:13); in need met (Php 4:19).

Note further the explanation in each instance: “In Christ Jesus” (Php 4:7); “In Him” (Php 4:13); “In Christ Jesus” (Php 4:19). He is our All-Sufficiency.

3. His MIND IN US. Resting in such infinite resources, relying upon One who never fails, results in a CONTENTED Mind “in whatsoever state” (Php 4:11). Circumstances the most disconcerting are offset by “the peace of God which (sur)-passeth all understanding” keeping guard over the “heart and mind” (Php 4:7).

We are prepared to anticipate the fact that Christian Experience finds its floodtide in this final chapter. It is as though all previous truth and experience, like successive waves, piling higher and higher, here burst all bounds and come to a climax of fulness. The World’s Most Wonderful Person-My Best Friend

Today a Man is in Heaven, seated at the right hand of God, the supreme place of power in the universe. This Man (no less God) is charged with exercising the prerogatives of the Godhead to the remotest ends of creation.

That Man loves me. He knows me through and through and still loves me. He loves me as no other person in the world. He has proved His love in that He died for me. He gave up His life that I might live. He did it under the scoffs and scorns, the hisses and hatreds of men. He is just the same today (Heb 13:8). He has a tender concern for me at this moment (Heb 4:14-16; Heb 7:25). He would do for me what no one in all the world would do.

He would-but can He do it?

Listen! When He had died the death for me, and risen again in great triumph, conscious that He had achieved the victory of the ages, Conqueror that He was over principalities, dominions and powers, He cried, “All authority, all power, is Mine in heaven and on earth-in heaven where I am going to exercise it, on earth where you will still be to need it.”

Two levels, the heavenly and the earthly, are comprehended in the sphere and exercise of His all-power and all-authority. That Man is at God's right hand. What does it mean? That the most wonderful Person in the world is my best Friend.

To illustrate. In our government, the man who most nearly approaches the "right hand of power" is the Secretary of State. Let us suppose Mr. Charles Hughes to be occupying that position, as he once did so worthily. Let us further assume that he and you grew up together in York State. You hear of his coming to such a post of honor and power. You write to congratulate him. Your note begins: "My dear Charlie." To you he is still "Charlie" and you familiarly refer to boyhood days.

When Mr. Hughes gets your letter, he leans back in his chair to enjoy it. It is like a refreshing breeze in the heat of summer. To answer it he does not call his secretary. With his own hand he pens his reply: "My dear Jim." You are still "Jim" to him. He recalls some boyhood pranks you had forgotten, and then adds: "Now, remember, I'm Charlie and you're Jim. If there is anything I can do for you do not fail to let me know."

What does it not mean to one to have such a friend, one who is lifted to a place of exceptional power, yet is unchanged in his affectionate concern for you. Such, and much more, is your Friend in Heaven. What if you never call on Him; never invite Him to use His power on your behalf. Can't you see how it hurts Him? Do you count on His friendship and help? Are you enriched by His special care? It was for this, that you might have such an experience of Him, that Philippians 4 was put in God's Book.

1-Our Duty and Privilege "In the Lord," Php 4:1-5

Note

"WHEREFORE" (Php 4:1) closely links this series of exhortations with the conclusion of Php 3:1-21; an outstanding instance of Scripture's designed use of the fact and expectation of our Lord's return to enjoin and urge a present life in all respects worthy of Him.

"Stand fast" (Php 4:1). The Christian has many exhortations indicating much need to "stand" and "stand fast" (Eph 6:13-14; 1Co 16:13; Gal 5:1; Col 4:12, et al). In Philippians he has a threefold duty: to "run" (Php 3:13-14); to "walk" (Php 3:17); to "stand" (Php 4:1).

THE HUMAN BOND. "My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, my dearly beloved" (Php 4:1) makes an added appeal, from the human side. Association "in the Lord" forms between us a strong, yet tender tie, which the Spirit makes use of beyond our ken. (With "joy and crown" compare "crown of rejoicing," used in the same connection, "in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming" [1Th 2:19]).

"I EXHORT, I EXHORT" (Php 4:2), tactfully urging two women at variance each to seek "the same mind in the Lord." Their difference is not "in the Lord." He has one mind, of which they must each seek to be possessed. In such effort, often most delicate and difficult, some other Christian, in position to help, should proffer aid (Php 4:3).

What a blessed ministry, "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3). Too frequently "busy bodies" serve to disrupt the Lord's body.

“REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS; AGAIN I SAY REJOICE” (Php 4:4). The keynote of the Epistle, and the key to the Christian experience it expounds. Living “in Him” (Php 1:1), we must also rejoice in Him, if we are to experience the riches of His resources.

Show “considerateness” (Php 4:5). As a testimony “unto all men” we are to show forbearance, gentleness, yieldedness in relation to others, not a strict demand of our rights in dealing with them. Motive urging to it: “The Lord is at hand,” either in His soon expected coming or in His present nearness. Read Jas 5:7-9.

Comment

LIVING OUR LIFE “IN THE LORD.” He is the sphere of our life, both inward and spiritual, and outward and practical. The one is the root of which the other is the fruit.

The Epistles mark this distinction by a discriminating use of names: “Christ” or “Christ Jesus” for the former; “Lord” or “Lord Jesus Christ” for the latter. * E.g., In Ephesians: we have our life “in Christ” (Eph 1:3; Eph 1:12; Eph 2:6; Eph 2:10; Eph 2:14, et al). We live out our life, we serve, “in the Lord” (Eph 4:17; Eph 5:8; Eph 6:10, et al).

* This usage of names, as found in Romans, is treated at length in the author’s book, “His Salvation As Set Forth in the Book of Romans,” Chapter 11.

So Philippians. As His saints we live “in Christ Jesus” (Php 1:1); in Him we glory (Php 1:26); have our consolation (Php 2:1); rejoice (Php 3:3); the prize of our high calling is in Him (Php 3:14). But for practical living we are exhorted to: “Rejoice in the Lord” (Php 3:1); “Stand fast in the Lord” (Php 4:1); “Be of the same mind in the Lord” (Php 4:2); “Rejoice in the Lord always” (Php 4:4).

He who has received Christ as his life (Php 1:1-30); has taken Him as his Pattern (Php 2:1-30); finds in Him his life’s goal (Php 3:1-21) - such an one must be careful to live his life “in the Lord,” yielded to Him, controlled by Him as His Lord and Master.

PREPARATIONS FOR APPROPRIATING HIS PROVISIONS OF GRACE. All this preparatory; merely putting ourselves in position to claim and enjoy the fulness of His bounty, the riches He has for us “in Christ Jesus.”

There is a life that can, and does, know the peace of God as a constant experience (Php 4:6-7); that has the sweet sense of His presence at all times (Php 4:8-9); that is made sufficient with divine strengthening (Php 4:13); that has its every need supplied (Php 4:19). It’s a life lived “in the Lord” (Php 4:1-5).

For example, consider the conditions of successful prayer: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psa 66:18). Then Euodias and Syntyche, you had best be reconciled.

Again, “If ye abide in Me, ask what ye will” (John 15:7). Then we must be careful to “so stand fast in the Lord.” Again, “If our heart condemn us not” (1Jn 3:21); then our heart must be rejoicing in the Lord (Php 4:4). Again, “Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight” (1Jn 3:22), i.e., “love one another” (Php 4:23). Then we had best show gentleness and considerateness to others (Php 4:5). The Two Levels: An Illustration Jesus says, “All power is Mine, in Heaven (where I am), and on

earth (where you are)-abide in Me.”

The ocean diver, in pursuit of his task, leaves his native air, absolutely necessary to his existence, and drops down through fathoms of water to the bottom of the sea. There he would die but for the air tube attached to his person. He lives by virtue of its constant, uninterrupted supply of air. Working on the lower level, he still “lives, moves and has his being” in the atmosphere of the upper level.

So the Christian. He is a pilgrim, away from home, out of his native element (Php 3:20). His life is in Christ, his Head, now in Heaven. (And, recall, the body breathes the air through its head). Only as we abide in Him do we live. “Severed from Me, ye can do nothing”-just as true of us as of the diver. Our chief necessity is to so abide “in the Lord,” while down here in this pilgrim walk, that we can draw upon His all-sufficient provision for us.

2-His Sufficient Provision: Through Our Prayer Life, Php 4:6-7

Note

A THREE-FOLD PRESCRIPTION (Php 4:6), just as explicit as our physician might give, compounding three elements:

1. Anxious for no-thing.
2. Prayerful for every-thing.
3. Thankful for any-thing.

Let a man practice these in simple, trustful following of directions, and there is bound to result in his experience

A PROMISED PEACE (Php 4:7). “The peace of God which passeth knowledge (surpasseth our natural powers of understanding, so unaccounted for by our circumstances, so contrary to them), SHALL keep (guard over) your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” It is military language. As a garrison of soldiers God will have His peace take possession of our hearts and minds. He will throw the cordon of His peace about us to ward off every worrying, vexatious thought that would infest us.

Comment

Some one has quaintly said, “Care and Prayer are as mutually opposed as Fire and Water.”

It is not merely that we pray. We must do so instinctively, “in everything,” before our mind begins its worrying, just as the child runs to its parent with its torn dress and distress of heart. Be instant with the upturned eye of faith and trust.

Nor is prayer all. Many keep praying, while they neglect to praise and give thanks. If we fail to thank Him for what He is doing, why should He do more? “In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1Th 5:18).

TAKE THE PRESCRIPTION. Handed a prescription with three elements, we are not free to select two and omit one. The druggist compounds them and we take them ALL. Take this, God’s

prescription, just as given, as often as you need it, many times a day if necessary, and you will find His peace resulting.

The writer has in mind a young business woman. She was mentally, spiritually and physically, a wreck. She appealed to us for relief. We gave her several Scriptures, this one in particular, with the above suggestions and directions. She was soon restored. How many of God's people need it.

How they dishonor their "Best Friend" by not drawing upon Him. Distracted one, take it today.

CHRIST'S CURE FOR CARE. Our Heavenly Father has made provision "in Christ" for a LIFE WITHOUT WORRY. For example, He says:

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth (is caring) for you" (1Pe 5:7).

Note the ALL. Many try to cast some of their care on Him and find no relief. Their pet cares they struggle with themselves. He knows they do not really trust, and says, "My child, until you cast it ALL on Me, you can keep it all yourself." Our "all care" is matched by His "all power."

Note the reason attached. How God reasons with us. "FOR He is caring for you." Is not that enough? The most wonderful Person in the world is caring for me.

"Tis enough that THOU dost care;

Why should I the burden bear."

Some years ago a man with horse and wagon overtook a pedestrian carrying a pack on his back. He stopped and proffered a ride, which was accepted.

Presently, as they rode along, the man observed that the one to whom he was giving a "lift" still carried his bundle. "Friend," said the man, "put your pack down and rest yourself."

"Oh no," was the reply, "it's too kind of you to ask me to ride; I would not burden you with my bundle."

You smile. His was all waste effort. The horse and wagon both had the burden, AND HE HAD IT TOO. Foolish indeed; yet no more so than the Christian who fails to cast his care on Him who undergirds him (Deu 33:27).

Other care-cure Scriptures abound. Read:

Mat 6:25-34 : The birds-"your Heavenly Father (not theirs; they are only creatures) feedeth them." The flowers -"shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no anxious thought . . . for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Heb 12:2 -"Looking (away) unto Jesus." So the Greek. Look away from the things that worry to Him in whom is no worry. Remember, Christ does not worry. If we look to Him to keep us abiding in Him as our life and our sphere of life, no worry can result.

Isa 26:3 -"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee." Not whose circumstances are right, but "whose mind is stayed on Him." This fits into the teaching of our Epistle. There's good psychology in it as well as good theology. It is giving God a

chance to keep us. He will, if we will.

Psa 37:1-7 -Read these verses and underscore the verbs in your Bible: "Fret not"; "Trust in" (you can't do both); "Delight in"; "Commit," and "trust in"; "Rest in," "Wait patiently for"; "Fret not." A little sermonette. Text, "Fret not," announced at the beginning, repeated at the close. Now you will not fret, for you have taken the steps to peace.

Friend, do you worry? God commands you not to (as He forbids stealing, lying, swearing, etc.). How dare you? You do not need to if you but enter into His provisions for peace. "In Me ye may have peace" (John 16:33).

3-His Sufficient Provision: Through Our Thought Life, Php 4:8-9

Note

In keeping with the place uniformly given in this Epistle to the Mind as the channel through which flows Christian Experience, its practical exhortations now include our Thought Life. Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." It is that experience, Himself in realized presence, for which provision is here made.

1-Knowing that "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," we are to direct our thought to the "things" here depicted, the lofty and worthy in life, that thus they may enter into our mental, moral and spiritual fiber.

2-These same qualities, "learned, received, heard and seen" as already embodied in the Apostle, we are to put into practice. Thoughts and ideals converted into the coin of living deeds.

3-This doing, it is promised that "the God of peace shall be with you." He will be in His temple, a realized presence.

Comment

We need more than peace; we need the Person-the God of peace.

OUR IDEAL IN CHRIST. Paul is addressing himself to the Greek mind, with whom the pursuit of "virtue" was an habitual occupation. He would have them know that the Christian faith has not only the loftiest ideal of all that is virtuous and praiseworthy but the provision for realizing that ideal. This exemplary life, all the qualities he has enumerated, has already found expression in the Man Christ Jesus. And if the Pattern life seem too remote, Paul is emboldened to direct them to a measurable realization of that model character, even in himself.

This under-study of the Christian ideal is for our encouragement. If by faithful pursuit it has come to a degree of fulness in the Apostle's life, it cannot be an elusive ideal. It is for all who are "in Christ." As we "think on" these Christlike qualities of character, considering them with eager desire to make them our own, to really "do" them in daily living, He "who is working in us to will and to work" the life that pleases Him, will bring them to fruition in us.

Ours is not an impersonal ideal; it is Christ. Nor yet a self-effort ideal; it is "Christ in us."

4-His Sufficient Provision: Through Our Daily Necessities, Php 4:10-19

Note

This section calls less for exposition than contemplative appropriation.

Paul calls to mind how his need has proved the occasion for a personal enrichment of his life, both through the benefactions of the Philippians (Php 4:10) and through new supplies of grace and strength from the Lord Himself (Php 4:11-14). Grateful for their loving concern for him, he makes it the assurance of like blessing for them; that as they have met his need (Php 4:14-18), God will in turn supply their every need (Php 4:19).

THE APOSTLE'S EXPERIENCE (Php 4:10-13). His need, characterized as "affliction" (Php 4:14), caused their care to "flourish again," take on new life as a tree in the spring. For this he "rejoices in the Lord" (Php 4:10).

But this is a small part of the accruing blessing. He is not calling attention to his "want" (Php 4:11 a). He has drunk at a fountain of divine satisfaction, independent of circumstance; "For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content" (Php 4:11 b). God does not ask us to be content with unsatisfactory conditions, when He has better for us; but in them, in each successive stage and step of the way, He is ready to supply therein a contentment of mind.

"Everywhere and in all things I am instructed" - initiated into a secret; a mystery unknown to the world of restless humanity - "to be abased and to abound; to be full and to be hungry; to abound and to suffer need" (Php 4:12). So exhilarating is this specific experience he is emboldened to soar to a universal statement:

"I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me" (Php 4:13).

Lest we misconstrue the "do," it is better to read, in harmony with the foregoing: "I am strong enough for all things in Him en-strengthening me." And this abundant provision, as a limitless in-working, Paul had learned through physical necessity!

THE PHILIPPIANS' EXPERIENCE (Php 4:14-19). Commending them for sharing in his necessity (Php 4:14), the more as they were the only Church to do so (Php 4:15), "sending once and again" (Php 4:16), the Apostle assures them he is thinking less of himself than of them, that to them the real blessing ensues—"the fruit that increaseth to your account" (Php 4:17).

Here follows Paul's assurance of sufficiency (Php 4:18 a), acknowledging their most recent benefaction (Php 4:18 b), not alone acceptable to him, but borne on heavenward wings, "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God" (Php 4:18 c). Such is the double reference of all spiritually-motivated deeds. Glad surprise this: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these . . . ye did it unto Me."

From this experience emerges one of the great promises of Scripture. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Php 4:19).

It is not a wish, but a promise. The reasoning runs thus: "You have supplied all my need as God's servant, a service pleasing to Him. And my God shall supply all your need."

Comment

DISCIPLINING OUR DESIRES (Php 4:11-12). Some one has well said: "True contentment depends not upon what we have but upon what we would have: a tub was large enough for Diogenes, but a world was too little for Alexander."

SUFFICIENT FOR ALL THINGS (Php 4:13). Christian Experience has come to its own. The servant of the Lord, having tested and proved Him, finds himself "strong for all things," with a sufficiency that is not his own but becomes his by virtue of his union with One who is empowering him, pouring His wondrous energy in and through him.

It works. He who draws upon Christ can do in Him what otherwise he could not do. That is to say, the mystical is the practical. The orchardist cultivates, irrigates, propagates, utilizing the vital mystical forces, and forth comes the luscious fruit.

The Christian who day by day cultivates the life "in Christ," the in-strengthening He infuses, reaps a practical output of sufficiency for all things. His "can't" is turned to "can."

"SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED" (Php 4:19). Not "may" but "shall"; not within certain limitations, but "according to His riches in glory"-confessedly beyond compute-a wealth He holds at our disposal, administered in and by Christ Jesus, on behalf of those who are in Him.

Here is provision beyond calculation. We can compute mechanical energy, in terms of horse-power; electrical energy, in kilowatts; but no one can venture even "an estimate" of the resources of a child of God in "His riches in glory."

Every believer has had, or should have had, some experience of drawing upon this promise of every need supplied. Not to prove such a promise, backed by such resources, is to impoverish ourselves unspeakably.

And since our need is so largely, so recurrently, that in the physical realm, often financial, we are convinced that He delights to manifest Himself in these every-day common places, that He may persuade us of a perpetual care in the higher realm of spiritual need.

For our encouragement to "taste and see that the Lord is good" in our own particular circumstances, whatever the need, from the many we select TWO ILLUSTRATIONS.

While holding meetings in a certain western city, we were invited one day to lunch in a Christian home, along with the mayor and his wife. After lunch, as we left the home for the afternoon service, having parted with the other guests, our hostess recited the Lord's dealings with her. Said she:

"We were in good circumstances, possessed of enough silverware to entertain a large company of guests, but through continued sickness we were reduced to nothing. The Church people sent us provisions at Christmas time. Though it was winter we were unable to maintain a fire in the house.

"One day the doctor came to see the children, and turning to me, said, 'Mrs. your children cannot get well with no fire in the house. You simply must have a fire.'

"When he had gone, I went into my bedroom, threw myself upon my knees and poured out my heart to the Lord. I said, 'Lord, You know all about our circumstances. You know we need a fire. Won't You send some one with some coal?'

“I arose from my knees, went into the front room to look out, and there was a man coming up the steps with a sack of coal on his back.”

What an experience that woman had of the providing care of her Lord. She told it with glowing face.

It was worth all the trial she had passed through. Consider what the Lord did to anticipate her prayer and have the coal there at that moment. Knowing she would ask it, He had it sacked and started on its way before she asked. “Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear” (Isa 65:24).

In a certain training school for Christian workers a student found herself without even car-fare with which to fulfill her assignment on a certain day. She made it a matter of prayer, telling the Lord her need. The day came when she must meet her appointment and she hadn't the money.

She could readily have borrowed it, but no, she still felt led to pray and trust.

The hour came when she must don her coat and hat. She did so, still without the needed fare. She walked down the street to the intersection where she should take her car, still praying but without the needed relief. The car was coming. She stepped from the curb to take it, still trusting. As she did so, there on the pavement lay a ten-cent piece. She picked it up, boarded her car and paid her fare.

Ten cents! How insignificant! Why bother over any thing so small? But, dear friend, it is not the value of the money, but of the experience; the value of knowing the Lord. Having trusted Him for ten cents, today, out in China or India, or wherever she be, she may be trusting Him for ten thousand dollars. She had proved Php 4:19.

God is not asking us to wait for large needs, or supposedly important matters. In the small, homely needs of every day He invites us to prove His all-sufficient provision.

THE SECRET OF CONTENTMENT is not in circumstances, for they are shifting. It is in Him, for He changes not.

It is in the persuasion begotten by God's Word that cannot fail, buttressed by the experimental knowledge that He has stepped in and met our need, that He does care for us, and will unceasingly “supply all our need,” such knowledge, such persuasion, is worth more than millions of money. It mints itself into the coin of a contented mind. And a contented mind is a priceless possession.

“O Lord, how happy we should be,

If we would cast our care on Thee,

If we from self could rest;

And feel at heart that One above,

In perfect wisdom, perfect love,

Is working for the best.”

Once a poor rich man, walking over his estates, thinking to inspect the progress of his hired man digging a ditch through his land, found him singing away at his work. As he approached he caught the words:

“My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands!
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full,-He has riches untold.
I’m the child of a King,
The child of a King!
With Jesus, my Saviour,
I’m the child of a King!”

“John,” said the rich man, “why are you singing such nonsense; you are a poor ditch-digger.”

“Oh, but it’s true,” was the reply. “God is my Father, and He has given me so much for which to sing and praise Him. Yonder is my little cottage and when my day’s work is done, there stands Mary at the door to greet me with a kiss and I sit down to a bountiful meal. Why shouldn’t I sing for joy?”

Then the poor rich man unburdened his heart: “Yonder on the hill is my mansion; but they do not love me up there. They are only waiting for me to die to get my money. John, I wish I had what you have.”

The Gospel of God’s dear Son offers a rich and ever-enriching experience of love and providing care. To know that love and prove that care, day by day, just where life’s circumstances find us, this is the privilege of the Christian. It is a life of joy, peace and content beyond compare.

5-Parting Salutations and Benedictions, Php 4:20-23

Four verses: two of salutations and greetings (Php 4:21-22), set between two benedictions, beautiful in their simplicity, ascribing “GLORY unto God and our Father for ever and ever” (Php 4:20), He who from the heavens sent His salvation to answer the heart needs of men, and praying that “the GRACE of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all” (Php 4:23), He through whom the love and power of God unto salvation came to be ours in transforming experience.

- GLORY AND GRACE is the divine order of manifestation. The God of Glory came to us in Grace, the grace that was in Christ Jesus, bringing salvation.

- GRACE AND GLORY is the human order of experience. “The Lord will give grace and glory” (Psa 84:11). He offers us His grace, that through its saving, sanctifying experience, He may bring us to glory. The recipients of His grace are the assured sharers of His glory. For this our Saviour prays: “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me” (John 17:24).

Two covenant gifts “given” to the Saviour: His redeemed on earth, His added glory in heaven. One day, when our course is run, He will bring His earthly gift into His heavenly, “to the praise of the glory of His grace.”

01.05. The Appeal

The Appeal Christ-The Four-Fold Blessing of Life

CHAPTER FIVE

It remains for us to summarize, in the briefest possible way, the message of the Spirit in the Epistle to the Philippians, thus to gather to ourselves its salient, spiritual truths, permitting Him to focus them more searchingly upon our heart-life, thus to accomplish their designed purpose of effecting in us a truer, richer, fuller Christian Experience.

The Spirit of Christ has given us a four-fold portrayal of those who are “His in Joyous Experience.” As we vitalize each aspect of our relationship to Him and His to us; a full-rounded Christian character, joyous, victorious, will result.

The Complete Chart pictures the “Appeal” of the Epistle, chapter by chapter. The reader is referred to it in Chapter Four.

Php 1:1-30 THE FACT here set forth is our inner, vital union with Christ. We are “in Christ Jesus” and He is in us. The INDWELLING CHRIST gives to the Christian life a new center: “To me to live is Christ.”

THE FAILURE that threatens is that we do not realize or recognize His presence in us, and continue living our own lives. Thus, for us to live is “ourselves,” not “Christ.”

THE ATTITUDE enjoined upon us, since He is within us, the fundamental fact of Christian Experience, is:

1-SURRENDER TO HIM. Until we do, He is within much as a prisoner, no freedom of action or expression. When He suggests or seeks to prompt the pursuing of a course, our minds are indifferent to His or our wills rise in opposition. When we surrender to Him, a union of spirit, His and ours, is immediately set up.

Our intellectual life is of His prompting. Our affectional life flows in the channels of His choosing. Our practical life expresses more and more His Self rather than ourself. The union strengthens and expands into every department of living as the surrender becomes the permanent, fixedly adhered to attitude of life.

2-SUFFER FOR HIM. Our attitude toward our circumstances is likewise altered. We do not chafe under the injustice of a Roman prison, its confinement and discomfort, nor smart under the strife, the jealousies and even ill-will of those who should honor and revere us. Having surrendered to Him who once suffered for us, it is now our privilege to suffer in small measure for Him. Being for HIM, a divine alchemy turns its gall to joy (Php 1:18; Php 1:29). The experience of true Christians in all ages has been one of “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name” (Acts 5:41).

ILLUSTRATION. A cross is formed by two lines, running in opposite directions, crossing each other. The angle of divergence makes the cross. Let that angle be removed and the two become parallel or merge into one; immediately the cross ceases.

Who has not seen this illustrated in child-life? The child is sobbing its very life out because refused something by the parent. The reason is not the thing in question but the attitude of mind and heart toward it-they are set upon having it.

Tactfully the parent turns the child's attention to something it can have. Delighted, the sobbing ceases. The child is satisfied. Parent and child are at one. The cross has disappeared, through a simple change of attitude, conforming the mind and heart to one who loves and cares.

For joyous, victorious Christian living no word is so all-important as "Surrender." Change the attitude toward "Him." He takes the central place of control, and "things" slip into a subordinate place where they cease to vex, nay they serve to glorify our union with Him. With Paul we "therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

"I've found a Friend, oh, such a Friend I He bled, He died to save me;

And not alone the gift of life, But His own self He gave me.

Naught that I have mine own I call, I hold it for the Giver:

My heart, my strength, my life, my all,

Are His, and His forever."

Php 2:1-30 THE FACT now before us is the historic Christ of God, He who came to be our Saviour by a wondrous, gracious humbling of Himself, thereby not alone redeeming us but leaving us an Example, a PATTERN LIFE that for all ages sets forth the ideal, yes, and more, the standard of the Christian life.

THE FAILURE that threatens is that we accept Him as Saviour but not as Pattern; that we refuse to STANDARDIZE our living by His, yes, our state of mind (from which life emanates) by His mind; that we bring Old Nature traits over into our New Life in Christ and label them "Christian" when there is nothing Christian about them, measured by the Standard. What failure this is!

THE ATTITUDE enjoined upon us is that we

1- WORK OUT THE PATTERN in our lives, earnestly contemplating the humility of mind and of resultant life that were in Him, eagerly desiring the same for ourselves, only to realize that God has made provision for the reproducing of the Pattern life in us, since He is "working in us (as He did in Him) to will and to do [work] of His good pleasure." The Pattern that would have been our despair, left to objective imitation, is incorporated into our lives, for inward realization.

2- WITHOUT MURMURING. The same God who is working in us the Pattern is selecting and controlling the outer circumstances of life to the same high end. If through pride we murmur, we grieve Him and hinder His purpose. If humbly we yield our lives into the Potter's hand, what beauty and glory of design He delights to bring out in these "earthen vessels."

To change the figure: "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," continuing the refining process till He sees His own face reflected, the likeness of His Pattern Life in us.

ILLUSTRATION. A story comes to mind of our Lord while still here upon earth. It may be but a legend, yet it is so true to what should be our experience of Him that we delight to think of it as actual.

It seems that one evening, just at the close of our Lord's earthly life, having journeyed up to Jerusalem, He was seated with His disciples, out by the city wall. To dispel the chill of the night air they had built a fire and gathered around it. The Master was talking to them.

One of the company, noting the Lord's features and form silhouetted by the glare of the fire upon the wall, reached for an ember and traced His reflected image there upon the masonry. In due time the evening was spent, the fire died out and they retired to rest.

The next morning, as people began to pass into the city, the mysterious silhouetted portrait attracted wondering attention. Various conjectures were offered by the crowd that congregated. A fish vender ventured the suggestion: "By his opened mouth, I can see that he is a man like myself, hawking his wares."

A shoe cobbler replied: "You are mistaken. Don't you see his stooped-over shoulders. He's a man like myself, working at his cobbler's bench."

But a proud Pharisee in the crowd scorned their suggestions. "Why," said he, "do you not note that high, noble brow. He belongs, like myself, to the cultured, educated class. Why-I could almost think it a portrait of myself." (Think of it, the pride of the human heart!)

But one, standing, as he gazed felt a great longing come into his heart, a longing for something he saw there in the likeness on the wall. "Oh," said he, "oh that one might be like that."

And, the story goes, in response to his humble heart-hunger the likeness of Christ leaped from the inanimate portrait on the wall into the very features of this man, till the people turned instinctively to behold the living Christ in the face of one whose heart had opened in humble longing to be like Him.

"With longing all my heart is filled,

That like Him I may be,

As on the wondrous thought I dwell

That Christ liveth in me."

Php 3:1-21 THE FACT to the fore in this chapter is the future, coming Christ, held before our eyes as the inspiring Goal of Christian living, the incentive to present attainment of purity and worthiness of life in intimate fellowship with Him.

THE FAILURE that threatens is that we "rejoice" or glory in anything other than Christ Jesus; that we refuse to set down as "loss" what we previously prized as "gain," and slacken our pace to an unseemly and unworthy "walk" when we have been called to an all-consuming "race," commanding every energy of our being.

THE ATTITUDE enjoined upon us is one of eagerly “pressing on,” “reaching forth unto those things which are before,” in fine disregard of all that would side-track us or slow us up, spurred on by the fact:

1- WE ARE CITIZENS OF HEAVEN. We came to be such by our New Birth. We are heaven-born, and heaven-bound. Our rights are there. Our wealth is there. Our expectation is from there, for:

2- CHRIST IS COMING, and we “look for” Him as our release from present trial, disappointment, all that now besets us in our present “body of humbling,” that we may share His likeness and fulness in the “body of His glory.”

AN EAGERNESS begotten by the prospect prompts us to put a new evaluation upon the things “in Christ.” The ledger of life suffers a severe reversal. The things once on the “gain” side we gladly set down as “loss for Christ.”

For us the problem of “worldliness” is solved. We feel the pulsating of an “other-worldliness.” Life is a Race and our “values” lie at the Goal.

ILLUSTRATION. In the Grecian games, as the story goes, a certain youth, fearing he might be outstripped by his competitor, took in his hand a golden apple. They ran; and he led his rival.

But, as they neared the goal, watching he could see that gradually, but surely, he was being overtaken. Then he let fall the golden apple. The tempting sight lured the youthful runner to halt an instant to possess himself of the apple. A fatal aside! He had lost the race.

Intent and expectant, eye upon the goal, the prize, the high calling, in Christ Jesus—thus eager and forward reaching, no one shall take our crown (Rev 3:11).

“Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,

And press with vigor on;

A heavenly race demands thy zeal,

And an immortal crown.”

Php 4:1-23 THE FACT that finally claims us is the present, loving, constant care of the living Christ, victoriously exalted to the place of power at God’s right hand, the pledge of a never-failing provision for His every follower.

THE FAILURE that threatens is that we so far forget His presence there or disregard His present purposes of grace toward us as to fail to lay hold of His ample provisions for our need.

THE ATTITUDE enjoined upon us is one of drawing upon Him, as a Friend indeed, One possessed of infinite resources which He fain would place at our disposal.

1- PRAYER AND PRAISE are the divinely appointed approach for every believer, the key that unlocks His wealth of resource and floods the soul with peace ineffable.

It is said that two angels were sent forth, each with a basket, the one to gather up the prayers of the saints, the other their praises. The first returned with basket full to overflowing. The saints had so much to ask of God. The second came back with an almost empty basket. So few saints

remembered to give praise to God for His many benefits.

2- APPROPRIATE HIS PROMISES. They are so rich and full, couched in such superlative terms, encouraging us to make large claims upon His “riches in glory,” assuring that He “shall supply all your need.”

Not to appropriate such gracious promises is to rob God of His glory, hurt His heart of love, and impoverish ourselves beyond compute.

ILLUSTRATION. Some years ago we read a booklet entitled, “Expectation Corner.” In it is the author’s dream of entering the Glory. A guide shows him about the Father’s vast estates. At length they come to long buildings and, upon inquiry, he is informed,

“These are the store-houses where the servants make provision for the needs of the Father’s children on the earth.”

Looking more closely, he noticed packages lying upon the shelves, many of them covered with dust. “And what are these,” he asked. “Oh,” said the guide, “these were gotten ready for the Father’s children, to meet some special need in their lives, and THEY WERE NEVER CALLED FOR.”

Thoroughly aroused, the man began to examine some of them. Presently he came upon one with his own name upon it, and the date. Thinking back, he recalled the severe trial through which he was passing at that particular time, a dire emergency, and here was the Lord’s provision for it, ample and sufficient to meet it.

“And to think,” said he, “I never called for it.”

Unclaimed provisions of His bountiful care! How many are up there, dear reader, meant for you, prepared specially to meet your need, labeled with your name, that you have failed to claim?

He has anticipated your every need, for today, for tomorrow, for the week, the month, the year, yes, for a lifetime. “Ye have not [simply] because ye ask not.” “Ask, and ye shall receive.”

“Since Jesus is my friend,

And I to Him belong,

It matters not what foes intend,

However fierce and strong.

He whispers in my breast Sweet words of holy cheer,

How they who seek in God their rest Shall ever find Him near;- How God hath built above A city fair and new,

Where eye and heart shall see and prove What faith has counted true. My heart for gladness springs;

It cannot more be sad;

For very joy it smiles and sings,- Sees naught but sunshine glad. The sun that lights mine eyes

Is Christ, the Lord I love;
I sing for joy of that which lies
Stored up for me above.”

02.00.1. HIS INDWELLING PRESENCE (Holy Spirit)

Title PHIS INDWELLING PRESENCE Intimate Studies in the Things of the Spirit by

Norman B. Harrison, D. D.

Pastor, Bible Teacher and Evangelist

Author of "His Salvation as Set Forth in the Book of Romans," "His In Joyous Experience, Paul's Epistle to the Philippians," "His Sure Return," "His In A Life Of Prayer."

"I will dwell in them, and walk in them"

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Dave

02.00.2. Preface to this Digital Module

Preface to this Digital Module

I've been using computer Bible study software since the days of MS-DOS - early 1990's. From the first time I did a "CTRL-S" maneuver, I've never cracked open a Strong's again! (And no regrets about that!) As a busy preacher, I've tried to assemble a classic research library inexpensively. Access to the free digital materials included in the Bible study software packages I used increased my study library in amazing ways. The amount of free stuff I've accumulated would have cost a small fortune. Then one day I realized that I owed a debt. So I started looking for public domain resources to convert to digital Bible study modules. Now my personal journey has come full circle: from the excitement of discovering free computer Bible software to the excitement of helping and being a blessing to others.

Thank you, Michelle, Jeremiah, Isaiah & Micah, for understanding my debt and graciously tolerating my near compulsive computer use for hours on end. Thank you, Norman B. Harrison, for converting your studies to eternal print. A special thank you to Brother Virgil Butts of BaptistBibleBelievers.com. Brother Virgil has painstakingly brought this text into the digital world. Make sure you visit his site to see more great titles. And of course - most importantly - my thanks to the Lord Jesus who saved my soul for all eternity. This Edition There have been no changes to Harrison's work, except for the following:

1. Scripture references have been converted to Scripture hyperlinks using the "Format Scripture ToolTip."
2. A few obvious Scripture reference errors have been corrected, as well as some obvious spelling errors.
3. The copy and paste process has unfortunately removed most of the italicized print. While the words have not been changed, some of Harrison's emphasis may be missing. It is with regret that I have not taken the time to correct this. The sense is still accurate. [By the way - would you understand this paragraph without italics? Of course!] Also, the italicizing of the foreign words have been lost. It is my hope that the reader will be able to follow the flow regardless of these flaws. They - the flaws - are mine, not Harrison's .
4. I am quite sure my edition of Harrison's work is rather imperfect. I pray that, nonetheless, it will be productively useful in the study of God's Word.

Finally Feel free to contact me with comments. You can reach me via e-mail at doctordavet@gmail.com

If you convert a classic resource to be used with eSword or TheWord, send me your work! I'd love to utilize it! Also - make sure you stop by www.doctordavet.com - for more digital Bible study modules. May the Lord bless you as study His word.

Dr. David S. Thomason

Florida, USA

2012

02.00.3. Copyright Information

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02.00.5. The Approach: The Highest Quest Of The Human Heart

The Approach: The Highest Quest Of The Human Heart “I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory” (Exo 33:18).

There is in the heart of man an insistent hunger. He may refuse it. He may repress it. Yet it persists. Despite his every effort to ignore it, or stifle it, still it speaks up. It is the hunger after God.

The fact that man has this hungering after God, unshared by any creature round about him, is an incontestable declaration as to man’s past descent, present duty, and future destiny. It betokens that he came from God, goes to God, and must now “live, and move, and have his being” in God.

As Augustine expressed it, out of a very personal experience of being far removed from God in sin: “Thou has made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee.” Again, the Westminster divines embodied this fact in their first, fundamental statement: “The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.” The Cry of the Heart

Paul on Mars Hill, surveying the multiplicity of gods surrounding him, the creations of Grecian culture, sensed the crying out of the heart of the pagan world. As he stood there he contemplated their pitiful display of ignorant, idolatrous aspiration after deity. He perceived that in this they were but voicing the universal cry of the heart of man. More by far than a mere theological dogma as to God’s existence; rather, an inner urge that men “seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him.”

Then Paul espied an image with the tell-tale inscription, “To the Unknown God.”

To him this spoke of still deeper depths of hungering, voiced in the limitations of confessed ignorance—ignorance that presented a plight the more pitiable because set in the framework of the world’s highest intellectual attainments. Taking as his text this revelation of a quest unsatisfied, the Apostle of the Christian faith brought to the Athenians the glad word that the “Unknown God,” after whom they groped, was known to him, had revealed Himself to men, and was knowable for the seeking.

Matching the heart-cry of an ignorant heathen world is the recurrent hunger of those who have tasted, little or much, of the goodness of the living God. Knowing Him, there is a longing to know Him yet more. Shut out from His fellowship, deprived of the privilege of worship, as the exiled David found himself, the heart aspires after Him:

“As the heart panteth after the water brooks so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” (Psa 42:1-2) The Answer of God As in nature God has provided an answer to every need of the body He has given us, so in grace for the needs of the soul. He gave us a hungering for Himself only that He might satisfy it. Whensoever the heart cries, with Moses: “I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory,” He has His all-sufficient answer at hand. What is the glory of God? What but His essential excellence in manifestation? This glory, this excellence, that which God really is, man was meant to share and

show forth in his own being and experience. In its progressive manifestation, then, “glory” tells the story of redemption. There is no truer key to revelation than the successive unfoldings of divine glory.

1. THE GLORY BESTOWED—MAN IN CREATION.

God, in counsel, determined to create man by bestowing upon him His essence of being: “And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have dominion,” etc. (Gen 1:26). Of man, thus created, we read, “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with GLORY and honour.”

2. THE GLORY LOST—MAN FALLEN IN SIN.

Man’s conscious nakedness, coming as a consequence of his fall into sin (Gen 3:7), is the loss of the divine glory with which he was endowed and clothed in creation. Stripped of his native glory he slinks from God’s presence (Gen 3:8-10) and is driven from His garden (Gen 3:24).

3. THE GLORY GLIMPSED—THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Throughout the Old Testament God’s glory is glimpsed by man, seen in such ways and under such conditions as foretoken its fuller manifestation under a more perfect covenant.

4. THE GLORY MANIFESTED—THE GOSPELS.

Heralded with glory (Luk 2:9; Luk 2:14), of Christ’s presence among men we read: “We beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father” (John 1:14). As the sum of His life-work He says to the Father: “I have glorified Thee on the earth” (John 17:4). Glory is the intent and content of the Son’s earthly stay.

5. THE GLORY EXPERIENCED—THE ACTS.

This experience Jesus promised His disciples upon His departure. For it He bade them tarry (Acts 1:4). On the day of Pentecost the gift of glory, the Holy Spirit sent from the Father, became theirs (Acts 2:1-47). Henceforth the Shekinah glory lived, moved and wrought in their midst.

6. THE GLORY EXPRESSED—THE EPISTLES.

The life of a man to whom the glory of God is restored, in whom He dwells and walks (2Co 6:16), such is the life expounded in the Epistles. The appeal for this life is to “glorify God in your body” (1Co 6:19-20).

7. THE GLORY ENTHRONED—THE REVELATION.

The Book of God does not close until He is pictured at the center of a state of society of which His glory is the light, a light in which the nations walk and to which they contribute whatever of glory and honour they possess, a society free from all that is unworthy or unclean (Rev 21:23-27). The Only Antidote In this unfolding program, now so largely fulfilled, so certain of complete accomplishment, we are in the crucial stage, that of EXPRESSING HIS EXPERIENCED GLORY. Surrounded as we are by a vast society that knows Him not, herein lies our chief duty—to know, to experience, to rightly express HIM. Men do not see miracles today, or any direct manifestation of God. Why? We are His miracle for our day. His glory resident in us, His expression of Himself He

is purposely limiting to His redeemed.

We have fallen upon days of gross materialism. To men the world of things is the only real world. Out of this miasmatic swamp of materialism is springing every imaginable evil. Men doubt their divine origin and destiny. They deny the very existence of God. They call into question His every revelation of Himself. In consequence, they acknowledge no moral or spiritual accountability. The thought of animal-origin engenders animal-ethics. These ideas, lodged in the mind, germinate and multiply their kind. We are sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind.

For this age of ours the one and only antidote is a Spirit-filled life, a follower of Christ who has experienced the Supernatural and is expressing Him through the avenues of his every-day expressional life. There is no other remedy. Argument will not answer; mere reasoning will not turn the mind of men in these matters. Nor has invective any power to beget faith. Not even the spoken truth, unsupported by the demonstration of living reality, will suffice to uproot unbelief. Only God Himself, God in human life, can meet the seriousness of self-blinded doubt. Only a life supernaturally indwelt, supernaturally transformed, supernaturally radiant, can suffice. He Himself in us—He is the answer.

To such a life we are gloriously called. The Secret of Guidance

“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom 8:14).

When once we know Him the heart mounts higher, yea becomes bolder, in its desire to know His mind and will for every personal interest. This is, indeed, the intent of His Indwelling—a Spirit-illuminated, Spirit-led life. The reward of habitually responding to His Indwelling is that we are rendered sensitive to the Spirit’s leading; whether through His Word, illuminating it as we read; through prayer, prompting His mind in us; or through His hand of providence in our affairs. For the living of such a life, a true blending of the divine and the human, as we do our part we will find Him faithful in His. Such a life is not only possible to us; it is our supreme duty and privilege.

02.01. God's Presence Among His People

God's Presence Among His People

CHAPTER ONE

"My presence shall go with thee" (Exo 33:14).

The hungering of the human heart after God—how shall it be met? By man's seeking after God, if haply he may find Him? Or by God's own gracious moving toward man in self-revelation? The first method, as man has pursued it, gives us the religions of the world. Of these the showing made by the cultured Athenians on Mars Hill is a fair sample. The second has produced the Christian faith, with its note of certainty and experience of reality.

That this latter method alone has the promise of producing satisfying results should, from the very premises in the case, be evident to all. That it has brought life and immortality to those who walk in its light, in the restoration of God to man and man to God, in mutual, indissoluble fellowship—this is a matter of record and experience.

The first chapter of man's spiritual history closed disastrously. It ended with man's relationship to God completely severed. The story is familiar: the simple test of allegiance which, if met on man's part, would have sealed to him the fellowship of God in perpetuity. But in the test he failed, doubtless little considering that in the act of disloyalty and disobedience he was forever renouncing the right and the power to fellowship with a holy God. That God so regarded it is evident from the scene's solemn conclusion: "So He drove out the man." There are two reasons why that severance, once effected, should continue:

I. GOD'S HOLINESS.

In the presence of God the seraphim, unfallen and therefore unabashed by His holiness, nevertheless fall down upon their faces, as they cry "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts" (Isa 6:3). The smoke-filled house further betokens His unapproachableness (Isa 6:4). And man, merely glimpsing the glory, cries out:

"Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa 6:5). The sadness of the situation is in the fact that man seldom sees, even dimly, the holiness of God, and continues blindly unconscious of the awful chasm of separation.

2. MAN'S SINFULNESS.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer 17:9).

Sin has left man in a state of ignorance of himself, with a peculiar incapacity for understanding himself and the forces at work in his life. The Bible is of supreme value in this regard, that it reveals man to himself, with utmost frankness and truthfulness, as is true of no other book.

Our Saviour, impelled in His coming to earth by a compassionate love for man, nevertheless takes occasion to castigate him in the most scathing terms:

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23).

Yonder is God, in unalterable holiness; here is man, in unchanging sinfulness: between the two, lodged in their very natures, a great gulf is fixed. God cannot bridge the gulf by any diminution of His holiness, thereby to accept man in his sinfulness; man, leopard-like, cannot change his spots. The situation seems hopeless.

“But God”—the thrill of knowing that God will not leave the situation thus! Rich in mercy, equally rich in resource, His great love finds a way. Prophetic of what His love will do is that scene upon Mt. Sinai when the just demands of law are counterpoised by grace and mercy:

“And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (Exo 34:5-7).

And although the people had just then demonstrated their ill-desert by descending to the depths of idolatry, Moses, encouraged by these gracious words, makes bold to petition the Lord for His presence among them:

“And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. And he said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us” (Exo 34:8-9).

I. His Revealed Presence A full study of the progressive revelation of His presence with His people discloses three distinct stages:

1. IN OLD TESTAMENT EXPERIENCES.

Abel, so closely following the debacle of the Fall, knew the way to restored fellowship with God, made use of it in a blood sacrifice, and “obtained witness that he was righteous.”

Enoch enjoyed a remarkably intimate experience of God’s presence. He “walked with God.” And he so “pleased God” that God was unwilling he should suffer sin’s penalty of death. God “took him” into His heavenly home in unbroken fellowship.

Abraham’s life is the unfolding of God’s gracious purposes in and presence with, a man whom He has sovereignly called into covenant relation with Himself. Leaving his native country and kindred at the divine bidding, he learns the lessons of faith and trust, of obedience and confidence. The Lord meets him, converses with him, binds Himself to him and his posterity with solemn oath, and that in perpetuity. The fellowship develops into such intimacy that he comes to be known as the “Friend of God.”

Jacob, least deserving of the divine presence, deceiver and supplanter that he was, is met as he fares forth into life’s adventure by the Lord appearing to him, reassuring him, promising to him His presence and prospering:

“And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not” (Gen 28:15-16).

Joseph, sinned against by his brethren and sold into slavery, is nevertheless sustained by an unseen hand. In the house of Potiphar it is said of him: “And the Lord was with Joseph . . . And his master saw that the Lord was with him.” Falsely accused, as was Another greater than he, and cast into prison, the record is: “But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy and gave him favour.” And when the sceptre of power is placed in his hand, that presence is with him in wisdom and prospering.

Moses, coming from the wilderness, is given the needed lesson of the Lord’s presence, not only with him personally as leader, assured in the words, “Certainly I will be with thee” (Exo 3:12), but also with the people whose cause he is being called to espouse. The burning bush, burning yet unconsumed, a phenomenon Moses could never forget, is a picture of the indestructibility of God’s people, however severe their trials, by virtue of His presence in their midst. (The same indestructibility attaches to the Church by virtue of the Lord’s presence—Rev 1:10-18).

This brings us to a new development in the vouchsafed presence of God: not merely with individuals, but with a company whom He chooses to call His people. And they are His, not merely because He calls them such; He makes them such in all reality—He redeems them. And once He has redeemed them to Himself, He comes and claims them for Himself by His living presence in their midst. The Passover of Exo 12:1-51 is followed immediately by the Presence of Exo 13:1-22 :

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people” (Exo 13:21-22).

This is something new. Henceforth in all their journeyings they are not to go alone. His presence in their midst unifies them, leads them and guides them.

Yet they narrowly escape the withdrawal of His presence, threatened through the grievous sin of the golden calf and averted only by “grace” extended through Moses’ intercession. To the Lord’s declaration, “For I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people,” Moses makes his plea for “grace” and receives the gracious assurance: “My presence shall go with thee.”

And now, with the giving of the Tabernacle the Presence becomes a settled, covenanted reality. By its gracious provisions of approach each individual may free himself from the barriers of sin and enter into assured fellowship with his God, in the way of His appointing. What a great day for Israel when the Tabernacle was finally set up, embodying God’s every requirement as to sinful man’s access unto Himself, and the Shekinah glory of His vouchsafed presence among His people came and filled the house (Exo 40:33-38). Glorious as far as it went, but only a type of what we of the New Covenant were to experience in surpassing reality.

2. IN THE PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Jesus’ virgin-birth is declared to be in fulfillment of the promise: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isa 7:14); and Matthew adds, “which being

interpreted is, God with us” (Mat 1:23). The Old Testament experiences of His presence among His people are but anticipations of the day when He becomes incarnate, dwelling among them in human form. The Shekinah glory finds its antitype in His blessed person:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

The Greek word for “dwelt” is “tabernacled.” All the meaning and intent of the Tabernacle as the meeting-place of God and man find their fulfillment in the person and presence of His Son. Never out of most intimate communion with His Father, nay, the Father was “abiding” in Him; yet always in close fellowship with man. He was the true temple; in Him God dwelt among men.

3. IN THE TRANSITION FROM “WITH” TO “IN.”

The first step is coextensive with Old Testament revelation and experience of God. The second step takes us through the Gospels, the record of “God manifest in the flesh.” And now the third step carries us on into the Acts and Epistles, wherein the life of the believer is set forth, historically and doctrinally, as indwelt by the very presence of God.

Our Lord Jesus, upon the eve of His death and subsequent departure to the Father, pointed His disciples forward to this step. Speaking of sending the Holy Spirit, He said: “For He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

And Paul directs the attention of believers to the fact that this indwelling, the goal to which God was looking forward in Old Testament days, is now realized in them:

“For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (2Co 6:16). As this step brings us to the very heart of our theme, the inner experience of God which is the gracious possession and privilege of every believer, we forbear to comment further at this time. Since, however, we have now come for the first time to distinctively Christian ground, God’s perfect sin-remedy, we must ask ourselves what has taken place that a sin-hating God, who drove the sinner from His presence, would, or could, take up His abode in man. The answer plunges us into the very heart of Christian doctrine.

II. Our Union With Him

Following the fact that Christ died for us, and preparatory to His coming to live in us, the most far-reaching change possible in our position before God has taken place —something that completely alters His way of looking upon us and of dealing with us. He no longer sees us as sinners because He sees us “in Him.”

Our being “in Him” must ever and always precede His being “in us.” In ourselves we are alienated from Him, something foreign to Him in nature as well as practice; in Him we are a part of Him, something akin to Him, such as He can claim as His very own, move into and rejoice over. Expounding this to His followers, Jesus said, “Abide in Me, and I in you,” indicating this sequence:

1. OUR POSITION IN HIM—“Ye in Me.”

2. OUR POSSESSION OF HIM—“I in You.” The entire modus operandi of the Christian faith is wrapped up in these two super-significant phrases. We simply must ponder them, pray over them,

and make their meaning our own, as the gateway to the understanding and experiencing of things Christian. OUR NEW POSITION IS THE KEY TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

“In Christ” is the dominant note in the symphony of redemption. It is a sine qua non—that without which no Christian life is possible. “Apart from Me ye can do nothing” because apart from Him we are nothing. Lacking in life and laden with sin, we are and ever must be. But “in Him,” engrafted into Christ, as branches of the Vine, we have His nature and life; we participate in His position; we cease to have a separate existence, are incorporated into His very being and must forevermore be identified with Him.

This was made possible only by a blessed interchange of position.

- He took our place that we might take His.
- He became the Son of Man that we might become sons of God.
- He partook of our flesh-and-blood natures that we might become “partakers of the divine nature.”
- He was made “sin for us” that we might be made the “righteousness of God in Him.”

It is evident that our union with Him is reciprocal in its operation—a give and take. By virtue of our position “in Him,” He gives us all that He has of life (which is eternal), of holiness, of riches, of acceptance with the Father. And He takes from us all that we have of sin, of condemnation and death, of poverty and misery.

As Luther puts it:

“All that Christ has now becomes the property of the believing soul; all that the soul has becomes the property of Christ. Christ possesses every blessing and eternal salvation; they are henceforth the property of the soul. The soul possesses every vice and sin; they become henceforth the property of Christ.”

Thus the great Christian doctrines—Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, Security, Fruitfulness in Service—rest in and grow out of the fact that we are “in Him.” OUR POSSESSION IS THE KEY TO CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

What our being “in Him” makes possible to us, nay, reckons to us as ours, His coming to be “in us” makes actual, works out in us, ingrains into our character and conduct.

- He only is pure; He alone in us can produce purity of life.
- He only is holy; He alone in us can make holiness an attribute of human life.
- He only is faithful; He alone in us can make us faithful.

Christian life is not the imitation of Christ—that were impossible; but His implantation, to the end that He may reproduce Himself in us—the out-living of an in-living Christ.

The vine secures its own type of life in the branches—no attempt to mold or shape the fruit to a set pattern. The life inherent in the vine suffices to reproduce itself in each minute characteristic.

Just so with Christ in us; He is urgent that we “abide” in Him, for our loyalty to His indwelling presence is the key to a true Christian experience —Christ realized in character and conduct.

In our Position in Him we are made manifest to God; we are holy and complete in Him. In our Possession of Him He is manifest to men; He lives out His life through us. As we are accepted in Him, so may He be magnified in us.

III. Seven Satisfying Relationships

Restored to full favor as His people, it remains for us to gather from the whole range of revelation the mighty spiritual uplift, inspiration and encouragement that are ours in and through the various relationships into which our covenant God is pleased to admit us.

In linguistic usage the preposition, the smallest of words, indicates the relationship existing between two objects or persons. As the relationship changes, the preposition changes. For example, a book with reference to a table. Now the book is above the table; now it is on, in, under the table; now it is removed from the table.

As we search the Scriptures for their reassuring statements of the relationships He is pleased to sustain toward us, let us not fail to remind ourselves that we are the sinners who, by nature as well as by practice, deserved perpetual banishment from His presence. What we were and what we are—herein lies the great contrast that exalts His glorious grace. Our search rewards us with the following:

1. HE IS WITH US.

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee: yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness” (Isa 41:10).

“And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [age]” (Mat 28:20).

He who hath said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,” is with us all the days, in all situations, under all circumstances, with the greater yearning and the more tender solicitude as He sees us pressed with burdens, perplexed with personal problems, or shrinking from impending evil. Lo, I. all authority Mine—am—with—you.

2. HE IS ABOVE US.

“Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord He is God in Heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else” (Deu 4:39).

“Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Eph 1:20-21).

And He is there, above, with a gracious purpose on our behalf—“now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

However high and strong our spiritual enemies may seem to be, He is above them all, in person, in position, in power. He is there, caring for us (1Pe 5:7; Read Psa 121:1-8).

3. HE IS BENEATH US.

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deu 33:27).

When, as we say, the bottom seems to be falling out of everything, it is only that we may cease to trust in things and settle down into the security of everlasting arms that are there, always there, to receive us. The new experience of Him more than repays. Child of His love, tense almost to tears, cease to struggle and nestle down in the strength of His arms. They are beneath.

4. HE IS BEFORE US.

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people” (Exo 13:21-22).

“And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice” (John 10:4).

Are we confronted with untried experiences from which we shrink with foreboding? Must our feet take a pathway strewn with thorns or jagged stones? What comfort to know that His blessed feet have found and felt them first, for He goeth before (Meditate anew on Psa 23:1-6).

5. HE IS BEHIND US.

“And the Angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them” (Exo 14:19).

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psa 23:6).

Does the enemy, in subtlety, steal upon us from behind, there is our faithful God, interposing His own presence between us and the impending peril. What we cannot see, He sees. If as Shepherd He goes before, as “Goodness” and “Mercy” He goes behind. He leaves no room for want or fear.

6. HE IS AROUND US.

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them” (Psa 34:7).

“As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever” (Psa 125:2).

We are told that “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe” (Pro 18:10). Abiding in Him we have the strong walls of a fortress completely around us. And even more than the fortress is the peace which He instills into the heart of him who there takes refuge. When we refuse to worry, bringing every interest into the citadel of prayer, He promises that His peace, passing all understanding, shall guard, stand sentinel, like a cordon of soldiers, around the heart and mind, refusing entrance to every would-be intruder. Truly there is no God like our God.

“Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in

heart” (Psa 32:10-11).

7. HE IS WITHIN US.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20).

Of all associations short of glory this is the superlative. That the Son of God should come, by His Spirit, to live within the human breast, in union with our spirit—this staggers the intellect to comprehend. Yet how it satisfies the hunger of the heart!

The fact that He dwells within, so well-nigh unbelievable, with the gracious purposes enfolded in that abiding Presence—all this is the entrancing story that awaits the telling.

May the Spirit Himself persuade us of its truth and lead us into its experienced reality.

02.02. His Promised Inner Presence

His Promised Inner Presence

CHAPTER TWO

“He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17).

It is a far cry from the hopeless situation of man outside the Garden of Eden, the entrance guarded against his return, and the gracious promise of the divine presence, not merely with man but actually within him.

The words of our Lord mark a distinct step in advance in the development of the divine program of redemption.

He has been to another garden, Gethsemane, there to retrace the First Adam's sinful steps of self-seeking, with resolute refusal brushing aside all suggestion that He spare Himself the suffering of Golgotha. “Not My will, but Thine be done”—with these words, a victor over self and Satan, the Son of God took the path to Pilate's judgment hall, there to be passed by mock justice on to Calvary's hill. Bearing His cross, as though He were the chief of sinners, He suffers Himself to be crucified in the company of malefactors, counted accursed FOR US. “For it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree,” suspended between heaven and earth, outcast of both, acceptable to neither.

But now, from the Cross comes the triumphant cry: “It is finished.” The Son of God is victor; He has become the Saviour. “Finished,” complete, is the work which Immanuel came into the world to accomplish.

- In His person, the God-Man, God and man have met.

- In His work the barrier of sin has been broken down; sin's power to separate is a thing of the past.

Man and God are again in communion.

But, are they? Potentially, yes; actually, no. Objectively, He has met sin's penalty for us; subjectively, sin's power remains in us. Jesus is but Immanuel—God with us; He must be supplanted by the Spirit—God within us. Jesus did a work for us; it must be supplemented by the Spirit's work in us.

Hence Jesus' words, which are worthy of careful weighing:

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you” (John 16:7).

In these words Jesus deliberately placed limitations upon His own ministry—limitations that require its augmentation by the ministry of the Spirit. Jesus' promise that He, the Spirit, would come to be

in us, that He would dwell perpetually with us as an inner presence, with the assurance that His coming thus to indwell us would prove greatly to our advantage and spiritual profit—this, “the truth” our Lord Jesus seeks so sincerely to impress upon us on the eve of His departure, is the heart and soul of the message unfolded in the subsequent pages of His Indwelling Presence. That in the wisdom and plan of God the Holy Spirit should come to live in us and what this means for Him and for us, we must now proceed to consider.

I. His Condescension The Spirit is taking up His abode with men. According to the terms of the proposal, what was occasional in the Old Testament, what was individual in the life of our Lord, is now to be universal with all believers. There is to be no withholding, and no respect of persons: “He . . . shall be in you.”

For the Spirit as for the Son, this involves the same condescension of leaving the heavenly home and circle of fellowship. As the Son “came forth,” was “sent forth,” from the Father, so now must the Spirit suffer the same deprivation of position in glory (see John 16:28; John 15:26; Gal 4:4; Gal 4:6).

As during the Incarnation the Son was resident upon earth, in like manner during the dispensation of the Spirit He has accepted the earth as His residence. As by virtue of the Son’s absence for the accomplishing of redemption, in a very real sense there were but two persons of the Godhead in heaven, so, likewise, during the present absence of the Spirit, and in just as true a sense. What it meant to both Son and Spirit to leave the Glory to become earth-dwellers, who of men can apprehend!

But for the Spirit there are elements of condescension that would seem to surpass that involved for the Son (barring, shall we say, the humiliation of the Cross). Of the Father’s sending Him into the world the Son rejoiced to say, “A body hast Thou prepared Me.” It was a pure, holy, sinless body that He was given to inhabit. Since the Son “came not to call the righteous but sinners,” in all who heed His call, the vilest, the most degraded, even the murderer and the harlot—in all such, when once accepted of the Father in His abounding grace, it is the province of the Spirit to take up an abiding residence.

When we contemplate the sin to which believers cling, the passions indulged, the unchaste thoughts entertained, the envies, jealousies, hatreds, all of which are unspeakably repugnant to His holiness, yet from which He cannot withdraw or disassociate Himself, since He has come in to “abide.”

When we view the picture, so capable of many more distressing details, what shall we say of the Spirit’s condescension, during the blessed dispensation now ours, in coming to indwell us, to claim us for Himself and to make us fit for His presence forever.

II. Our Benefaction

“It is expedient for you that I go away . . . If I depart I will send Him unto you.”

What is the benefaction that this departure of Jesus, only to send us the Spirit, brings to us? Jesus our Lord assures us that this advance step in the divine program is of tremendous import to us. Wherein does it consist?

The Spirit becomes a personal possession—personal to each one. This could never be true of relationship to Jesus. He was an historical person, who was born, lived, spoke, wrought, moved about, in places definitely capable of designation. If a person were in the place where He was, he might enjoy His presence; otherwise he was deprived of it. The Apostles were chosen to be “with Him.” To respond to His call, that they might hear His teaching, see His mighty works, come to know Him, be His witnesses, they must needs leave their homes and occupation and become itinerant with Him. Only some artificial, monkish mode of life could continuously adapt itself to such conditions.

But the Spirit does not call us to be with Him; He comes to be “with us.”

Wherever we live our lives, there He is, adapting Himself to the circumstances surrounding His beloved. Hence there is no Mecca for the Christian faith, no sacred shrine, no foregathering to find Him whom believers worship and serve. Though they be scattered to the ends of the earth, He is with them, dwelling in them, walking in them, the living Christ by His Spirit their intimate, personal possession.

But more; this indwelling Spirit, one with our spirit, is more than a presence with us. He is a molding, transforming power.

To the end of Jesus’ ministry, taught of Him though they were, His followers, even His intimates, remained unstable, cowardly and undependable: His was but an influence without. When, however, the Spirit was come, these same men became at once the embodiment of fidelity, courage and conviction. True, Jesus had left them, but His Spirit within made them as new men. So does He desire to work in every believer.

All self-effort toward transformation of character is futile. The vile pictures hung upon the walls of memory by indulgence in illicit imaginations, in obscenity, in habits of profligacy; the remorse that lingers from animosities, jealousies, ugly self-seekings—how have men sought in vain to purge their souls of these; how many suicides tell the tale of hopeless effort to be free from their relentless lashings.

No, it is only the Holy Spirit of God who, coming into the life, can impart purity of mind and holiness of heart, where sin had wrought its havoc. To set sin’s captive free—this He has power to do; this He delights to do.

III. The Exhortation

There is but one exhortation that befits our so great benefaction from His so great condescension.

It is that we respond with a glad, joyous, ceaseless “Thank you.” We are accustomed to return such thanks for benefits received at the hands of friends; how much more for this from Him.

A very close friend in Christ, who has entered into the intimate things of the Spirit, we have frequently heard in prayer making thankful acknowledgment of this unspeakable blessing, thanking and praising Him for giving the Holy Spirit, pouring out the most genuine gratitude for His coming as a personal presence to indwell the heart. We could not but feel that such thanks-giving, beyond the honoring of the Spirit through this recognition of His presence, became a real forward-looking means of grace and growth.

Then we began to consider how many Christians we knew who have the habit of giving praise and thanks for this, the supreme benefit of the believer's life, that He, the Holy Spirit of God and of Christ, has come in, never to leave us, but to abide forever.

We were surprised to discover the almost utter absence of such habit among our friends. He has come in! In utmost appreciation of a benefit so confessedly beyond compute let us learn to say a daily "Thank you."

02.03. His Incoming - Our Salvation

His Incoming - Our Salvation

CHAPTER THREE

“Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:33).

As Jesus drew toward the close of His ministry, conscious that He had accomplished His mission, able to say to His Father, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do,” then it was that He began to speak definitely and expectantly of Another coming to take His place in the world. Very evidently He could not “come” until Jesus’ work was finished. There must be a completed Salvation; then He would come to carry it on—carry it on by carrying it in, into the personal lives of men, to the meeting of their inmost, utmost need.

So Luke refers to his Gospel as a narrative “of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up” (Acts 1:1-2), the Book of Acts being an account of its continuance by the Holy Spirit from the day of His coming down according to promise.

To see clearly the place of the Spirit in the plan of Salvation, we must see the relation of His coming to both the coming and going of the Son. Of the coming of the two the very same language is used, indicating a closely correlated purpose. The Father “sent” the Son to be the Saviour (John 3:17; John 5:37; John 6:29; John 7:28-29; John 8:42, etc.). Likewise the Spirit; He was “sent” by the Son (John 15:26; John 16:7), also by and from the Father (John 14:26; John 15:26). The Father “gave” the Son (Isa 9:6; John 3:16, etc.). Likewise the Spirit; He was “given,” He was “the gift” (Luk 11:13; John 14:16; Acts 2:38, etc.). (The word “come,” or “came,” is most frequent—many references).

Again, the two gifts are timed to the unfolding of the Father’s plan. Of the Son it is said, “When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son . . . to redeem . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal 4:4-5). And when He had accomplished redemption, and men by believing upon Him could be brought as sons into His family, then “God sent forth the Spirit of His Son” (Gal 4:6) to make this an experimental reality.

While Jesus was still with us, therefore, the giving of the Spirit was still future, both as an act of the Father and as an experience of believers. On one occasion John finds it needful, in recording the teaching of Jesus, to add the parenthetical explanation:

“But this He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:39).

When, however, the day of Pentecost had come, and believers experienced the gift of the Spirit, Peter makes explanation by tracing it to the fact that Jesus has been “by the right hand of God exalted” and has “received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:33). The set time

for the sending of the Spirit had come.

Jesus had said to His followers: “Wait for the promise of the Father.” While they waited, He went—went to the throne, there to claim the promise on their behalf.

“The promise of the Father.” When? and to whom? Ah, we are being admitted into one of the mysteries of eternity. Back yonder, in the eternal counsels of redemption, the Father solemnly covenanted with the Son that if He would come and give Himself to redeem the race, He, the Father, would give eternal life to all who should believe upon Him (read again John 5:1-47; John 6:1-71). And more, He would give to all such the Holy Spirit as a personal, indwelling presence, to abide with them forever.

Has the Father ever broken His covenanted promise to His own Son? Has anyone ever believed upon Him and failed to receive eternal life? Such a thing is utterly impossible. The God of the universe is pledged to answer every man’s faith with the gift of life (read again John 6:39-40).

Has anyone ever believed upon the Son and failed to receive the Spirit? Such a thing is utterly impossible. It is the covenanted “promise of the Father,” the answer He is pledged to make to every man’s faith in His Son. “Let God be true, but every man a liar.”

I. His Incoming

What do the Scriptures tell us as to the Holy Spirit’s coming—His Incoming, to dwell in believers? When does He come in? and why? We know just when the Son was “given,” when He was “sent,” historically, to be the Saviour of men. We know also when and on what conditions the Son comes, experimentally, into the lives of men. Do we know as much concerning the Holy Spirit? when, historically, He was “sent”? when, experimentally, He is “given” to any individual? On the authority of God’s Word we do.

1. HISTORICALLY AND DISPENSATIONALLY, HE WAS GIVEN—SENT—ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

Jesus makes the transition from His own ministry to the dispensation of the Spirit in the closing scene with His disciples, as recorded by Luke:

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:4-5).

The set time for the sending of the Spirit was just at hand. They were to tarry for it, the appointed yearly feast in the Jewish calendar. Yet this particular year it was God’s chosen time above all other years. For just as precisely as Jesus had died on the day of the annual Passover, and risen again the third day in fulfillment of the Feast of First Fruits, so was the Holy Spirit given in exact fulfillment of the Feast of Weeks, seven full weeks intervening, on the fiftieth day—therefore called “Pentecost.”

The actual happening of the poured-out Spirit, Peter explained, as we have already noted, by the fact that Jesus had ascended to glory, had presented His finished work, had claimed and received

for His followers “the promise of the Father,” for which He bade them tarry. Henceforth believers are born into the riches, blessings and benefits of a fulfilled Feast of Pentecost—the Spirit “given” and “sent” in a sense never before true. A noteworthy feature of the event, for our study, is the recorded fact: “They were ALL filled with the Holy Ghost.”

Was there not some one of the company that failed of the experience? No, not one. And why? Because the gift of the Spirit is in the covenant. If His giving were selective, due to something in one believer which another lacked, then we might expect one or more to be left out. But by covenant right every believer is as truly entitled to the gift of the Spirit as to the gift of eternal life. Hence

2. PERSONALLY AND INDIVIDUALLY, HE IS GIVEN— COMES IN—WHEN WE BELIEVE UPON THE SON.

“He that believeth on Me”—and with these words Jesus proceeds to depict an outflowing life of blessing, such as the Spirit alone can produce, a life He expected of every believer and of which the believer could fail only by repressing and restraining the Spirit (read John 7:37-38). Then follows the inspired notation: “But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive” (John 7:39). Believe—on the Son: receive—the Spirit. The one follows the other. When the dispensational progress, noted above, had removed the one limitation— “not yet”—then the receiving becomes the immediate sequel of believing.

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal 4:6).

Here is a specified reason—“because.” What is the ground upon which God rests the sending forth of His Spirit into any individual’s heart? It is simply that he has believed upon the Son, already “sent forth” to be the Saviour, and has become a son. God acknowledges the fact of faith by giving him the mark of sonship, the Holy Spirit. Addressing the body of believers in Galatia, Paul declares to them the fact that God HATH sent forth the Spirit into their hearts, indiscriminately—the perfect tense of a past, accomplished fact.

“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom 5:5).

Appealing to common Christian experience Paul declares the Spirit is “given unto us,” alone making possible the realization of the love of God in our hearts.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Rom 8:9).

Paul is making it impossible for any believer to excuse a fleshly life by disclaiming to be “in the Spirit.” Why, says he, if you haven’t the Spirit you aren’t a Christian at all. Here, as elsewhere, he appeals to the Spirit’s presence in the believer as the fundamental fact of Christian life and experience. The Holy Spirit is the hallmark of the sons of God, His recognition and official stamp of genuine saving faith in His Son.

No one, since the Spirit was dispensationally given, has ever seen a believer who did not possess that Spirit. Such a person does not exist. It is an impossibility. God’s immediate answer to saving

faith is the giving of the Spirit in regenerating power and as an indwelling presence. Hence Peter's answer, on the Day of Pentecost, to the people who, seeing what had taken place, desired the same blessing for themselves. What could they do to receive the Spirit? Listen!

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38-39).

Note the two words, familiar to this discussion, "gift" and "promise." God's Spirit has become a gift, in which is enfolded the gift of eternal life; He is also the promise which our glorified Christ has "received of the Father" (Acts 2:33). The promise is for all, old and young, near and far; the gift to be received by repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, evidenced by the definite step of baptism as an outward sign and testimony. Do this and "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Some three thousand, we read, responded, and as surely received the gift of the Spirit as the one hundred and twenty who were sharers in the spectacle of His original outpouring. This is further proved and illustrated by the exceptional experience of disciples at Ephesus "Acts 19:1-7. Paul, coming to their company, questions the reality of their Christian standing: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Acts 19:2). It then develops that they are not Christians at all; that they have not so much as heard of the Holy Spirit; Apollos had taught them only the ministry of John the Baptist, baptizing them as his disciples (Acts 19:2-3). When they were instructed to believe upon Christ Jesus (Acts 19:4) and "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5), they too received the Spirit. They had met the simple condition of repentance and saving faith.

The longed-for experiences that unfold from the gracious purposes of the Spirit's indwelling presence may not as yet be ours, but His initial Incoming, key to all else, is an accomplished fact.

Because we have believed upon His Son, God HAS sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.

II. Our Salvation A complete presentation of the plan and operation of Salvation involves the combined ministry of Father, Son, and Spirit. That no one could be saved apart from the work of the Spirit should be self-evident. "By the grace of God He (Christ) tasted death for every man." Yet every man is not saved. Why? The answer lies in the work of the Spirit, who supplements and applies the work of the Son. The unsaved have not made room for Him in their lives.

What Christ did for us, the Spirit does in us. His is a personal application of the potencies of saving grace. To accomplish this He in-comes us. A complete survey of the Spirit's work in securing our salvation yields the following:

1. HE CONVICTS.

"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 16:8-11).

"When He is come." "Come" is one of the three great words of the dispensation of the Spirit—"come" because He is "sent" and "given." But where has He come? He has come in. He was always in the world, but now His base of operations is the heart of the believer—"by His Spirit

in the inner man.”

From this His chosen home-base He convicts the unbelieving world “of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.” Not in general, but specifically with reference to the saving work of Christ. The Spirit’s work rests upon the Son’s work. Not sin in general, though He has much to say of this, but the sin of not believing upon Him. The sin of excluding Him precludes the remedy for all sin. Righteousness—where is it to be found? Him whom men adjudged a sinner, God has declared righteous in that He has received Him back into His presence. Judgment? In the death and victorious resurrection of our Lord, judgment was passed upon “the prince of this world.” All who continue to serve him are living under a condemned system and must meet the same ultimate judgment.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit had come, Peter’s message centered wholly in the person and work of Christ; the Spirit used it to convict the hearts of hearers. “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart.” Whenever Christ is preached, the hearts into which the Spirit has come, realizing His purpose to convict, should give themselves to believing, expectant prayer, to the end that His work be unhindered.

2. HE REGENERATES.

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Tit 3:5).

The new birth is peculiarly the office of the Spirit in Salvation. Like begets like. To enter His kingdom we must have a nature suited to life in the kingdom. This the Spirit imparts. “The water of regeneration.” Regeneration is the act of the Spirit whereby He cleanses away the corruption of death, the state common to all sin, by quickening us with His own newness of life.

“Water” also refers to the Spirit’s instrument in this work—the Word. “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3; see also Eph 5:26). Through the gracious words of our Lord to the sin-laden woman of Samaria the Spirit caused her not only to drink but also to experience a satisfying fountain within her hitherto thirsty soul.

“Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:13-14).

3. HE ANOINTS.

“Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (2Co 1:21-22).

While water is the symbol of the Spirit’s work in cleansing and quickening, oil is the symbol of Himself, in living presence. The oil in the candlestick emblemizes Him who, incoming, begets the abiding life. Thus, while He cleanses with new life, He anoints with Himself.

“HATH anointed us,” the perfect tense of an accomplished fact. So also John: “But ye HAVE an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things” (1Jn 2:20). So always in the New Testament. Were we not anointed we could not qualify as “priests unto God.” His Anointing—the Holy Spirit—“abides in us” in a wonderful teaching ministry (1Jn 2:27). Through Him we are endowed with the mind of Christ, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God. The anointing, then, is the Incoming of the Spirit, in abiding presence. Hence the uniform appeal of the epistles to the ever-existent fact, ignorance of which is inexcusable, recognition of which begets a devoted life:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's” (1Co 6:19-20).

4. HE BAPTIZES.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1Co 12:13).

Baptism with the Spirit is doubtless more misunderstood and misrepresented than any other phase of the Spirit's work, largely due to failure to adhere to the terms of Scripture. Baptism is an initial rite. It betokens our standing in the Christian life. It is therefore related to our salvation, as distinguishable from both sanctification and service.

In the experience of the first believers, they were bidden to wait for the promise of the Father (a dispensational necessity since Jesus was not yet glorified), with the assurance that they should be baptized with the Spirit not many days hence. The day of Pentecost came. The Spirit descended upon each believer. The Church had her birth. How? By each believer receiving the Spirit, being united to Christ by His Spirit, sharing in His life and sharing that life each with the other. Two things were effected: His mystical Body was formed and they were baptized into it.

Of their experience it is recorded that “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” They all, through days of prayer and yieldedness of life, had met the conditions for being filled as well as baptized. This, however, is no warrant for concluding that the one is the same as the other or confusing the one with the other. Would to God that all who are baptized with the Spirit were also filled with the Spirit, and that at the very same time, as at Pentecost. How well it might be so! How seldom it is so!

That the two are different experiences is evident from the following:

(1) Believers are told that we “all” are baptized, that it is a past experience, common to true believers. But this statement is made to the Corinthians, among whom the most sensual sins of the early Church had made their appearance. If baptism with the Spirit betokens an advanced experience in the Christian life, the sins of these Corinthians belied Paul's statement that we “all” have entered into such a state. So also do the lives of the many believers down through the centuries. Since it is stated of all believers, irrespective of unworthiness of life and in spite of it, baptism of the Spirit must refer to POSITION, which we all have, complete in Him, rather than CONDITION, in which we continually come short.

(2) Believers are exhorted to “be filled,” but never to “be baptized.” We challenge any one to turn to the epistles, which contain the Spirit’s instructions as to how the Christian life is to be lived, and find a single exhortation to be baptized with the Spirit, a single intimation that we have any duty in the matter, a single suggestion that it is still future in our experience. Such a reference does not exist. The reason is evident. Baptism with the Spirit takes place at the New Birth; is a sovereignly bestowed benefit, bringing us into the Body of Christ, into the family of God; has to do with salvation rather than any future experience of sanctification; is never in the realm of duty, but is something He sees to the instant we believe upon the Son. Instead of ever seeking the baptism with the Spirit (seeking the fullness of the Spirit is quite another matter) we should be ever thanking Him that He has thus baptized us into His Body.

5. HE SEALS.

“After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph 1:13).

“The Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30).

“Believed . . . sealed,” and that by the “Spirit of promise,” sent by the Father in fidelity to His promise to seal everyone who believes upon His Son, that they may be made secure in the salvation into which He has brought them.

In the administration of salvation the Trinity are engaged in a blessed co-operative work, ministering to the security of the saints (Read again Eph 1:1-14). Said Jesus: “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand” (John 10:28-29). We are “given” by the Father to the Son, and the Son gives to us life that is eternal. The Son is secure in His possession; we are secure in our possession—the Holy Spirit makes it doubly sure. Underneath is the hand of the Son; above is the hand of the Father: this supernatural hand-clasp is secure in the sealing of the Spirit. Do we question the security? The Spirit is Himself the seal. How can He fail?

There are at least three uses to which we put the seal, which embody this work of the Spirit in making our salvation secure to us, and to Him—for He has as much at stake as we.

(1) The stamping of a document by an authorized official—in oriental lands the king used his signet ring—thus declaring that the transaction contained in the document was complete, settled, not to be undone, irrevocable.

(2) The branding of property, such as cattle or logs, as the mark of ownership. Cattle may wander far and mingle freely upon the range, but the owner claims them and separates them by means of the brand in the body. In the great timber belts logs of many owners may mix in floating down stream, only to be separated into their respective booms in accordance with the brand upon them.

(3) The sealing of a package or car for transportation, guaranteeing safe conveyance and delivery intact at destination.

In the above there is embodied a past, present and future reference, which is most suggestive of the Spirit’s far-reaching work in our salvation.

6. HE "EARNESTS."

"Which [that Holy Spirit of promise] is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory" (Eph 1:14).

We may be permitted to coin the verb out of a desire to convey the Spirit's active interest in assuring to us, through His present ministry in our lives, the full and final benefits of salvation—in complete redemption. The Father has fulfilled His promise; the Spirit is prosecuting His present work in our hearts, in pledge and prospect of that glorious consummation.

The reference is to the practice, common today as of old, of an initial payment in making a purchase. Such payment served both to bind the transaction and to pledge the final payment in full. As the "earnest" of such purpose, it was termed "earnest-money."

Even now we who "have the first-fruits of the Spirit," imperfect and incomplete though they be, find in them His solemn pledge of the day when He will leave nothing undone in carrying our salvation to completion—when He will possess His purchased possession in fully consummated redemption.

- Then we will have a body like unto His glorious body (Php 3:20-21);
- Then we will be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (1Jn 3:2);
- Then He will come to be glorified and wondered at in all His saints (2Th 1:10);
- Then He will present us to Himself devoid of spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish (Eph 5:27).

7. HE WITNESSES.

"The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom 8:16-17).

We are not left to imagine that we are saved, to hope that we are saved, or even to make the claim for ourselves, all of which might be in the nature of presumption on our part.

Instead, the blessed Spirit, on His part, takes up His abode in our hearts, there to bear witness that it is actually so. And His witness is true. In this He is but carrying out His own provision that "at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." His Spirit unites with our spirit in the testimony that it is true.

The third witness is His own Word which declares that we who have believed "have passed out of death into life" (John 5:24).

In scanning the Spirit's Incoming for our Salvation we detect a three-tense aspect which may be stated thus:

1. Through His REGENERATION work we have a PAST salvation, perfect in Him.
2. Through His SEALING work we have a PRESENT salvation, secured to us day by day, by the seal of His own presence.

3. Through His EARNEST work we have a FUTURE salvation, assured to us by His pre-payment. By His WITNESSING within He continually imparts to all His work, past, present, future, a glorious sense of reality, by which we KNOW it to be so.

III. The Exhortation

Scripture has one grave warning as to our attitude toward the Spirit's purposed work for our salvation: "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost" (Acts 7:51).

Resisting the Spirit—this is the solemn explanation of why anyone is found in unbelief today. No one can remain unsaved except by withstanding the tender yearnings of the Holy Spirit.

Dear reader, if you are unsaved, this is the reason. Christ died for you—for you as much as for any person who was ever saved. The loving Spirit has many times called this fact to your attention, pressing it home to your heart; but you resisted Him. Change your attitude, cease to resist, and He will bring the Saviour of the world into your life to be your own personal Saviour. Consider well, hear and heed the appeal from the glory of Him who has become a life-giving Spirit:

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20).

When Holman Hunt had completed his matchless picture of Christ standing, with pierced hand uplifted, knocking at the door, a friend remonstrated that he had omitted something, that the door had no latch for opening it.

"No," said Mr. Hunt, "I have not left anything out; this door can be opened only from within."

One day a father, accompanied by his little boy, visited an art gallery, especially intent upon viewing Holman Hunt's painting. As they gazed upon the compassionate face and pleading posture of our blessed Lord, the boy stood absorbed in wrapt intensity of interest. Then to his father he whispered: "Father, Father, did He get in?"

Dear reader, this very day you can change your attitude and know His In-coming. Cease to resist or refuse. Joyously believe and receive. Does He get in?

02.04. His Indwelling - Our Sanctification

His Indwelling - Our Sanctification

CHAPTER FOUR

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1Co 3:16).

The Apostle Paul; amazed at the inconsistencies existing among the Corinthian Christians, accounts for them in one of two ways: either they are ignorant of the fundamental facts of Christian faith and life, or they are ignoring those facts to the point of rendering them inoperative. Bringing his opening argument to a conclusion, he appeals to them: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” These words set forth two things:

1. THE FACT THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS THE BELIEVER.

This we have already seen to be a revealed fact of God's Word. If there ever could be found a believer of whom this was not true, God would be found a liar. The Spirit's In-coming is His immediate response to saving faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. By His In-coming He baptizes us into the Body of Christ and makes secure to us a past, present and future salvation. Moreover, He has come to “abide,” to dwell, making our hearts His permanent abode.

2. THE APPEAL FOR A LIFE IN KEEPING WITH HIS INDWELLING.

These Corinthians could live unworthy lives, as they are doing, only by disregarding the provision God has made in them for a life in harmony with Himself. This provision is the giving to them of His Spirit as an indwelling and transforming presence. The purpose of that indwelling, fraught with boundless possibilities, they have set aside, only to slip back into their old ways of living.

The Greek verb “to indwell” means to use as a house, to make it one's home. It is like an open window through which we look in upon a home scene. We see One adjusting Himself to His new surroundings, rather, adjusting them to His holy tastes, until He is at home in them and feels at home. Before the open window we are moved to make a restatement of the above:

1. THE FACT THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS MAKING OUR HEARTS HIS HOME.

2. THE APPEAL THAT WE MAKE HIM AT HOME BY LIVING A LIFE IN KEEPING WITH HIS INDWELLING.

That these present two phases of the same thing should be evident to all. The second grows out of the first. In the first the emphasis is upon the divine personality. In the second it is upon the human. They constitute the two phases of Sanctification. We may state them as follows:

1. HIS PRESENCE SECURES OUR POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION, WHICH IS ALWAYS PERFECT, ALWAYS COMPLETE—WHAT WE ARE IN CHRIST.

2. OUR RESPONSE TO HIS PRESENCE SECURES OUR EXPERIMENTAL SANCTIFICATION, WHICH IS PROGRESSIVE AND INCOMPLETE—WHAT WE SHOULD BE IN CONDUCT.

A gemlike illustration of the two is Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. It divides symmetrically at the center. Chapters 1-3 are a matchless presentation of Positional Sanctification. Our Standing in Christ, not in ourselves, unalterable and equally perfect in the case of all who believe. It is the product of the combined work of Father, Son and Spirit, so set forth in each chapter:

(1) As Believers —the Father chose us for Himself; the Son purchased us unto Himself; the Spirit sealed us unto Himself.

(2) As His Body—the Father quickened us from the dead; the Son formed us into a New Man in Himself; the Spirit gives us “access” as such.

(3) As His Building—the Father constitutes us His “household”; the Son builds us into a “temple in the Lord;” the Spirit occupies it as His “habitation in the Spirit.”

In the entire picture neither our duty nor our conduct has any place. The remarkable statements made concerning us are wholly due to our position in Christ, and are equally true of all believers, at all times, without condition or qualification.

Chapters 4-6, however, open with a “beseech,” and are an appeal to appropriate all the possibilities of our position by a life, a walk, an experience, that shows us to be set apart unto Him in all actuality. We are exhorted:

- To “walk worthily of our calling,”
- To “grow up into Him in all things,”
- To “no longer walk as other Gentiles walk,”
- To “put off the old man” with his doings,
- To “put on the new man” with his ways,
- To “walk in love,”
- To “walk as children of light,” etc.

Experimental Sanctification is the realization of a life growing out of, and in keeping with, Positional Sanctification.

I. His Indwelling—Our Positional Sanctification 1. BY VIRTUE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S INDWELLING, WE ARE CALLED BY HIS NAME: HOLY ONES OR SAINTS.

Here it becomes necessary to note a fact that is perfectly evident in the language of Scripture, but which is wholly obscured in the process of translation, namely, that “holy,” “saint” and “sanctify” are all one and the same thing. One who is holy or set apart is a saint or holy one—not because of his character or conduct but because of his set-apart position. The state of being thus set apart is sanctification: primarily referring to the position of being set apart from the common to the sacred, and only secondarily to a character in keeping with the position.

Now, when men were seeking a designation for the early disciples, noting that they were distinguished by their faith in, and allegiance to, Christ, they seized upon this relationship and designated them by it: Christians or Christ Ones. So, after the same manner, the Scriptures embody our relationship to the Holy Spirit in a name for us: Holy Ones or Saints. And while the name Christians is applied to us but three times, that of Holy Ones (Saints) is employed something over sixty times.

This raises the question: Who are called Saints? Those who are living holy lives? No, indeed. All believers are so called, all who have the Holy Spirit, and that in spite of actually and openly unholy lives. Take, for example, the Corinthians. God makes use of their unworthy lives to teach His grace in Positional Sanctification.

“Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” (1Co 1:2).

“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1Co 6:11).

In the phrase, “called to be saints,” the italics indicate, as always in Bible translations, that the words have been supplied by the translators. The Greek says, “called saints.” It is God’s designation of every believer, because He sees every one “sanctified in Christ Jesus.”

When He comes to speak to them, these very same people, of what they are in themselves, the picture is one of utter contrast:

“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you” (1Co 5:1-2).

“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? . . . I speak to your shame . . . Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong?”

“Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren” (1Co 6:1-8).

Yet these Corinthians had the name, “saint,” fastened to them. No unworthy conduct could drive from them the Indwelling Spirit, nor could it divest them of a name expressive of this abiding relationship.

2. BY THE BAPTISM WITH THE SPIRIT OUR POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION IS SECURED TO US.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1Co 12:13).

We are all in the position secured to us by the baptism with the Spirit. Made to drink of the one Spirit, of the one life common to all, in the one body, the Body of Christ, we are grafted into Him, joined to Him, identified with Him, so that what is true of Him is true of us. Judicially, His death and

resurrection are ours. Positionally, His perfection of life is ours.

What this means for success in Christian living, a victory-wrought out in Christ's physical body, nineteen hundred years ago, flawless and complete, and now made over to us who are in His mystical Body, no one should fail to see. It is the only place for us to start, in a victory already won. We were baptized into, and now are, "the Body of Christ" (1Co 12:13; 1Co 12:27).

But the Body of Christ has died to sin. Therefore, in the purpose of God, and in the sight of God, we have died to sin: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" (Rom 6:3).

This divinely administered baptism with the Spirit, of which man's administration of water is an outward symbol, makes us one with Him in a Body that has passed through:

- (1) death,
- (2) burial,
- (3) resurrection, into
- (4) new life (Rom 6:4).

Hence Jesus' declaration that the believer "shall not come into judgment" (for he is baptized into His once-for-all judgment for sin), "but is passed from of death unto life."

Then Paul proceeds to ingrain the fact of this tremendous transaction into the consciousness of our Christian living, thereby to translate its priceless worth into practical values.

Into three great words—"KNOW," "RECKON," "YIELD," he compresses the threefold secret of writing these facts into Christian experience.

(1) We must KNOW that we were included in His death and resurrection; know it, not by reasoning but by revelation, just because God tells us it is so; know it, as accomplished in the basic facts of our redemption 1900 years ago, lest we attempt to bring it about by any struggle or effort of our own.

(2) We must "RECKON" ourselves to be "surely, truly, certainly" (for such is the force of "indeed") "dead unto sin and alive unto God." How shall we "reckon" it so? Count it true and act accordingly. Take it into account in all our actions.

(3) We must YIELD ourselves as instruments, no longer to sin, to which we died, but to God, to whom we are now alive. Alive for service! The nature of this new life and service now becomes apparent.*

* The reader is referred to the author's His Salvation as Set Forth in the Book of Romans, page 64ff. The purport of all of this should be apparent to all.

Positional Sanctification is the only true, scriptural basis for Experimental Sanctification. The Holy Spirit brings us into our positional victory in Christ before He leads us into any personal victory in practical living. He takes us back to the one place where God has wrought a perfect work on our behalf; then He starts us out to make its blessed achievements our own in daily life.

To begin anywhere else is to imperil our whole structure of Christian experience by resting it upon the shifting sands of human effort and experiment.

II. His Indwelling—Our Experimental Sanctification The Spirit who has come to indwell us is the sustainer, transformer, renewer of the life He has imparted to us. He abides in us as the Holy Spirit of God to bring His holiness to full fruition. To that end He seeks a vital relationship with our inner processes of thought and aspiration, as intimate and interpenetrating as that which our human spirit enjoys.

From within He works a transformation that is not only moral and spiritual but intellectual, affectional, volitional, yes, practical. His aim is this: having secured to us such a wonderful Position, He is setting about to produce in us a correspondent Condition.

The necessary transformation is of a twofold nature, for the meeting of our twofold problem: negative, to the overcoming of sin in the life; positive, to the developing of Christ-likeness of character.

The Shorter Catechism states it thus:

“Sanctification is the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.”

1. THE SPIRIT’S INDWELLING OVERCOMES SIN IN US.

He delivers us from it. He gives us victory over it.

What took place when we believed upon Christ? We were born again; born of the Spirit; we received a new nature. Did the old nature die? Did the self-life cease to exist? God’s Word is emphatic in teaching that the sin nature never dies short of glory. If it did, we could never sin again. The only source from which we could draw our thoughts or acts would be the new life in the Spirit; but that never sins (1Jn 3:9). If the case were otherwise the fact that any one sinned would prove that he was not born again. Who then could establish his spiritual birthright? The Scripture rebukes such a position in severest terms:

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us” (1Jn 1:8; 1Jn 1:10).

The Scripture does assert our dual nature, resulting in an inner, spiritual conflict:

“The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal 5:17).

This teaches:

- (1) that the flesh persists after the Spirit comes to indwell;
- (2) that the two are separate and opposing entities, “the one” contrary to “the other”;
- (3) that the one checkmates the other, resulting in a life of defeat.

The way out is in the verse preceding: “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Gal 5:16). It is not in the death of the flesh but in the dominance of the Spirit over

it. The life that draws its every aspiration and motive for action from the Spirit leaves the flesh to atrophy in inaction, in inability to have its way.

We must turn now to Romans. Immediately someone reminds us that Paul taught that the intent of our identification with Christ in death is “that the body of sin might be DESTROYED” (Rom 6:6). But any Greek scholar will tell us that that is just what it does not teach. The word is “work” with the alpha privative before it: un-working, inoperative, out of a job. We step up to a door bell to ring it and read: “Bell not working.” The bell is there, but something has happened to make it un-working. It does not respond. Temptation steps up to our door and knocks, as formerly. But while the “body of sin” is within, it does not respond for it is “not working.”

In Rom 7:1-25 the inner conflict between flesh and spirit is depicted in a scene of mortal agony. Not only is there hopeless deadlock—hopeless to the human “I”—but a sense of desperation in which the victim cries: “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Another name for “the body of sin”). Be it noted, he does not ask for sin to be destroyed or done to death; he asks to be delivered from it. Deliverance from death! And how? By the dominance of life.

That deliverance, that new dominance, comes at once— Rom 8:1-39, when the Holy Spirit is introduced as indwelling the life, taking charge of its interests, taking over the conflict for which the “I” had proved all insufficient.

In the glad exultation of realized deliverance comes the cry: “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2). The Holy Spirit, become the “law,” (the ruling, controlling, dominating principle) by His indwelling presence, is in all reality the Spirit of life, freeing us from the control, the domination of sin and death.

And now, just as we have seen that Positional Sanctification is grounded in the finished work of Christ for us, so likewise is Experimental Sanctification. The work of the Spirit has its roots in, and grows out of, the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ. He, as it were, checks upon its treasured resource and makes its values our own in victorious experience.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom 8:3-4).

Christ has made it no longer necessary, nor even logical, for us to follow the dictates of sin; and when we cease to heed the promptings of the flesh, choosing rather to heed the behests of the Spirit, He, the blessed Indwelling Spirit, leads us out into a life of assured victory. One thrills with the exultation of freedom from enslavement, of victory over defeat, as we follow, step-by- step, the unfolding story (Rom 8:5-25) only to find ourselves gripped and carried on to the glorious climax of the chapter, sharers in a sweepstake victory over every force in the field:

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:35; Rom 8:37-39).

“Separate us from . . . Christ?” No, indeed, for by the Indwelling Spirit we have entered into the inseparable life. In it we have found both delightful deliverance from sin and unspeakable satisfaction for the soul—separated from it and unto Him. Thus the practical expression of Sanctification is in a life of Separation.

This phase of Sanctification is carried over into the Epistles to the Corinthians and there developed more fully. These Corinthian Christians were confronted with every form of evil in the society surrounding them, evil that made a strong bid for freedom to enmesh them in its toils. It is even so with us. Evil is not only in us but also around us. The two are kin, responsive; they tend to “get together.” But the Spirit indwells us as the Spirit of Separation. And He separates by a twofold appeal. He both restrains from evil and constrains to a life set apart to Himself.

Having repeatedly reminded the Corinthians that they are the indwelt temple of God (1Co 3:16-17; 1Co 6:19-20), each time using this fact as an appeal for a holy life, separate from sin, He finally comes to a supreme entreaty, based upon the same fact, for a life that can make experimental proof of this endearing relationship:

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2Co 6:16-18).

This double demarcation of the Christian life, because the indwelt temple of God, is clearly and beautifully denoted by the two walls of separation in the Tabernacle. The outer, court wall separated from the world without; the inner, house wall separated unto the Presence within. And again, they depict the interrelation of the work of Christ and of the Spirit in a life of separation and sanctification. The court, particularly by its altar of sacrifice, portrays Christ’s work for us, and our POSITION in Him. The house, setting forth the abiding Presence and the abiding life, portrays our POSSESSION in the Spirit. Thus Positional and Experimental Sanctification conspire in a double urge to a life of separation.

These two elements are present at every marriage altar, sanctifying the home as a doubly set-apart life. The husband’s vow runs: “Forsaking all others, cleave lovingly and loyally to her, and to her alone.” So also the wife’s, it is a separation from and unto. And the ideal home, the truly safe and happy home, is one where the “from” has less and less need of emphasis and the “unto” becomes increasingly ascendant. This is the compelling secret of the home—the unfailing, sanctifying presence of the dear one who indwells it. What is the home without that presence? And what but an empty mockery, destined for the divorce courts, the marriage bond that ceases to respond to it! Not otherwise is it with the Spirit’s covenanted presence in our hearts.

As “separated from” is the negative side of sanctification, so “separated unto” is its positive side. The one always has the other in view, and alone makes it possible. To this latter, then, we now naturally turn.

2. THE SPIRIT’S INDWELLING DEVELOPS HIS OWN CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER IN US.

This takes us again to the fifth of Galatians, to complete our examination of its teaching. We saw the necessity of walking in the Spirit that we might not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Gal 5:16), for the conflict is there and each is contending in the arena of our lives for the mastery (Gal 5:17). What the flesh is capable of when unleashed, unhampered by the Spirit is graphically set forth in a catalog lurid with color (Gal 5:19-21). As we read the enumeration, running the whole gamut of fleshly desire and degradation, and realize that it is but a partial listing ending with the phrase, "and such like," we are confronted with a picture of what we might have been, but for His gracious interposition.

These are the "works of the flesh"; that is, what it normally works at and what it normally works out. We know the class of works that characterize a carpenter, or mason, an electrician or office clerk. So here are the output, the accomplishments of the flesh when free to "work"; that is, when it is not interfered with by the Spirit, when "the body of sin" is not put "out of work" (Rom 6:6).

Such is the background for the Holy Spirit's work of reorganizing our life around His own Indwelling. This picture of possibilities in the flesh had to be drawn to show us "the hole of the pit whence we are digged." By it the Spirit has compressed a world of contrast into the "BUT" that introduces His blessed deliverance:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal 5:22-23).

These are not "works," disassociated, divisive, destructive. These are the "fruit," one harmonious whole, of His Presence at the roots of life, at the fountain of affection, at the main-spring of action; the out-breathing of the inbreathing of God by His Spirit. It is John 15:1-27, with the flavor of the fruit analyzed. It is Christ realized in human life.

One hesitates to go beyond mere meditation in silence. Yet we can readily see that God is in this fruit bringing Himself, His own revealed attributes and ways of dealing with us, to realization in our characters and lives. "God is love." Doubtless love is the dominant flavor, permeating all. This is borne out by reference to His characterization of Love in First Corinthians, comparing the two descriptions as we read:

"Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity [love] envieth not; charity [love] vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity [love] never faileth" (1Co 13:4-8).

Someone has interpreted the fruit of the Spirit in terms of love, as follows:

- Joy is love exulting.
- Peace is love reposing.
- Longsuffering is love untiring.
- Gentleness is love enduring.
- Goodness is love in action.

- Faith is love on the battlefield.
- Meekness is love under discipline.
- Temperance is love in training.

To see clearly how these qualities round out human character into a completed whole, we should gather the nine into three groupings of three each:

- “Love, Joy, peace”: these are the Spirit realizing Himself, His poise and calm, His essential Self in our PERSONAL CHARACTER.
- “Long-suffering, gentleness, goodness”: these are the Spirit realizing His own principles of dealing with men in our CONDUCT TOWARD OTHERS.
- “Faith, meekness, temperance”: these are the Spirit’s developing in us a right ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD.

Or may we regard them as the “fine flour” of the meal offering, typifying the evenness of character found in our Lord Jesus Christ. Noted men of history are great in some outstanding characteristic. Not so with Him. We cannot think of Him as great in any one or more particulars; His life is so even in its traits of character, so balanced, so marked by wholeness. It is this that the Spirit’s Indwelling reproduces in us. Not a working, not a striving for this or that character-development, but a coming to expression of His own rounded-out character, the out-living of the in-living Christ.

Is this an impossible ideal? beyond our hope of realization? No, for we go on to read, for our encouragement: “And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal 5:24).

Something, says the Spirit, has taken place in the spiritual life-history of every believer that frees him from the necessity of flesh-dominance. “They that are Christ’s”— they who, having accepted Him as Saviour, are His by the New Birth—“crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

When? And how? When we passed through some great crisis of struggling to be freed from sin? Never! There is just one place where God deals with sin, finally, completely, forever. It is at the Cross. It is the transaction of Calvary. Those who know their Bible know that we were crucified there “with Christ” (Rom 6:1-6; Gal 2:20).

It is there, dear reader, in the death of His Son “for sin,” that God dealt effectually with all sin, yours and mine. Simply to believe it is to enter into His rest.

This it is that is affirmed of each one of us in Gal 5:24.

We know that such a statement is not true experimentally of all who are Christ’s. Alas, how untrue! Yet the Spirit states that it is absolutely true of all. The reason, the explanation, is this: He is speaking, not of Experimental, but of Positional Sanctification. In so doing He uses the aorist tense, which, as every Greek scholar knows, expresses a past, complete, timeless transaction.

“They that are Christ’s crucified the flesh” (omit the “have”). When? Dean Alford comments: “When they became Christ’s— at their baptism, see Rom 6:2.” Jamison, Fausset and Brown expound thus: “They nailed it to the cross once for all (force of aorist) when they became Christ’s (Rom

6:3-4). They keep it now in a state of crucifixion (Rom 6:6); so that the Spirit can produce in them, comparatively uninterrupted by it, 'the fruit of the Spirit' (Gal 5:22)."

May God deliver us from two dangers:

- First—that of treating God's Word as though it were untrue and struggling to crucify the flesh—which we never can—a thing which He accomplished once for all in Christ.
- Second— that of disregarding the victory of Calvary, that is, failing to reckon ourselves dead unto sin and continuing to yield obedience to its lusts.

So to live is not only unfair to Christ whose glorious victory on our behalf we thus nullify and let go for naught, it is in a more direct and intimate sense unfair to the Holy Spirit who has taken up His Indwelling in our hearts, thereby to check out to us the values of Calvary and make its victories a glorious, personal reality in the lives of all who are His. Therefore III. The Exhortation

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit" (Eph 4:30). In some inexplicable manner the word "away" has been popularly inserted in this phrase, constituting a statement that is entirely unscriptural. We can never grieve away the Spirit, since He has come in to abide, dwell, remain. He is the indissoluble bond, uniting us to Christ, making eternal life eternally ours. Reader, you can never drive Him away. And herein lies your power to grieve Him. If you are bound to frequent questionable places, you take Him along. He must go with you. He has no choice. If you persist in thinking, saying, doing, the unworthy thing, He is partner to it for He cannot disassociate Himself from His own and the things that occupy them.

Particularly is He grieved when we, in this manner, frustrate the twofold purpose of His Indwelling, namely, the two phases of our Sanctification, negative and positive. He is grieved, first, when we persist in clinging to the sin from which He seeks to set us free; second, when we refuse to let Him develop His own character of Christ-likeness in us.

That this is the point of the exhortation not to grieve Him is evident from the context:

NEGATIVE—"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph 4:30-31)

POSITIVE—"And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph 4:32).

If we are not to grieve the Spirit, we must believe His Word, wholly and implicitly, as to His indwelling presence; as to the purposes for which He indwells us; as to the use He makes of our union with Christ in His finished work to effect His victory in us. We must trust Him wholly, unwaveringly, to carry on His gracious work in our hearts, silently, steadily, victoriously.

02.05. His Inworking - Our Service

His Inworking - Our Service

CHAPTER FIVE

“Work out your own salvation . . . for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Php 2:12-13). “He is able to do . . . according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph 3:20).

What is Christian service? Is it something we do for Him? Or is it something He does in and through us? These two questions localize the line of cleavage running through the camp of Christ’s followers today. Are we to serve Him as best we may? Or does He purpose in sovereign wisdom to serve Himself through us?

If we take the former view, human personality is the important factor in service. Since we are doing it, we must initiate it, plan it, scheme it, devise ways and means, by hook or crook, to compass it. If we are faithful, we praise ourselves; if we are successful, we congratulate ourselves. If we seem to be failing, we blame our methods and proceed to change them; or we call in to help us men whose personalities promise well, irrespective of relationship to Him. How far afield this view may carry us is well illustrated by the many forms of flagrantly worldly methods in vogue in Christian institutions today.

If we take the latter view, divine personality comes at once to the place of dominance. Since He is really the power at work, our dependence is upon Him. We must seek His mind, have His wisdom, permit Him freedom to initiate, guide and direct. We will wish to know His plan that there may be no withholding of the strength of His might in carrying it to a conclusion.

The practical result is immediately apparent; we will find our lives consciously centered in Him, and continuously dependent upon Him.

Which of these views is correct, scripturally and experimentally, is readily determined for us by reference to the quotations that head this chapter. Meditation upon them yields the following:

1. He is not only indwelling but “inworking” us.

The Greek verb is *energeo*, from which is derived our energy. He is the inner, inwardly working power, the energy of our lives. And more—the wording of the sentence in the Greek makes this doubly emphatic: “For God it is who is inworking in you.”

2. It is an effectual and purposeful inworking:

“both the willing and the inworking, for the sake of His good pleasure.” His Indwelling is designed to secure a life lived in the sphere of His pleasure—always “good” as ours is not—not to our pleasing, but to His. Yet this is not arbitrarily superimposed. Quite the opposite, for He causes “the willing and the inworking” so to be inwrought that it comes to be as much ours as His. How

wonderful! What becomes of the behavioristic theories of psychology in face of such a fact?

3. The measure of His power is limited by the degree of freedom accorded by the human personality: “according to the power that worketh in us.”

Under the New Covenant our responsibility is a tremendous one, but it is never that of independent initiation or action; always that of rightly relating ourselves to His indwelling, inworking, energizing presence.

4. The possibilities engendered by such facts far exceed our powers of imagination.

Hence the exhortation: “Work out your own salvation”—a salvation peculiar and personal to you, for you have the Holy Spirit indwelling you, and the possibilities are not limited to your human effort but to His divine power. Whatever “salvation” may have meant to Paul or Peter, or others, you have the same Spirit working in you for His good pleasure. Your responsibility is so to live as not to thwart His inworking purposes; rather, that your living and serving shall be the outworking of that which He is inworking.

We are now prepared to see the further and fuller reach of His indwelling Presence, beyond that disclosed in the studies of our last chapter. The Holy Spirit, we saw, indwells us and thereby accomplishes our Sanctification—an adjustment of our personal lives to His own holy person and character, to the dropping away of sin’s power over us and the implanting of His imparted attributes in us. But to what purpose is all of this? For the beautifying of our personal lives? To terminate upon us? Not at all. His work in us is that He may have an instrument adjusted to His use, thus to work through us to the blessing of others.

Here is an added incentive to a life of holiness. It is as a “good connection” over the phone. The buzzing of other voices, so disturbing and distracting, dies away and we get clearly the voicing of the Spirit’s mind and will in the soul. “Whosoever hath, to him shall be given,” was spoken of a hearing ear, because of which Jesus said to those who possessed it, “It is given unto you to know . . . but to them it is not given” (Mat 13:12; Mat 13:11). The hidden secret of a life of service lies back in the heart attuned to hear the whisperings of His will for us.

I. His Inworking

We must first see the fact of the Inworking of the Spirit, with all that He is intent upon accomplishing in and through us, since it is in Him, energizing us, that our service finds its source of inspiration and strength.

1. HE INSTRUCTS US.

“Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. . . But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him” (1Jn 2:20; 1Jn 2:27).

This is said of all believers. When we believed unto salvation, the Holy Spirit, by His In-coming, anointed us as His own. We not only received His life by the New Birth, but we were also endowed with His mind, the mind of Christ. But this mind for things spiritual, this capacity to

understand—see 1Co 2:9-14, must be developed, much as the immature mind of the child. So the Holy Spirit takes up in us the work of instructor; we, as it were, go to school to the Spirit. This is just the work Jesus promised He would do:

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

“Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you” (John 16:13-14).

What He is bent upon being and doing in us as sons of God, in the capacity of instructor and guide, is delineated in what He came to be in the Son of God: “the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord” (Isa 11:2). What we call “common sense” would not be so uncommon; rather, understanding, good judgment, wise counsel, spiritual insight would be universal characteristics of God’s people, if only the Spirit were unhindered in His Inworking.

But the anointing does not eventuate in mere instruction or quickened illumination. Anointing is in order to service. Of Jesus we read: “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). Do we long to serve? Then let us appropriate—work out—the anointing we have, by way of preparation. Whatever other instruction we may be privileged to secure, and much is needed to serve our day, like the Thessalonians we must be “taught of God” in order to be His true servants. This is the inwrought work of the Spirit.

2. HE EMPOWERS US.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8).

The Lord Jesus had carefully instructed them as to their need of spiritual power, lacking which they should not venture forth in their own strength. The power they needed He also promised them, a promise that was fulfilled in the In-coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

But, for the promise of power His wording is not “in,” but “upon.” The same is true of the actual event; not only were they filled with the Spirit, but His presence, manifested as fire, was “upon each of them.”

It is language that suggests the superimposing of divine power, the overshadowing of our impotence with His omnipotence. It is the New Covenant fulfilling of the Word of the Lord through Zechariah: “Not by might, nor by power (such as men possess), but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.” Throughout the Church age He is “upon” us, to empower for service.

3. HE CALLS US TO SERVICE.

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed . . .”

(Acts 13:2-4).

Here we recognize the Holy Spirit as the Great Executive of the Church, laying her plans and taking measures to carry them out. To do so He must select men for His service, set them apart, send them forth. Paul, in particular, had been for a protracted period under the tutelage of the Spirit (see Gal 1:15-17). Fresh from this inwrought instruction, with a “knowledge of the mystery of Christ” that was to shape the entire course of the Church, the Spirit now called him into the service for which He Himself had qualified him.

It is of the utmost importance that we have a call; that we hear and heed the call. There are many agencies through which we may enter Christian service, all fallible in judgment, limited in resource. If we wish an appointment, we should apply first at Headquarters. There is the Spirit, infinite in wisdom, mighty in counsel, possessed of all heavenly resources and all earthly appointments.

Moreover, when He calls, hear and heed. Many are the lives today that are sadly set aside because they temporized with the Great Executive. His will is sovereign. If He wants you, is willing to use you, be sure you want nothing so much as the privilege of saying to Him: “Thy Will—Nothing More; Nothing Less; Nothing Else.”

4. HE APPOINTS TO PARTICULAR SERVICE.

“For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles” (Gal 2:8, R.V.). The Greek is *energeo*—to work in. Rotherham translates, “inwardly wrought in.” To the Spirit’s In-working is attributed the fact that Peter found his ministry among the Jews and Paul among the Gentiles. He prepared Peter for a particular work and appointed him to it. So also with Paul.

By no possibility could they exchange positions; each one’s work was divinely selected and assigned. They wrought as the Spirit had diligently wrought in them.

The eighth chapter of Acts shows us Philip moved about by the will of the Spirit, assigning him definite tasks. He interrupts his preaching to crowds at Samaria and stations him on a desert highway that he may speak to one man, and he an Ethiopian. It was the Spirit’s strategy, thereby to introduce the Gospel into the continent of Africa.

This done, He removed Philip westward and assigned him to a preaching tour of the Mediterranean coast (Acts 8:5-40).

Every believer should look upon his life as Spirit-planned and Spirit-appointed.

We should be as open to the Spirit’s changes of program as was Philip, Paul or Peter. We should never assume that what we knew of the Spirit’s assignment for yesterday will suffice for today or tomorrow. And, knowing that the Spirit must man a world-wide work, far more widely scattered than any army or navy service, we should be eagerly open to removal and relocation, wherever we may serve His purposes best.

We think of a dear, good friend in the ministry, one who had been much used of God. But he became possessed of a house. From that time forth he could hear no call beyond a limited radius of his house. What a travesty on the executive work of the Holy Spirit! Putting Him on a

tether—thus far and no farther. Dictating to Him where He may, or may not, send us. Of course, all such are set aside; He does not accept such humanly imposed limitations.

5. HE SPEAKS THROUGH US TO MAN.

“Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in ail wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily” (Col 1:28-29).

Paul thus describes, and ascribes, his ministry of the Gospel: “According to His inward-working which is inwardly-working in me with power” (Rotherham). He would have it known that the originating power of it is not with him, that it is wrought in him. No wonder he cries: “Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.” And looking back upon his ministry at Corinth, he writes of it:

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (1Co 2:4-5).

In this, Paul is but like His Master, for the Lord Jesus Christ bore the same testimony concerning His own earthly ministry: “The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works” (John 14:10).

Tracing this to His intimate union with the Father, He assures us that He is providing for equal, and even greater, works on our part, by His ascension to the Father and our union with Him in the Spirit.

6. HE SPEAKS THROUGH US TO GOD.

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (Rom 8:26-27).

It is the indwelling Spirit of whom this is said. He is the Intercessor in us as Christ our Lord is the Intercessor above us (Rom 8:34). True prayer is that which is wrought in us by the Spirit; He is its prompter and promoter, its wisdom and power. In this He overshadows our confessed weakness and inability to pray as we ought. Moreover, He is in utmost accord with the Father; the mind of the One is the mind of the Other. The prayer He prompts in us cannot fail of its answer.

In the Holy Spirit’s loving concern for His own—His saints or holy ones—His inwrought prayer becomes a constant, persistent crying out on their behalf: “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Eph 6:18). Faithful and watchful is the Spirit in brooding love over His children, and He instills into our prayer-life a like faithfulness and watchfulness for their welfare. What a gracious prayer ministry He maintains in the hearts of His own on behalf of His own!

7. HE BEARS FRUIT THROUGH US.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing . . . Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much

fruit" (John 15:5; John 15:8).

The Vine and Branch teaching does not mention the Spirit by name, but He is the inworking power of it all. He has come to abide in us that we may have through Him the Abiding Life. By Him we are grafted into the Vine; by Him its life flows into us and bears fruit through us. It is here we gain our most comprehensive conception of the Spirit's Inworking, seen as the normal, vital, indispensable, "abiding" reality of the believer's living and serving. Only as we abide have we the position, the life, the fruit of believers. But we do not abide of ourselves. We abide because He abides.

The result of this relationship, positioned in Christ, cultured by the Father, wrought out through the Spirit, is but the expression of these vital forces, in:

- "fruit" (John 15:2);
- "more fruit" (John 15:2);
- "much fruit" (John 15:5; John 15:8).

This is Christian service at its highest. In it the human, the branch, has nothing whereof to boast; it is but the channel. In it, however, the Godhead, in union with the believer, is living His life and working His works, to His own glory.

II. Our Service

Doubtless, in the foregoing, we have fully sensed the fact that Christian service is not something of our own selecting, nor yet of our own executing—not anything disassociated from Him who is the Great Servant in the Godhead, but always something springing from our relationship to Him, something wrought out by Him through us. By Him; through us: a mutual, practical partnership.

Between His Inworking, as above unfolded, and its outworking in service, now to be considered, there is clearly a close, abiding correspondence such as we might expect.

1. WE ARE HIS WORKMEN.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2Ti 2:15). Our thought turns to the long centuries in which the Holy Spirit was giving authorship to His Book of Truth; the men that He chose for the work; how He caused them to write, carried along on the stream of divine thought beyond their power even to comprehend the import of their own words; the marvels of the divine plan, involving the sending of the Son to redeem the race; His testifying "beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow"; His purposes in the Church, culminating in the perfections of the coming ages.

Nothing is so essential as that the world know the truths of this Book. Yet to men it is a sealed treasure-house. Shall its message of wisdom be lost to them, when to know it would mean salvation? Shall men perish for want of understanding what the Spirit has prepared for them? The Spirit says, No! He has a definite plan. It is this: that, just as He used men to write His Truth, He will continue to use men to interpret and dispense it. To this end He comes into the believer as the Anointing One, quickening him into an understanding of the Truth. This done, He calls him to be His workman in spiritual things, bidding him go about His work with earnest purpose to show himself approved unto God by the way he handles the Word of Truth, apportioning and dispensing

it to his fellows according to its intent and meaning. That the Holy Spirit should call and use men of our day, even us, for so sacred a work, fraught with the eternal destiny of souls, should solemnize all our hearts in the purpose, as workmen qualified by His Inworking, to hold forth the word of life in all its power to save.

2. WE ARE HIS WITNESSES.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me” (Acts 1:8).

“My witnesses”; made such by the In-working of the Spirit whose genius it is to make much of Christ. The Holy Spirit is the Lord Jesus Christ’s chief witnesser during this age; but He has qualified us and drawn us into partnership with Himself in His witnessing task.

Of this partnership Jesus spoke:

“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me: and ye also shall bear witness” (John 15:26-27).

To qualify as witnesses of Christ we must have a personal, first-hand knowledge of Him, whereby we may “speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.” Moreover we must have a personal experience of Him, that our testimony to the transforming facts of the Gospel may not be belied by an untransformed life; rather, that lip and life speak the same language, as indeed they did at the martyr’s stake, the place of supreme witness. Indeed, the Greek, “martyr,” means readiness to witness with a conviction which may lead one to give up his life.

Such knowledge, such transformation, such conviction can come only as it is inwrought by the Holy Spirit. He only can so reveal to us our risen Christ that we may say of Him, in the glad exultation of His triumph: “We have seen the Lord.” He only can so make real to us our glorified Lord that we may say out of our experience that we “know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.”

A most touching scene was enacted not long since, in one of our well-known art galleries. A blind man was seen walking through the galleries, accompanied by an intimate friend. Arm in arm they stood before each painting while the one with good vision explained and described every detail, and his friend, with countenance aglow, heard of the beauties portrayed upon the various canvases. At times the blind man was filled with evident enthusiasm, and later expressed his admiration of the pictures he had been privileged to see. He had seen them through his friend, the one at his side to lend him sight and give him knowledge of what otherwise he would not have known. It is just this the Holy Spirit does for us. He sees the face of our Lord Jesus Christ in His beauty and glory. He causes us to see Him too. He imparts to us His own enthusiasm for Him. He makes Him real. So the Spirit witnesses of Him to us; and we witness of Him to others.

3. WE ARE HIS AMBASSADORS.

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (2Co 5:20).

Having qualified us as witnesses, able to speak of Him, the Spirit calls us into an office where we must needs speak for Him. It is the office of Ambassador, than which there is none more honorable or dignified among men.

It is an office in which one is sent to live among those who do not have his citizenship, there to represent his government and his people. In its exercise he is not to speak his own mind or voice his own opinions, but to catch and truly convey the mind and will of the one he represents. Finding himself unable longer sincerely or successfully to represent him, he should cease to exercise the office.

Of this Christian diplomatic office, representing the Court of Heaven among men who do not own allegiance to our Christ, we may say that the Holy Spirit is the Chief Ambassador.

Just as the centurion recognized in Jesus one clothed with authority, so Jesus assured us that the Spirit would act and speak in a like capacity: "He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak" (John 16:13).

The Holy Spirit is a true and faithful Ambassador, refusing ever to speak from Himself, as though He were the seat of authority when He is here to represent Another. Rest assured He will never lead us into any such breach of office. But there are two ways in which we may forfeit our ambassadorship:

First, by saying things from ourselves, either that which is unauthorized or that which is contrary to authority. The United States has summarily dismissed more than one ambassador for such offense. It is a serious matter. We cannot afford such misrepresentation. God has left but little room to misunderstand His mind, with His Word of Truth in our hands and His Spirit of Truth in our hearts. We stand amazed, then, at the foolish babblings, the idle speculations, the open questionings, even sharp contradictions of His revealed truth, proceeding from the mouths of His called and constituted ambassadors. Surely they do not realize the seriousness of the offense nor the accounting into which He must bring them.

Second, by refusing to speak from Him, as He bids. We are here "in Christ's stead." There are certain things He wants said. Yearningly He seeks to get His Gospel of Reconciliation out to men. If He cannot get utterance through us we have failed Him in the office to which He appointed us.

"A prominent clergyman in New England tells this experience of his: In the course of his pastoral work he was called to conduct the funeral service of a young woman who had died unexpectedly. As he entered the house he met the minister in charge of the mission church, where the family attended, and asked him, 'Was Mary a Christian?' To his surprise a pained look came into his face as he replied, 'Three weeks ago I had a strong impulse to speak to her, but I did not; and I do not know. A moment later he met the girl's Sunday School teacher and asked her the same question. Quickly the tears came, as she said, 'Two weeks ago, Doctor, a voice seemed to say to me, 'Speak to Mary,' and I knew what it meant, and I intended to, but I did not, and I do not know.' Deeply moved by these unexpected answers, a few minutes later he met the girl's mother, and thinking doubtless to give her an opportunity to speak a word that would bring comfort to her heart, he said quietly, 'Mary was a Christian girl?' The tears came quick and hot to the mother's eyes, as she sobbed out, 'One week ago a voice came to me saying, 'Speak to Mary,' and I thought of it, but I did not at the time, and you know how unexpectedly she went away and I do not know'" (S. D.

Gordon).

Could anything be more unspeakably pathetic? The Holy Spirit, lovingly anticipating a crucial hour, wrought in three people, a pastor, a teacher, a mother, seeking the use of their lips to speak His message for which he had doubtless prepared the young heart, and He was denied utterance by all three. Let us ask ourselves whether we also are refusing equally specific assignments.

If so, by what right do we continue in office?

4. WE ARE HIS HERALDS OF A WORLD-WIDE GOSPEL.

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Mat 28:18-20).

The Gospel is “good news.” It is meant to be told. Nay, it must be told. Further, our Lord Jesus had a plan for its world-wide telling: “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.” Moreover, He declared that the Holy Spirit would take up the program and see to its carrying out, using His followers as His heralds:

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Here is a program of world-wide expansion, with the Holy Spirit pledged to put it into operation. How? By His inworking of it in us and our outworking of it through Him. That He immediately set about the task, working true to specifications, is evident from a study of the Book of Acts. The program of Acts 1:8 is the outline of the book. *

* The Acts is a record of the Spirit’s expanding program:

I. Introduction – Acts 1:1-26.

II. In Jerusalem and all Judea – Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37, Acts 5:1-42, Acts 6:1-15, Acts 7:1-60, Acts 8:1-4

III. In Samaria – Acts 8:16-40, Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30, Acts 12:1-25, Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41, Acts 16:40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-40, Acts 22:1-30, Acts 23:1-35, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32, Acts 17:1-44, Acts 28:1-31.

IV. Unto the Uttermost Part of the Earth – (Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30, Acts 12:1-25).

In Anticipation (Acts 8:26-40). In Preparation (Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30, Acts 12:1-25).

In Realization (Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41, Acts 16:40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-40, Acts 22:1-30, Acts 23:1-35, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32, Acts 17:1-44, Acts 28:1-31).

It is an exhibition of the mind of the Spirit regarding world-wide evangelization. It is equally a demonstration of His purpose, in this age, to select and qualify men as His Gospel heralds, appointing them their work and empowering them for its performance.

Down to our own day there is no reason for thinking that He has changed either His mind or His method. He is still working by the plan. He is definitely committed to the program. He is seeking to work the same mind in us, and is prepared to use us in proportion as we accept His program, in principle, as our own. It involves on our part:

(1) The cordial recognition of His executive sovereignty, in the exercise of which He must be free to place His men wherever He will, to the ends of the earth, much as the manager of an industrial plant must say just where his men shall work.

(2) The heartiest co-operation in His plan to tell the whole world the Good News, at whatever cost, to the refusal of other and various proposals, however promising or alluring.

Yet to meet these conditions is not natural to us, only as the Spirit in-works them. He has a universal mind for the carrying out of an eternal purpose; ours is provincial, for we see and think from our particular spot of earth. We think our country fair, a fit place to live always and serve. But He, holding the whole field in view, may have selected this as a favored birthplace for us, where He might train and culture us for a field of His choosing far out yonder. Knowing the Spirit's program, every Christian should seek to find His personal life-plan for him.

A needful warning against laggardness on the part of Christian heralds is found in the following parable: *

* Adapted from A Strange but True Story, by Mrs. H. Grattan Guinness.

A wealthy land-owner, cultivating some thousands of acres and much beloved by his large staff of laborers, before taking a necessary journey gave very explicit directions that the whole of the cultivated land was to be kept in hand, while all the marshy ground was to be reclaimed, the hills terraced and the poor mountain stretches fertilized, that not the smallest corner of the estate should remain barren or neglected. Ample resources were left to accomplish all this work.

Moreover, the owner being detained for many years, the number of tenants and laborers was vastly multiplied. What was his surprise, then, upon returning, to find the work unaccomplished, the moors and mountain wastes more wild and desolate than ever, rich virgin soil left untouched to bear briars and thistles, meadows barren through lack of cultivation. The greater part of the estate seemed scarcely to have been visited even.

Had they been idle? Some had. Very many had been most industrious, but in utmost disregard of directions they had expended their efforts upon the parks around their homes, so intent upon bringing them to a state of perfection that they many times quarreled through overlapping and interfering with their neighbors. The loss of labor consequent upon misdirected effort left vast areas of reclaimable soil wholly undeveloped and yet the laborers talked much about the owner's expressed purposes. They were always reading the directions he wrote, and said continually to one another: "You know we have to bring the whole property into order." But they did not do it. Despite the efforts of the few, and even when their resulting crops proved superabundant, the many failed to turn in and help. Were these servants fools? or traitors to their Lord? He said, "Go

ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” After 1900 years they had not even mentioned that there was a Gospel, to one-half of the world.

5. WE ARE HIS EPISTLES.

“The epistle of Christ . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart . . . known and read of all men” (2Co 3:3; 2Co 3:2).

The Spirit’s purposes in us rise to still higher levels. He will have His truth known through us in a far more complete and convincing manner; not that men should hear it from our lips, but read it in our lives.

He, the Spirit of Truth, occupied Himself for centuries in producing the Book of Truth. In the centuries since He has been giving Himself to the production of living epistles of the same truth. And the proof positive for any and every generation is this, that, reading the truth of God in the Book in their hands, they turn and see the same truth living and walking before their eyes.

The believer is the world’s Bible; and, many times, the only one it will read. How overwhelming the responsibility! That today there should be so much unbelief concerning Christ is a serious reflection upon His present-day epistles. Men should see in us that which would convert to Christ by its acceptance or condemn by its rejection. What a joy to preach the Gospel, were every Christian in the Church a living embodiment of its truth and power! How impossible the task when its professors belie its power.

Living epistles of Christ, circulating everywhere, do men read HIM aright in us? If not, there is need for a revised version. This the indwelling, inworking Spirit eagerly waits to effect. The World’s Bible

Christ has no hands but our hands To do His work today,

He has no feet but our feet To lead men in His way,

He has no tongue but our tongues To tell men how He died,

He has no help but our help To bring them to His side.

We are the only Bible The careless: world will read,

We are the sinner’s gospel, We are the scoffer’s creed,

We are the Lord’s last message, Given in deed and word.

What if the type is crooked?

What if the print is blurred?

What if our hands are busy With other work than His?

What if our feet are walking Where sin’s allurements is?

What if our tongues are speaking Of things His lips would scorn?

How can we hope to help Him And hasten His return?

—Annie Johnson Flint.

6. WE ARE HIS PRAYER-PARTNERS.

“Praying in the Holy Spirit” (Jude 1:20).

He in us; we in Him. What a partnership, intimate and indissoluble, for carrying on the ministry of prayer! There is a mutuality in it that should challenge us to do our part. In the matter of prayer, what He works in us we must in undiminished measure work out.

Without doubt, for this Gospel age, the Holy Spirit is the Great Prayer. Visualize, for the moment, the task He has undertaken. All the possibilities of the Gospel of the Son of God, all the salvaging values of Calvary, the determining of the destiny of immortal souls thereby, the Spirit has taken to Himself in trust, to pass on and apply to the hearts and lives of men. He loves with the love of God the Father. He yearns with the compassion of Christ the Son. In His love, and in His yearning, how He prays. What intercession! What wonder He “maketh intercession . . . with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Something of the Son’s Gethsemane goes into the Spirit’s agonizing over sin.

His intercession is an inworking within us. But what poor prayer-partners we prove to be. How little of His agony takes fire in our spirits. How lightly His burden for the souls of men rests upon our hearts. Today, O Thou Spirit of all grace, we offer ourselves anew for this partnership of prayer. Pray Thou in us, and we will pray in Thee.

7. WE ARE HIS STEWARDS OF MANIFOLD GRACE.

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1Pe 4:10).

The Greek word for “steward” means “house-manager.” But it is the same root word that is translated “dispensation.” When we are given a stewardship, we are given a dispensation, a responsibility in house management. So Paul describes his ministry to the Gentiles—Eph 3:2. But this is the Holy Spirit’s dispensation. He has undertaken to build and manage a spiritual house, the Church of the living God. We are called to share with Him this blessed work, a work of which Jesus spoke thus:

“Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over His household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing” (Luk 12:42-43).

When we consider the greatness of the “house” the Holy Spirit is building and managing, extending into every city, hamlet and countryside, to the very earth-ends, with every home and heart a prospect for His gracious working; when we weigh the responsibility of dispensing His Word, by being “instant in season, out of season,” that all may receive their “portion of meat in due season”; when we match the variety of opportunity with the urgency of need, we say:

“Surely the Lord has an appointed place in which I may minister His manifold grace.”

Then, in quick response to our longing, comes the assurance that such is the case, that however limited our capabilities—not of gold, nor yet of silver, but perchance of wood, or even of earth—if we are only willing to be kept clean and fit for His use, He will rejoice over us and use us as a “vessel unto honor”:

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2Ti 2:20-21).

III. The Exhortation The Holy Spirit has given one brief word of admonition, embodying our responsibility in view of His Inworking: “Quench not the Spirit” (1Th 5:19).

The Spirit is as a fire, burning upon the altar of our hearts, seeking to come to expression as a sacred flame that will bear its own testimony as to His presence and do its own witnessing work of reproofing sin and lighting in the hearts of men a burning desire for Him whom to know is life eternal.

The reference is to the candlestick in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle, an imagery fulfilled in each New Covenant believer. The candlestick was supplied with oil, symbol of the Spirit. It was always lit, expressive of the constant, abiding Presence. It was the priest’s responsibility to see that it was not extinguished, that by its continuous burning it might bear its testimony and do its work.

Every believer is supremely responsible for giving to the Spirit His fullest and freest expression.

At no time should He strive in vain to speak His mind or perform His purposed work, because our powers are not placed unreservedly at His disposal. The sacred flame must not be stifled, suppressed or extinguished. He is graciously in-working us, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. The least we can do is to accord to Him the opportunity for unobstructed expression. “Quench Not The Spirit.”

02.06. His Infilling - Our Overflowing

His Infilling - Our Overflowing

CHAPTER SIX

“The water that I shall give him shall be IN HIM a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

“Out OF HIS BELLY [from within him] shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38).

These scriptures present two sides of the same experience, an experience of, by, and through the Holy Spirit.

When we believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ we are born of the Spirit and He opens within us a fountain of ceaseless satisfaction, constantly upwelling. The Greek says, “leaping up,” the same word as is used of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful when he was healed. So irrepressible is the supply in its inexhaustibleness. It is a personal, inward experience.

When, however, this up-leaping fountain is permitted to come to its fullness, it becomes more than a merely personal experience; it overflows in multiplied blessing to others. Jesus said, “rivers”—an overflow both copious and diffuse.

This—a filling to overflowing—is what Jesus expected of every believer. Let us mark His words carefully:

“If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit . . .” (John 7:37-39).

“As the Scripture hath said” is doubtless a reference to many Old Testament passages prophesying the day when the Temple shall have living waters issuing from beneath it for the blessing of many peoples. Jesus is transferring this promise to His New Covenant people. Indwelt by His Spirit, we are His temple. And He looks to every believer to fulfill the promise by letting the living waters of the Spirit come to such fullness that they cannot be contained but must overflow and issue forth by virtue of their own superabundance.

It is to be feared that the average person, in praying to be “filled with the Spirit,” thinks of himself as a more or less empty vessel into which the Lord, in answering the prayer, is to pour His Spirit till he is filled with Him.

How very artificial such a conception is, as compared with our Lord’s characterization of it as a fountain springing up to fullness of experience and expression.

But it is not only artificial; it is unscriptural, in that it looks to God to do something He has already done. God always acts in accordance with His Word. Such a statement should be axiomatic. We

must therefore interpret our experience in the light of His Word, never the reverse. And if our experience does not square with His Word, we must not count His Word at fault, but our own meeting of its conditions.

As we have already seen, the Holy Spirit's In-coming takes place when we believe. He comes in, as Jesus promised, to stay, to remain, to abide. By His In-coming we are united to Christ and are rendered capable of living the Christian life. Henceforth we have His Indwelling and His Inworking. But—with what degree of freedom? and with what measure of fullness?

- Since He has come in, can we not let Him come further in?
- Since He is dwelling within us, can we not study to make Him more at home?
- Since He is working within us, can we not remove the hindrances to His unhampered working?

This we must do. It is the inescapable responsibility of the Christian life. Until we have done so, we are in a constant state of sinning against the Spirit. Like His Old Testament people we are limiting the Holy One of Israel. We have Him under leash, in the confines of our lives, that He may not do the things that He would. We are robbing Him, and ourselves, of the fruits of His fullness. Therefore the command, addressed to every child of grace, concerning His unhindered Infilling: "BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."

I. His Infilling

Just what do we mean by the Infilling of the Spirit? The command is clear, but how does the Spirit bring it to pass? Perhaps our surest way to a right understanding of this benefit is to visualize it by means of illustration.

Let us take a glass half filled with water. The glass has the water in it and we call it a "glass of water." Yet that is not strictly true. Rather, it is a glass of water and air; it is partially filled with each of the two.

That glass represents the average Christian. He has the Spirit; but he has also the self-life. He is not filled with either one, but exemplifies, in a manner that may be quite unconscious to himself, the condition of Gal 5:17 : "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

That each excludes the other from the mastery may be seen by converting the glass into a closed receptacle, connected by intake with a reservoir of water. The air resists the water, holds it in check, forbids its coming to fullness. It resists the entire reservoir. Nay, if the air is heated, it will expand, fill a yet larger part of the receptacle and cause the water to recede.

It is this that actually happens, the reverse of the Spirit's infilling, when we give encouragement to the flesh-life. Thus a Christian may become increasingly "carnal."

But now, when the water from the reservoir is given freedom to expel the air, it rises; it fills; it overflows. It is the Infilling of the Spirit, manifesting itself in the flowing out which Jesus promised. He infills that we may overflow.

Another illustration of this inner experience, exceeding our capacity to contain it, is in the utterance of the Psalmist: "My cup runneth over" (Psa 23:5). All the blessings enumerated in this Psalm come to a climax in the shepherd's benediction at the close of the day: "Thou anointest my head with oil." By the oil the Holy Spirit's healing and restoring ministry is symbolized. The reference is to the shepherd's rodding of the sheep. Standing at the door of the fold, permitting them to enter only by him (see John 10:9), with his rod he halts them, one by one, for personal inspection. One may have torn itself in a bramble; another may be footsore; others may be weary from the day's journey. The shepherd has his horn of oil ready at hand, and the every need is met. It is this sufficiency of our Shepherd's care, refreshing and restoring to body and spirit, that causes the cup of Christian experience to come to the full and overflow.

We may seek a modern illustration in the field of electricity. Take the familiar flashlight. Every-thing that makes for the light is within. Nothing is to be added or drawn upon from without. Yet the bulb remains dark and lifeless until it is enabled to lay hold of the resources so well within its grasp. When, however, we form the connection—and it is so simply done—the light leaps up into the bulb. It itself is filled, and forthwith it outflows in a radiant flood of light.

How was it filled? By an Infilling—a filling from within. And its outflowing in blessing naturally and necessarily followed the Infilling. The Spirit, already indwelling us, awaits the touch that brings Him to the fullness that overflows.

II. Our Overflowing The Spirit, when He comes to fullness in our lives, has His chosen and appointed ways of manifesting Himself in the overflowing that results. These ways are manifold—rivers. The Scriptures have much more to say about this matter than we usually detect. Repeatedly it is referred to by a Greek word, variously translated, "abundant," "abounding," "exceeding." For example, in the familiar words of our Lord: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

The word means "exceeding some measure or need," "over and above." That is, over and above our personal need; over and above the measure of our capacity to contain. Also, in its root meaning it conveys the thought of "around and beyond." That is, it flows over, beyond and around, to the blessing of others.

As a suggestive aside we may note that Salvation, in its origin and nature, is just this: God's grace rising beyond His power to contain it, rising till it overflowed in blessing to men. Thus we read:

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded [overflowed] toward us in all wisdom and prudence" (Eph 1:7-8).

So much for its abundance of supply at the source. Then we are told that it far exceeded, over and above, our need:

"But not as the offence, so also is the free gift: for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded [over and above the need] unto many" (Rom 5:15).

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom 5:20).

Having drunk at such a superabundant fountain, and become partakers of His overflowing nature, how can we fail to reflect the fact? even as our Lord Jesus said we would: “He that believeth on Me, out from within him shall flow rivers of living water.”

Some of the channels which these “rivers” make for themselves are as follows:

1. WE WILL OVERFLOW IN PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph 5:18-20).

This is the classic passage on the Spirit’s Infilling, since it contains the command to Christians to “Be filled with the Spirit.” Here, then, we may look for the normal overflow from His fullness. It is contrasted with spirituous intoxication which overflows in shameful, degrading unrestraint. From the Spirit’s Infilling something akin results in the spiritual realm, a welling up and pouring out of the spirit in unrestrained praise and thanksgiving. “Singing” is a normal and necessary expression of the Spirit-filled life. In it He overflows. He who commanded His people to “rejoice before the Lord”—He it is who begets “melody in our hearts unto the Lord.”

“Giving thanks always for all things.” No man can do that: the human mind and spirit are too sensitive to the fluctuations of circumstance. Yet it is His command and will for us: “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1Th 5:18). And, mark you, only as we do so will we avoid quenching the Spirit (1Th 5:19). This particular will of God—thanksgiving, always, in every thing—He is striving to maintain as the constant overflow of His Indwelling and Inworking in fullness.

It follows that the Spirit-filled life, the life that permits His fullness in a sustained overflow, is the only life that can please God. Every other life, whatever its attainments, falls short of His expectation of us.

“By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name” (Heb 13:15).

He asks for our hearts as the altar where He may place the continual sacrifice of praise. He will have it never to die out. It was so in the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple, how much more in us under the New Covenant realities. Indwelling this temple, from yielded lips “giving thanks to His name,” He has made provision for the continuous praise due unto Himself.

2. WE WILL OVERFLOW IN LOVE.

“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you” (1Th 3:12).

“Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom 5:5).

He wants His love, brought to expression in us as “the fruit of the Spirit,” to “increase” till it “abounds,” that is, overflows the limits of our own lives, the limits of every barrier of unloveliness,

exceeding all expectation “in love one toward another.”

To do this we are not left to draw upon our own supply of love, little better than a cistern, exhaustible and leaky at best, which has so often failed under test, even to turning vitriolic under provocation. Nay, in giving us the Holy Spirit He has poured out His own love in our hearts. This is the supply upon which He asks us to draw. And when the same Spirit is permitted to make of it a fountain leaping up to fullness, it readily “abounds” toward others. Being His own love in us and out from us, it is both copious in quantity and unfailing in quality:

“Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity [love] envieth not, charity [love] vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all thing, endureth all things. Charity [love] never faileth” (1Co 13:4-8).

3. WE WILL OVERFLOW IN JOY.

“These things have I spoken unto you that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:11).

“My joy”—a joy that did not fail Jesus our Lord under the crushing burden of the world’s sin, because its supply was in the eternal hills of His Father through whom, indwelling Him, He spake and wrought. That super-tested joy He gives to remain, dwell, abide in us by imparting to us His Spirit as its indwelling source. And further—“that your joy may be full.” When His Spirit of joy is permitted to come to fullness, so that He infills us, then our joy becomes full.

And it abounds. It exceeds what might naturally be expected, unrepressed by circumstances because its source is in the Spirit who is insensitive to circumstances.

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Col 1:11).

“With joyfulness.” We may succeed, up to a certain point, in being patient and longsuffering—we can school ourselves in it—but never “with joyfulness.” It is not in us, only in Him, so to do. It becomes our experience when His inward strengthening mounts to a daily dominance, a satisfying fullness that will not be repressed. The joyfulness, in spite of all, is the mark of the genuine.

4. WE WILL OVERFLOW IN FRUITFULNESS.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). The Abiding Life, our vital union with Christ, set up and sustained by the abiding Indwelling of the Holy Spirit—since what the sap is to vine and branch, He is to our partaking of the life and nature of Christ—this life in Him finds its natural and necessary expression in fruit-bearing. Truly abiding we cannot fail to bear fruit; it is Himself bearing it through us.

But what is fruit? Is it not the overplus of the tree’s life—over and above what it uses upon itself and its own needs? A fruitless Christian is one who has no life to spare in blessing to others, he uses it all upon himself. Fruit is the Spirit infilling us to overflowing. And consider how wondrously wide and varied its usefulness may be. The tree pours its very life and nature into the apple, the

pear, or the peach. In that form its life is sent from friend to friend, sustaining other life, conveying love, performing a ministry that may be world-wide. "From within him shall flow"—fruit is that overflow, flavored with Himself.

The practical conditions lying back of this process are indicated by such Old Testament Scriptures as these:

"He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season" (Psa 1:3).

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree . . . They shall still bring forth fruit in old age" (Psa 92:12; Psa 92:14).

Planted by the unfailing rivers of God's grace, or sending its taproot down to the waters unaffected by surface circumstances, such as make ordinary life the victim of drought, these waters, drawn up by the roots, infill the tree and its branches, causing it ceaselessly to abound in fruitfulness.

So is the abiding, Spirit-filled believer.

5. WE WILL OVERFLOW IN POWER.

"He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph 3:20).

Here is the same Greek word, applied to our experiencing, and expressing, His power. The Greek says: "He is able to do above all things, above the measure of our capacity to ask or think." Just so wondrously as that is His inward-working power able to infill us, come to its fullness and overflow the bounds we would set for it by the highest imagination of our asking or thinking.

"He is able"—yes, but under this New Covenant relationship He can express, and we can experience, that ability only "according to the power that worketh in us." Ours is the great responsibility of letting His power find unhindered fullness in and through the channel of our living, thinking and doing. Outside of us, unconditioned by partnership with human personality, what is that power? The heavens answer, uttering knowledge of infinite power displayed in the starry worlds that stud the immeasurable reaches of space, each held to its appointed place with a mathematical precision that amazes. The little flower at our feet answers, disclosing to our gaze a world of microscopic beauty and symmetry, order and design, that staggers belief. But now—within us is this same power, implanted by His personal presence. Untrammled, free to rise to His purposed heights of power in us, what will the disclosures of His presence be?

6. WE WILL OVERFLOW IN THE GRACE OF GIVING.

"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality . . . Therefore, as ye abound in every-thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also" (2Co 8:1-2; 2Co 8:7).

This is the Scriptures' classic on Giving. And what a picture it presents. The Macedonian Christians were poor; yet their giving was rich. How? and why? Giving is a grace. That is, God's

grace that gave the Saviour and still gives in spite of undesert, is planted in our hearts by His Spirit. So the grace of God was bestowed until the “abundance” of joy and poverty—what a commingling— “abounded unto the riches of their liberality.”

Twice our Greek word, “over and above,” is employed to describe an experience of being filled so full that they could not but overflow in blessing to others. Naturally their cup contained only “depths of poverty.” But He added His grace and the poverty welled up in a joy that exceeded all bounds. So the Apostle exhorts the Corinthians, who have “abounded” in so many ways, to “abound in this grace also.”

What a provision for financing the cause of Christ in the world! Not drives—far, far from it. Nor yet dinners that fill the stomach, but grace that fills the heart. Then giving becomes the luxurious outpouring of heaven’s treasure in the heart through the medium of material substance.

Multiplied thousands, through the Christian centuries, have proved that when the Spirit infills the heart with this grace there is an inner experience of joy out of which proceed, not mere charity or benevolence, but the “rivers of living water” freighted with tokens of love, His and ours.

7. WE WILL OVERFLOW IN GOOD WORKS.

“God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2Co 9:8).

This remarkable scripture, so boundless in its scope, stands as the grand climax to the teaching on the grace of giving. Its intent is to generalize the grace of God flowing out from us. Giving is just one of the channels it takes. He is able to supply to us every sort of grace, applicable to every conceivable need, so that every requirement of our own is more than met, and we overflow, out of this abundant supply, in every sort of good works for the blessing of others. Rotherham aims at a literal translation, thus: “God has power to cause every kind of favour to superabound unto you, in order that, in every thing, at every time, having every sort of sufficiency of your own, ye may be superabounding unto every good work.”

But now, we must not fail to note that this scripture, in its twice using the Greek word, “over and above,” which underlies the teaching of this chapter, makes beautifully clear the mutuality of the matter, namely, that He infills us over and above our own need that we in turn may overflow, abound over and beyond ourselves, in blessing to others. These two phases of the Spirit-filled life we must ever keep in mind—His part and ours. Let us, then, paraphrase the passage, so that it reads: “God is able to make every sort of grace to abound unto you, over and above your own need, that, in every thing, at every time, having every sort of sufficiency of your own, you may superabound [overflow] to others in every good work.”

He who chose us unto good works and prepared them beforehand, He is able to make us multiplied channels of blessing when we permit Him to infill us and overflow us. Then our manifold good works, adapted to every need, flow out from Him, freighted with Himself—“rivers of living water.”

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1Co 15:58).

III. The Exhortation

How shall we have this experience of His Infilling? How can He fill us till we overflow? The answer is in a simple exhortation of Scripture, so evidently suited to this experience that no one need miss it. It is in the little word: "YIELD." The mutuality of the matter is this: It is ours to yield; it is His to fill. He fills what we yield.

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom 6:13).

All that precedes must be carefully read, leading to the climax of vs. 11. If God reckons, counts us, with Christ, as dead unto sin and alive unto God, then we must also reckon ourselves just so. If we really do think of ourselves thus, our counting it true will constrain us to present ourselves to God, yield ourselves to Him, as alive from the dead, responsive to Him and Him alone, therefore ready for His service, wholly and completely.

As we do so, He accepts the offering, infills the life thus yielded, claims it as wholly His, occupies it as completely as it was yielded up to Him, uses it to His glory. It becomes a new and wondrous experience of Himself—inwardly, in us; outwardly, in overflow to others.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom 12:1-2).

"Present" is the same Greek word as "yield." Present your bodies—the vehicle for expressing the alive-to-God soul within—as wholly yielded to Him. Show that this is a true offering on your part, and that the resulting relationship is real and commanding, by maintaining a corresponding consistent attitude toward the world (Rom 12:2), and you will make proof of His will as a practical realization in your life. He is faithful that promised. You will be "filled unto all the fullness of God."

One example from life, representative of the many, may suffice to quicken our yearning and to encourage us to expect that He who is no respecter of persons will do as graciously for us.

For many years Dr. F. B. Meyer, of London, has been overflowing in "rivers of living water," by his life, by his lips, by his pen. Thousands have been blessed through his Spirit-filled ministry. But it was not always so. This is his story as he tells it.

When he had been preaching some thirteen years he met and heard J. Hudson Taylor. There was something about him of indescribable poise and calm, something so beautiful and satisfying, that Mr. Meyer became intensely dissatisfied with himself. He spent a wakeful night and rose early, impelled to seek the secret from Mr. Taylor. He rapped upon his hotel door at seven in the morning. To his apology for calling so early, Mr. Taylor assured him it was no intrusion, that he had been up with his Bible and his Lord since four-thirty.

This circumstance, and the conversation that followed led Mr. Meyer to see a Christ-centered life unfolding to him, a life so yielded to HIM that He became the center about which it revolved, the source from which all its satisfaction sprang, the supply of its every need, the strength and

sufficiency of its every service. He yielded his life to Him. The Spirit infilled him. And the result is the common possession of the Christian world: in ceaseless blessing, in superabounding service, in the outgoings of beauty and strength from a life given up to Him.

From the pen of another, enriched by a like experience, come words that call us to drink at the same fountain of fullness:

Live out Thy life within me, Oh, Jesus! King of Kings.

Be Thou, Thyself, the answer To all my questionings.

Live out Thy life within me, In all things have Thy way;

I, the transparent medium, Thy glory to display.

The temple has been yielded, And purified of sin.

Let Thy Shekinah glory Now flash forth from within.

And all the earth keep silence, The body henceforth be

Thy silent, docile servant, Moved only as by Thee.

Its members every moment Held subject to Thy call,

Ready to have Thee use them. Or not be used at all,

Held without restless longing, Or strain, or stress, or fret,

Or chafing at Thy dealings, Or thoughts of vain regret;

But restful, calm and pliant, From bend or bias free,

Permitting' Thee to settle When Thou hast need of me.

Live out Thy life within me.

Oh, Jesus! King of Kings,

Be Thou, Thyself, the answer To all my questionings.

02.07. Our Response To His Indwelling

Our Response To His Indwelling

CHAPTER SEVEN “Work out your own salvation . . . it is God which worketh in you” (Php 2:12-13).

This chapter might be entitled: “Modern Pictures of Christian Living.” Having examined in the foregoing the principal scriptures dealing with the Holy Spirit, in His relationship to us and our relationship to Him, our present purpose is to bring these lessons to bear, in the most practical manner possible, upon the living of the Christian life by us moderns. Realizing also that ours is a day of overmuch materialism that militates against any sense of reality in things spiritual and supernatural, we desire to draw these pictures in the vivid colorings of the reader’s every-day life.

The aim throughout our studies has been to disclose the mutuality of the Spirit-indwelt life. He has His part in the program of the spiritual life—the things He does, desires to do, will assuredly do, if given full freedom and cooperation to that end. We have our part in the same program—the things that rest upon us, responsibility for which we cannot shift to another, in the doing of which , we accord Him His desired freedom for the carrying out of His part. It is a partnership life. He assuredly will not fail in His share of the partnership; we must make sure that we do not come short in ours. He will play fair with us; we must play fair with Him. We submit that the simple explanation that covers every failure in the Christian life is this: unfaithfulness to the partnership which was set up when we became the sons of God.

The possibilities of presenting truth by the picture method were demonstrated once for all and in the highest degree by our Lord Jesus Christ. His parables are word-pictures of which we never tire. Whenever, for example, we turn to the Parable of the Sower we see again the whole scene enacted before our eyes and the imagination, thus called into action, quickens the mind into some new apprehension of its scintillating truths. The fact is that Jesus resorted to the parable largely because His hearers could not at the time receive the truths He had to teach them; so He stored them away in the picture, in deep, rich suggestiveness, that the Spirit might illuminate them with understanding in His own good time and way.

Every true picture does us a service, by way of enriching the furnishings of the mind, of which the abstract statement is utterly incapable. For instance, transporting the reader to the writer’s former Seattle home, on the shores of Lake Washington, with the constant vista of Mt. Rainier’s perennial snows, I make the statement: “The mountain lies beyond the waters of the lake.”

Having heard the bare statement you have at once all there is for you in it. There is no hidden richness, nothing to grow upon you or respond to your efforts to appreciate it better. If, however, I can paint you a picture of the glories of that majestic mountain, snow-crowned, sun-kissed, cloud-enshrouded at times, set off by the shoreline beauties of the lake nestling at its foot, whose waters reflect the sky’s deep azure and send forth a sparkle with each tossing wave —if I can succeed in making that scene live before your eyes, not only will you never forget it, but you can

call it up and feed upon it afresh whensoever you will. And, thinking now of the parable, a shift of circumstances or a fresh hunger of the heart, five, ten, twenty years hence, may make the picture a hundredfold more meaningful.

In the following four pictures we will attempt to infuse such suggestiveness as shall cause the lessons of the preceding pages to lay a more commanding hold upon the heart, the mind, the will, that they may find new avenues for practical, every-day expression.

I. The Automobile

Doubtless no development of modern times is more illustrative of Christian living, in the union of the mystical and the practical, than the automobile. And it has become so ubiquitous, so thoroughly woven into the fabric of life, that its lessons, once we catch them, are inescapable.

We are planning to take a ride in our auto—so nearly a daily occurrence with the most of us. But we pause a moment to reflect upon its makeup. Why are we expecting it to take us upon our way? There is nothing outside of it to draw it. It is under no external compulsion. If it goes it is because of some inward urge. Yes, the auto is organized around an inner principle, namely, the expansive power of exploded gasoline. There it is, invisible, intangible, in its very heart and soul; everything visible, usable, practical, is gathered around, linked up with, made responsive to, this impelling principle.

Should this inner principle suddenly cease to exist, should the auto lose its inward secret of power, or should the mechanism become disconnected with the throbbing life within and the wheels refuse to revolve at its bidding— then, of what value is our auto? Were it to stand all the daylong at our door, motionless, inert, would we prize it for its other qualities? It is beautiful and graceful. It is strong and durable. Its paint is pleasing to the eye and lustrous. Its tires are expensive. Its upholstery is luxurious. Its every appointment is of the finest. Are we proud of it? Do we rejoice over it? Of course, it doesn't go; but, aside from that, it's such a splendid car!

Dear friends, we know full well that without the power to go, to do the thing for which it was made, cost what it may we must consider it but a pile of junk. Some time since there appeared in the papers a picture of a miniature auto, owned by a boy in Paris. It elicited much admiration, so perfect and complete, except for one thing —it had no engine. It was a plaything—nothing more. So is every Christian life that does not recognize the indwelling Spirit of God and link its outward mechanics for daily living to the dynamics of His inner working.

But now, we are ready for our ride. The chauffeur takes his seat, turns on the ignition, and the engine starts. It throbs with power and we are elated with the promise of a pleasing drive.

But, as we get under way and the chauffeur calls upon the engine to do its best, for some inexplicable reason he pulls back the emergency brake. What is he doing? He is acting insincerely. He is treating the engine unfairly. Professing to wish its finest service, he is refusing it freedom to render that service. With his foot he is asking it to go forward; with his hand he is hindering it from doing so.

Just so is every inconsistent Christian life. By faith in Christ we have dared to become Spirit-indwelt. We possess the inner working of His might and power. He is there, in us, to accomplish certain ends, to set us forward in things spiritual. Yet we cling to the "brake" of our

fleshly, unresponsive self-life. We refuse Him freedom to achieve His ends. We actually work against Him. Is it fair?

Let us now label the picture, in the hope that the auto may henceforth speak to us its own deeply spiritual, possibly reproachful, lesson—so label it as to embody the mutuality of responsibility: OUR RESPONDING TO HIS INWORKING II. The Flower Garden

Returning from our ride we alight from the car and enter our front yard. As we do so we pass from public domain to privately owned property, the very transition that took place when we passed from being a man of the world to being a child of God. Henceforth we are not our own, having been bought with a price. Others have not acknowledged that ownership; we have. Of this distinction the Tabernacle, with its sacred enclosure, is a perfect portrayal. Entrance to the enclosure, and to our Father's house, is by the Altar of Sacrifice, the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. All who there enter are His, by right of a purchase price. All outside are not. The court wall is the rightful, natural line of demarcation.

It is the spring time. Nature is bursting the bondage of winter. We conceive the desire for a flower garden, and forthwith we begin to plan for it. We select the spot, and recalling how greatly our neighbor's flowers of last year were admired, we resolve to send away for the very best seed obtainable. We will have the finest, the most beautiful flowers it is possible to produce.

Then a difficulty confronts us. Our yard is open— open to the ingress of other folks' chickens or cows, of prowling dogs and wallowing animals of whatsoever sort. Our efforts will be but wasted. What is the use of trying while these enemies of a flower garden have access to it, only to lay it in ruthless ruin? We see at once that our first move is to fence in, or hedge about, the land which is ours, that it may be ours in actuality, undisputed and undisturbed in the uses to which we desire to put it. So we set about to secure the separation of that which is our own from that which is not. It is our only wise course.

God, our Heavenly Father, has entered upon a like enterprise. He longs to produce gardens of Christian character, of surpassing beauty, to which the earth is otherwise stranger. What He is able to do He demonstrated, centuries ago, in the life of His own Son. Men have never ceased to admire its beauty; they speak of it still. But He would make a modern demonstration, that the men of our day may see, and wonder, and desire for themselves. In this He has made the start.

He already has the plots of ground. They are His, and they are widely scattered over the earth, where all conditions and races of men can see for themselves. And now, He will take His own heavenly seed—the Holy Spirit, holy, pure, beautiful—drop it into these bits of ground, and demonstrate the beauty of Heaven's flowers in earthly soil.

Doubtless we have all seen, possibly we have visited, an experiment station or demonstration farm, such as the agricultural departments of our various states conduct, the purpose being scientifically to experiment with the different soils and climatic conditions, and thus to demonstrate for neighboring agriculturists what can be most advantageously produced in a given locality. The results have been amazing. In Alaska, where the writer resided for some years, the government demonstrated that grains, fruits, vegetables, could be produced, surpassing in abundance, size, and flavor, anything ever conceived for that supposedly nonproductive area. What the government has done, God wants to do, with even more surprising results, in us.

He asks for our lives as His Demonstration Gardens, in which to display His matchless power in character cultivation. But He is confronted with a difficulty, identical with that which we met in the making of our own garden. Realizing it would be a waste of seed and effort, resulting only in disappointment, were our plot left open to the desecration of vandal feet, we wisely refused to proceed until it was brought into a state of separation, set apart for our particular use. Then we found joy in bestowing our best effort.

Is our Father less wise than we? “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” He knows when our lives are public property, the stamping ground for the world’s desecrating feet. He has no notion of bestowing His beautifying art until we do our part to provide some fence of separation, some mode of life that marks us as His, some “No Trespassing” sign to let the world know we are His.

How evident to every heart is the reasonableness of His expectation. What can He not do to beautify our garden plot when we meet the simple condition? Longing for Him to accept of our lives as a chosen spot for the display of His glory, here and now, we label this picture: **OUR SEPARATION IN ORDER TO HIS DEMONSTRATION.**

III. Over the Fence While we are still in the yard let us gather a lesson from looking over the fence into the field beyond.

Some years ago we saw a cartoon—memory says it was in *The Ram’s Horn*—which has never lost its suggestiveness. Near to a fence stood a donkey. Grown tired of his own grazing he had lifted his head and looked with envious eyes at the grass on yonder side. Persuaded that it was far better than his own pasture he was reaching his long neck over the fence in an effort to feed upon it. Meanwhile, another donkey, on the opposite side of the fence, obsessed with the same spirit of dissatisfaction with his own lot, was reaching over to avail himself of what he conceived to be the better pasture of his neighbor. And there were the two donkeys, each discontented with his own lot, each thinking the other’s lot the more desirable.

One does not need to be a donkey to fall into such foolish error. We see men and women making the same mistake, on all sides, under our very eyes. How easily done! Yet how ill-considered! Did you ever notice, in looking off at a distant hillside, how it appears to be completely covered with green verdure. But it is the deception of distance, lending enchantment. We walk over to the hillside and are surprised to find great bare spots in the midst of sparsely growing vegetation. No one of us is in position to truly judge the lot of another, so superficial is the view we necessarily take. Still less are we able to select a lot more wisely adapted to our need.

There is a story told of a man who became very much dissatisfied with his cross. One day he chanced upon a valley strewn with a great variety of crosses. He became elated with the thought that now he had opportunity to select a cross to his liking. So he laid his own down and, passing among them, lighted upon one bedecked with sparkling jewels.

“Ah,” he said, “this will suit me well; how grand to carry these jewels.” But he had not gone far until the cross became exceedingly heavy, and he was glad to return and lay it down. (How foolish to envy another his wealth). Looking about he espied another cross, all covered with roses. “How beautiful,” he thought; “this will just suit me.” Confidently he carried it away; but he had not gone far till the heat of the sun withered the roses and let the thorns press down into his shoulder. Disappointed, he again returned. This time he espied one that appealed to him, and said, “Surely

this will suit me.” After carrying it for some distance, upon examining it more closely he was surprised to discover in it none other than his own discarded cross.

Who is it that has appointed our lot in life? Who is even now selecting and controlling the circumstances that He sees fit to weave into the forming of our character, for the rounding out of the chosen pattern of our lives? Is it not He who loved us, even unto Calvary? Is not our lot in life the outworking of “the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will”? Are we children of God, heirs of His riches, and living a merely fortuitous life? like the flotsam and jetsam washed about by the ocean wave?

Or dare we regard our lives as merely self-determined? “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph 2:10). Moreover, as we “walk in them” He walks in us (2Co 6:16), even in the circumstances that seem so hard. His Spirit indwells us to guide us, to see that we do not miss the path, to enable us to fit into His appointment for us, to work in us a spirit of contentment therein. In proportion as we are responsive to the inworking of His mind and will, our lives are the expression of that mind and will.

Again, when we complain of our lot we are sinning against Him, against His love and wisdom for us. Were we allowing the blessed Spirit to work in us His own humility, we would acknowledge ourselves not wise enough to choose anything better than He is choosing for us, that we are far from deserving anything better than is being meted out to us. And how can we more fully prove ourselves undeserving of an altered lot than by complaining of what we now have? Rather than seizing upon our trying circumstances as the God-given opportunity for testing, strengthening, and stabilizing our faith?

When, however, we are found saying: “My Heavenly Father knows what is best for me; He will not suffer me to be tested above measure; whensoever He wills, He can change my circumstances; His will is always best”—then will He delight Himself in us and rejoice to bring release.

Having reflected thus upon the picture let us label it, as the earnest of our desire to find and fit into His perfect will for our lives: **OUR CONTENTMENT WITH HIS APPOINTMENT.**

IV. In the House

We have had our ride, planned our flower garden, paused to learn a lesson from looking over the fence. We now pass on into the house.

We must recognize the house as particularly rich in suggestive lessons concerning the living of the Christian life. It is so used in Scripture. Is not the house the place where men live? And is not the Christian’s heart the place where the Holy Spirit of God has chosen to live?

Since the writer of these pages has doubtless come to be associated in the mind of the readers with the better things of the spiritual life, may we venture to draw this picture in terms of a supposed call upon the reader in his or her own home. We come knocking at your door, seeking admission. You respond by graciously opening to us, inviting us in and ushering us to a seat. True, the seat is almost where we entered, but we are in, we are your guest. So is it with the Spirit. Admitted to every believer’s life, though but barely in, He is in, an abiding Guest.

We seek to converse together. But the conversation lags. We seem to have so little of common interest. (We are supposing for the moment that you have not given yourself wholeheartedly to spiritual things). But, while we are thus engaged you espy a worldly friend of yours coming up the walk to call. You are embarrassed. You see your religious and worldly interests about to clash.

Without disclosing your motive you invite your preacher-friend to an inner room. This pleases me greatly, for am I not now further into your house? Yes; but as I examine my surroundings I am amazed to find myself in a tightly closed room, a virtual prisoner. Further in, it is true, but with less freedom and less promise of fellowship than before. And, to add to my discomfiture, my listening ear catches the sound of animated conversation between you and your worldly friend. No awkward pauses now; you are at home on ground of common familiarity. Reflecting upon my own efforts to converse, the contrast is painful.

Dear reader, have you ever considered that my experience in your home is identical with that of the Spirit in your heart? You have Him; but He does not have you. The really vital concerns of your heart-life you have kept for things apart from Him, for things which He could not share. Then you complain that spiritual things do not command you, that they fail to interest you.

During a travelling ministry it was our frequent lot to be entertained in the homes of the people.

The entertainment which we most appreciated was that which accorded us free range of the house, unhampered by restraint, nothing concealed, nothing held back. It was such freedom that formed the basis for a satisfying fellowship. The Holy Spirit looks for the same in our lives, the opportunity for making His presence tell in the molding of our lives.

How many housewives have a "lumber room," a catchall, a rubbish room is what it amounts to, made up of an assortment of things they would be ashamed to show their visitors, yet which they lack the courage to throw away and be rid of forever. They would blush to have their neighbors peep into that room and investigate its contents.

That cluttered-up, unyielded, uncleansed room is but a picture of what the average Christian is harboring in his inner heart-life—things he would not have anyone suspect are there; things the presence of which he is scarcely willing to acknowledge to himself; things that if brought out to public gaze would shame him forever with his fellows. Yet the Holy Spirit knows these things are there, and has to put up with them daily. He knows they remain in the life, solely because the one who has let Him into the heart has refused to turn that heart over to Him for His full occupancy, undisputed and unrestrained.

Friends of the writer tell this experience: They were at one time under necessity of changing their residence. At length they found a house that suited them well. They were ready to decide upon it. But they thought best to inspect it once more.

In doing so they came upon a door which had previously escaped their attention. To their inquiry the agent explained, what he had before neglected to tell them, that the owner had some things he wished to store and that he was reserving that room for his own use.

"Oh," said our friends, "if that is the case we would not even consider taking the house. We want it entirely for ourselves or not at all."

Of course. Not one of us would hesitate in coming to a like decision. Then how can we ask the Holy Spirit to accept of a divided heart, unsundered in its entirety to His blessed presence?

Let us label this picture, with prayerful desire that He will accept the offering and fill and flood it with His Shekinah glory: OUR YIELDING TO HIS INDWELLING

02.08. The Appeal: The Practice Of His Presence

The Appeal: The Practice Of His Presence “That I may know Him” (Php 3:10.)

Eternity will be occupied with an unfolding experience of “Him,” conditioned upon an initial knowledge of Him, here and now. This being so, the utmost of human wisdom for the present time consists in availing ourselves of the opportunity to know Him.

In the Epistle to the Philippians, Paul makes evident that for him, becoming a Christian had wrought nothing short of a revolution. The revolution consisted chiefly in this: that from the day he met the Son of God upon the Damascus road he found his life centering no longer in things but in a Person. Religious ceremonies and activities surrendered the supreme command to this Person: “For to me to live is Christ.”

Common standards of morality gave room to a controlling ambition to please this Person: “Wherefore we make it our ambition . . . to be well-pleasing to Him.” This change of center is the essential characteristic of genuine Christian experience.

Every godly person, living his life in the light of revealed truth, learns to stand in awe of A Great Discovery The Psalmist records such a discovery in Psa 139:1-24. He envisions his life as incapable of escape from the Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Omnipotence of God. In its contemplation he is filled with awe and reverence.

But the Christian has made a still greater discovery. He is not only in the presence of a wonderful, wonder-working God, but that God is a Presence in him. Taking Him at His word, proving His word true in experience, his life has actually become the In-coming, Indwelling, Inworking, Infilling of His blessed, personal Presence.

No discovery could possibly hold greater potentialities for lifting life to a higher level, for altering its course and changing its very nature. This is so evidently true that we make bold to assert that the chief duty of the Christian, once he has made the discovery and knows it to be a fact, is to capitalize this Presence for character, conduct and service.

This is precisely what Paul did. It is just what every godly follower of Christ has done. Such a life is for every reader of His Indwelling Presence—this is the focal-point of its appeal. A Consuming Desire

Paul found this change of center, this Christocentric life, quickly maturing into a consuming, passionate desire: “That I may know Him.”

And, as he goes on to say, he wants to know Him transformingly, that he may get all the values there are for him in this privileged intimacy; he cannot suffer any of the possibilities of His indwelling Presence to go unappropriated.

We can imagine a noted guest coming late at night to lodge at our home. We show him to the guest-chamber, carefully made ready for his comfort. He retires to rest. But with what eagerness

we anticipate the morning hours, bringing their privileged opportunity to “know him.” Could there be a more tragic tragedy than for us to be entertaining the greatest of all guests—the Lord of Life and Glory— and restrain our hearts from fulfilling the desire to know Him, the most blessed person of the universe, in as utter familiarity as He is pleased to accord us? Any other attitude would be unthinkable, did not a disappointing experience with the human heart teach us otherwise.

As we write from a summer sojourn in Wisconsin, a young girl of twenty, resident of a neighboring town, and blind from birth, by a series of delicate operations has been given her sight. She was away from home, in Milwaukee. Her first glimpses of a hitherto unseen world were entrancing. Yet this is what she said: “I have seen a sunset with its myriad colors, a rose whose beauty could never be imagined by the sense of feeling, but I want most of all to see my mother.”

What of Him “whom not having seen, we love”? Does not our love beget a longing that runs on before in desire to see His face?

One day a godly woman, a parishioner of ours, came to us with beaming face to say that she had seen the Lord in a dream, and that His face and form were surpassingly beautiful to her. Things that we greatly desire, that take hold of our imagination before we have seen them, of these we have often dreamed. Have we dreamed of Him? If not, is it because He is still so unreal to us? So undesired? A Daily Life-Adjustment The Holy Spirit has adjusted His mode of living to actually inhabit, indwell our lives. We must, in turn, adjust our living, in its every thought, aspiration and action, to the fact that He is there, in us, a part of us. Since our physical senses cannot apprehend Him, we must exercise our spiritual faculties in the art of knowing Him. We must practice His presence. Nay, we must make it the business of our lives to live in the momentary consciousness of His abiding presence.

How shall we practice His presence? The means of grace are really His appointed provision to this end. As we turn to His Word, given to us by the Spirit, we must trust the Spirit in us to answer to the Spirit in the Word. Thus, as we read, our spirits are quickened into conscious realization of His Spirit indwelling us. As the love letter serves to satisfy the heart by enabling us to feed upon the object of our love, so is His Word to the heart that hungers after Him.

Prayer is essentially the practice of His presence. True prayer is talking to God. It is claiming audience with God. Resolute in the purpose not to neglect prayer, nor yet to use it merely to get something from God, we need to seize upon it with renewed avidity, as the opportunity to commune with Him, to school our spirits in responding to His Spirit, to practice His presence.

Particularly must we practice His presence in our daily round. Life must become the outliving of His in-living. Many are familiar with the story of Brother Lawrence, a monk of the seventeenth century. His life was characterized by the perpetual sense of God’s presence. All his thoughts and aspirations were tempered by the fact of God in his life. Assigned to menial kitchen duties, he found Him as consciously real and near as when engaged in his daily devotions.

It is from such daily practice of His presence that the radiant life is realized.

In the diary of Henry Martyn, the sainted missionary of India, is found this entry: “My principal enjoyment is the enjoyment of God’s presence.” Did the fact disclose itself in any way to others? The natives of Cawnpore used to say of him: “God is shining in that man’s face.”

In our busy modern life it is possible, yea needful, to seize upon some round of the day—the man setting out for business as he seats himself in his car; the housewife starting breakfast or sweeping the floor—and cause the initiating of the act to serve as a signal for lifting the heart into conscious communion with Him, to claim His presence and partnership in the particular task or at some anticipated point of need. Simple in itself, the practice will return large spiritual dividends.

Not long ago we were conducting a two weeks' meeting in a certain western community. A young man, a few years out of college and but recently married, showed the profoundest interest in truths that to him were utterly new. He and his young wife began the daily practice of family worship. It proved so profitable that he could not refrain from frequently commenting upon it. He was finding new reality in the Christian life.

Then one day he came to our room with the wistful query: "Do I understand you to say that we can have Christ all the time in our lives?" "Certainly," we replied; "that is exactly what the Christian life means. He is all the time present with us and in us."

To aid him in his earnest desire to realize that presence, we suggested: "Suppose, when you awaken in the morning the sun is shining brightly. It reminds you of Jesus who said of Himself, 'I am the light of the world,' and you say to Him, 'Lord Jesus, just As the sun shines in the heavens will You shine in my heart today, dispelling the darkness from every corner by flooding it with Your light!'

"You proceed to dress. As you do so you recall that He speaks of clothing us with righteousness as a garment, and you say, 'Lord Jesus, as I am clothing my body to make it fit to appear among men, will You cover me with Your righteousness this day, that I may be spiritually fit to mingle among my fellows.'"

"You draw water to wash your face and hands. As you do so you are reminded of Jesus' promise to cleanse us with water, and you say, 'Lord Jesus, just as I am washing my body with, water, do You wash me this day that I may be clean of heart, within as well as without.'

"You sit down to eat your breakfast. As you do so you realize how much your soul needs the Bread of Life, which bread Jesus is, and you say, 'Lord Jesus, just as I renew my physical man with this food do You give me food for the inner man that I may be strong this day to do Thy will.'"

Then I said to him, "What are you doing by all of this? You are bringing Christ consciously into your life for the day, making Him real for its round of duty."

The young man seemed to catch a new vision of life. His eye glistened with the tenderness of the thought that Christ was his ever-present, every-day possession. Looking out of the window, across the street to his place of business (he ran a factory for making apple boxes), he said, with a hush in his voice, "Well, it's going to be a different box factory."

He saw Christ working there with him, and in him, in blessed partnership.

The reader will not be surprised at the sequel. Shortly that young man stood out as the spiritual leader in the community. We know his secret—not he, but Christ in him. It is an open secret, available to every one of us. Reader, will you make it yours?

Chapter 22

03.00.1. HIS SIDE VERSUS OUR SIDE - OVERVIEW OF GALATIANS

HIS SIDE VERSUS OUR SIDE - OVERVIEW OF GALATIANS

Or, What is a TRUE Christian?

by Norman Harrison

03.00.2. Preface to the e-Sword Edition

Preface to the e-Sword Edition When I first discovered the amazing power of e-Sword, I was connected to the internet with a 56k fax modem. My enthusiasm for the program and its plethora of resources motivated me to stay up all night downloading its riches. I spent the next several days exploring the amazing variety of study material. As a busy pastor, I've tried to assemble a classic research library. As a busy pastor of a small church, I've tried to inexpensively assemble a classic research library. E-Sword immediately added many valuable assets that I hadn't yet purchased; and those resources that e-Sword duplicated were much easier and faster to use than the paper versions.

Since that wonderful first week, I've discovered many more treasures through Google searches. Then one day I realized that I owed a debt. I made a contribution to Rick Meyers (Rick - you are the modern day Gutenberg; should the Lord not return in the near future like I believe He will, you will do for Bible study the next 100 years what Gutenberg did in the 1500's), and then started looking for public domain resources to convert to .topx files. And so my personal journey has come full circle: from the excitement of discovering e-Sword to the excitement of creating .topx files for others. Like Rick quotes from Mat 10:8, "freely ye have received, freely give."

Thank you, Dear Family, for understanding my debt and graciously tolerating my near compulsive computer use for hours on end. My thanks to the creator of e-Sword, Rick Meyers - <www.e-sword.net>. Thank you, Norman Harrison, for converting your studies into eternal print. A very special thanks goes out to Brother Virgil Butts. He is the man who painstakingly typed out this manuscript. This text - and many other excellent reference works - is available at his website <www.baptistbiblebelievers.com>. Visit him often! I would also be remiss to neglect to mention Mr. Jason Briggs, Mr. Ed Sandlin, & Mrs. Pamela Marshall, who have so enriched my own ministry. And of course most of all, thank You Lord Jesus for saving my soul for all eternity. This Edition

There have been no changes made to Brother Virgil's manuscript of Harrison's work, except for the following:

Scripture references have been converted to Scripture hyperlinks using the "Format Scripture ToolTip."

A few obvious Scripture reference errors have been corrected, as well as some obvious spelling errors.

The copy and paste process may have unfortunately removed some of the italicized print. While the words have not been changed, some of Harrison's emphasis may be missing. It is with regret that I have not taken the time to correct this. The sense is still accurate. [By the way - would you understand this paragraph without italics? Of course!] Also, the italicizing of the foreign words have been lost. It is my hope that the reader will be able to follow the flow regardless of these flaws. They - the flaws - are mine, not Harrison's.

I am quite sure my edition of Harrison's work is rather imperfect. I pray that, nonetheless, it will be productively useful in the study of God's Word.

Finally Stop by and visit www.DoctorDaveT.com for more fundamental Bible modules. May the Lord bless you as study His word.

Dr. David Thomason

Florida, 2010

03.00.3. Copyright Information

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03.00.4. Introduction

Introduction

This is a keeper, folks!

If the Christian faith is true -- and it is, blessedly true -- the importance of a correct understanding of Christian truth and of the nature of the life produced by it cannot be over-emphasized. Human destiny is at stake.

Yet the popular misconception of the Christian life, everywhere prevalent in Christendom, both inside the Church and out, and that in a day of boasted intelligence and learning, is nothing short of tragic. It is both baffling and alarming. Yet, in a sense, the fact that the essential character of Christian truth should be so far beyond popular comprehension is a tribute to our Faith.

To our mind, as a result of wide observation, the most serious error of our day is the popular notion that the Christian life is a matter of CONDUCT. Do certain things; don't do certain things, and you are a Christian! This confining of Christian living to behaviour is altogether shallow, superficial, and above all else FUTILE.

What is a Christian?

The answer runs somewhat thus: A Christian is one who accepts CHRIST, especially as the teacher of a way of life; he adopts a set of habits, such as church attendance, Bible reading, prayer; he associates with other "Christian" people; he doesn't lie, steal, or get drunk; he is fair in his dealings with his fellowmen; he can be counted on to take a "Christian" attitude toward the questions of the day. A "Christian" is one who conforms to certain standards! And essential change in the PERSON, productive of such conduct, is ignored.

This is GALATIANISM in its modern, most common form. It is this against which the Apostle Paul contended with passionate conviction that it was fatal to the Christian system of truth and experience.

THE DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF A TRUE CHRISTIAN

Turning to the Epistle to the Galatians we find the Apostle Paul defining and describing a Christian in such terms as these:

- A Christian is one who has the living CHRIST living in him. (See Gal 2:20; Gal 4:19). He has had a transforming experience.
- A Christian is one who has the HOLY SPIRIT (Gal 4:6). He begets in the believer new characteristics that are productive of Christian conduct (Gal 5:22-23).
- A Christian is one who has shared the Cross experience with Christ, as the basic solution of his personal problems. (see Gal 2:20; Gal 5:24; Gal 6:14; Gal 6:17).

- A Christian is one possessed of a life so divine, so ideal that it cannot be pressed into a mould of external regulations (See Gal 4:9-11; Gal 4:19-21; Gal 5:1-6)

In other words, the Christian life consists not in BEHAVING but in BEING, a life out of which behaviour naturally proceeds; not something external, but internal, the root producing the fruit. It is a LIFE that must be free to express itself; to impose regulations upon it is fatal to it.

Man in his natural state soon finds he is like the woody growth of the grape vine; running to wood, the real life is choked out. He has nothing but the external form, an empty shell of respectability.

The Purpose of This Writing

To produce another detailed exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians is entirely foreign to the purpose of this writing. Rather, our aim will be to gather from the Epistle its immensely valuable teachings for Christian living, using the same sharply contrasting presentation employed by the Apostle -- the only method, doubtless, that will arouse us, the present-day exponents of the Gospel, to the all-sufficiency we have in CHRIST for the solution of life's problems and the failure which results from any admixture of self-effort.

As a preparation for appropriating these truths we urge the reading and rereading of the Epistle. As a guide to the reading, and a stimulus to further study, we offer the following outline:

1. Gal 1:1-24, Gal 2:1-21 -- PERSONAL. Paul's defense of his apostleship and the gospel he preached as authoritative.
2. Gal 3:1-29, Gal 4:1-31 -- DOCTRINAL. The doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, apart from any admixture of works, expounded and illustrated.
3. Gal 5:1-26, Gal 6:1-18 -- PRACTICAL. Christian living is a maintaining of the freedom we have in CHRIST and an appropriating of our resources in Him.

An Epistle of Contrasts

The Gospel of JESUS CHRIST is a distinct something, with such adequate resources as render it sufficient in itself. As such it does not admit of any admixture of law-works or of self-effort on our part, else its resources are set aside and become inoperative. To establish this fact beyond all gainsaying, not only doctrinally but practically, that we may not only believe it but LIVE IT, the apostle presents the Gospel in a PROLONGED SERIES OF OPPOSITES, things that should not be mixed because they will not mix. To attempt their mixture, as many did then and do now, is both error and failure.

These contrasts will be appreciated if we bear in mind that Paul is contending against a twofold error.

- First, that our salvation is secured partly by faith in CHRIST and partly by good works prescribed by the law.
- Second, that our perfecting in this life in CHRIST is a matter of self-effort on our part in obedience to the law.

Thus Paul sees at stake the two essentials of the Christian faith, SALVATION and SANCTIFICATION, and sets about zealously to safeguard them for all time. The difficulty with the above errors is that they leave us impotently on Our Side, in struggle and failure. They are powerless to transfer us to the abounding resources of His Side.

03.01. THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US - Gal_1:4

THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US - Gal 1:4

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world" -- Gal 1:4.

GOD sees sin as a state of bondage from which man needs to be delivered. It is comparable to the condition of His people in bondage in Egypt. Then it was that He appeared as their Deliverer, saying, "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians" (Exo 3:8).

Sin is not only abhorrent to a holy GOD -- it is that; but it is also an enslavement. It robs; it ensnares; it places men under the power of GOD's enemy and the evil of this age. In love GOD will deliver.

The Most Thrilling Story Ever Told

Why anyone should deny that JESUS CHRIST, and according to His own statement, "came down from heaven" with the purpose and power to free men from their sins, and now, as a part of the human race, is in the position to do it, seems almost inexplicable.

Accepted as one of the facts of history it becomes the most thrilling adventure of all time. A whole race of human beings had been stolen from GOD, placed in the camp of His enemy and, imbued with Satan's spirit, were quite willing to remain subject to him. (Prisoners in a sort of Prisoners Base game.) "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us" (Eph 2:4) would not leave us thus. The story of what He did to release us is indeed Good News -- the Gospel -- almost too good to be true.

To think of GOD, Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth, imprisoning Himself in flesh and blood; subjecting Himself to the law designed only for sinful men; sharing man's lot, even to suffering its poverty and privations; incurring the hatreds and suspicions of which sinful nature is alone capable; submitting Himself to being made a prisoner in the court of envy and injustice; in utmost shame giving up His life on the cross, all with the purpose of saving us from eternal loss and shame. He "gave Himself for our sins." He knew well what He was doing. In seeming defeat He had won the victory for us. All to secure our release! All to set us prisoners free! All to deliver us! Amazing story.

From What He Delivered Us

Deliver! If ever you feel depressed or discouraged and need a thrilling uplift, trace the use of "deliver" through the Bible. In the Hebrew and Greek some forty words are used to get the idea across to us. Sin has created such an "evil world," with so many by-products of suffering, physical, mental, spiritual, circumstantial -- yes, financial, that men are its victims at every turn. How gracious that our Saviour delivers from such "according to the will of God and our Father."

Says the Psalmist, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Psa 34:19). The Lord invites us, saying, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver

thee, and thou shalt glorify Me" (Psa 50:15). Psa 91:1-16 is a prolonged psalm of deliverance.

When the three faithful Israelites were condemned to the fiery furnace they testified, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king" (Dan 3:17). The result? The seven times hotter fire, while leaving hair and clothing untouched, burned off their bonds so that they walked free in the flames of their affliction. What a deliverance! And the same Lord is able to deliver you.

Similarly the Apostle Paul, faced with death, testifies to a past, present and future deliverance: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us" (2Co 1:10).

To What We Are Delivered

Jesus seeing men under the power of death, bereft of life, said, "I am come that they might have life;" "I give unto them eternal life" (John 10:10; John 10:28).

Seeing men in darkness He cried, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Seeing men hungry and thirsty, He cried, "I am that bread of life"; "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John 6:48; John 7:37).

Seeing men in bondage -- though they vehemently resented the implication -- He cried, "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36; see John 8:32-34).

How can we adequately thank GOD our great Deliverer for so all-inclusive a deliverance and transference? "Giving thanks unto the Father ... who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col 1:12-13).

SPIRITUAL BIRTH VERSUS PHYSICAL BIRTH - Gal 1:4-5

What is the gospel? What does it mean to be "saved?"

Lord willing, we shall examine this question in this study. Won't you, reader, if you are unsure of your eternal destiny, read this as though GOD Himself were speaking to your heart. Won't you lay aside all of your presuppositions - of which you have honest doubt, and let GOD, Who is not the author of confusion, give you peace that will surpass all of your human understanding?

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." -- Gal 1:4-5

"In Adam all die ... in Christ all are made alive" -- 1Co 15:22

Very many people, perhaps the majority, do not understand the Gospel. They cannot see the WHY of salvation. Why do all men, especially "they", need to be "saved"? Why should good-living people listen to the Good News that they CAN be saved, when they have no need of it?

Resultantly, they do not understand the HOW of salvation. This plan of justification by faith, especially if one like Paul insists that it be by "faith alone": they cannot see it; so they decide just to go on and do the best they can, perhaps in a religious way, and GOD must accept of that.

This is a very real difficulty and must be met at the outset. It is met, fully and completely, when we understand GOD's method of dealing with men, when we see His working principle of:

IDENTIFICATION

In Adam

A-L-L Die

In CHRIST

A-L-L Live

This is a twofold division of the entire human race. Everybody is either "in Adam" or "in Christ." We are all in two groups, two classes, two columns, two camps; and they are in the sharpest contrast.

That is, GOD deals with the whole human race through two federal heads: Adam, the first, and CHRIST, who is called the "last Adam," and who calls Himself the "Son of man" or the representative man.

By birth all are in Adam, inescapably, simply by being born into the human race. But, that there be no injustice, all may by a second birth come to be in CHRIST.

This is a thoroughly representative principle. By way of illustration, here is a man who was in Germany when World War II broke. We did not have dealings with him personally, but we dealt with him through his accepted head, Hitler. As it went with Hitler, so it went with him. When Hitler was defeated, he was defeated -- that is his lot today. This is a defeated man.

So by this principle GOD is not dealing with us personally, but positionally, according to the headship we have chosen to live under. It's a question of which side we are on. And you, my friend, will enter into a true appreciation of the Gospel only as you contemplate this fact.

All Identified with Adam

Justification by Faith has its doctrinal exposition in Romans, sister Epistle to Galatians. In Romans the doctrine is expounded; in Galatians it is illustrated and enforced.

In Romans the Gospel begins not with CHRIST, but with sons of Adam, picturing the human race as men corrupting their ways -- ways that make them "worthy of death" (Rom 1:18-32); and proceeding with withering logic to prove GOD's case against all men. Let us quote:

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ... There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." -- Rom 3:9-12; Rom 3:18-20

(Note that the "deeds of the law" is an effort to live up to a required standard, and "there shall no flesh" -- no child of Adam -- "be justified in his sight.")

In all of this, my friend, nothing is said about you personally -- only racially. GOD is condemning, and rightly, the whole human race of which you and I are a part. Degrees of goodness are no answer. Attempts to live a good life avail nothing. Your connections are wrong. You are in the wrong class. You are on the wrong side. It is time you cast about for a different classification. GOD has a way out. Consider it carefully; here it is:

CHRIST Identified with Us

Here again is the story of GOD's great adventure. He would not leave us thus, sinful, guilty, condemned -- the whole race. He will provide a second federal head, sinless, holy, above reproach. Who could it be? No one but -- Himself! No man could do it. Yet it must be a man -- one of the race. He will become that man!

He, GOD, became man, identified with us, sharing our lot. He came over to Our Side, that He might free us and deliver us over to His Side. He took our flesh and blood, put Himself under the law, met its demands as our representative even to its penalty for violating it, even to death.

Having Himself taken the deserts of our bad record in Adam, and having set for us a new, sinless record, He says in effect, "I have taken your record, even to dying your death; now I invite you to take My record of perfect righteousness, giving up all you had in Adam for all you may have in Me."

These two records, the two sides, and what we have in the "one man" on either side, are found in a startling and convincing contrast in Rom 5:12-21 :

By the "one man" Adam: sin, disobedience, offense, condemnation, death.

By the "one man" CHRIST: obedience, righteousness, justification, life.

Is the choice a difficult one? Who would not change sides, gladly giving up a place on Our Side for one on His Side?

We Identified with CHRIST

Now identification passes from the racial to the personal, from being merely positional to becoming gloriously experiential.

He died our death, now we share His death as though it were actually ours.

In Him we have gone through death, a death to sin, and come out into life, a new life unto GOD.

Our new Head died unto sin and lives unto GOD; in these experiences we are one with Him. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 6:11).

We are not only on His Side; the transfer is so complete that the fetters of our former allegiance are severed; we are His by an inward, heart devotion. He has won us to His Side, He has bound us to Himself. Henceforth His life is ours and ours is His.

For such a salvation, heaven-sent, there is no substitute. Why be deceived by a man-made counterfeit, powerless to deliver?

The choice is yours.

03.02. THE GOSPEL VERSUS "ANOTHER GOSPEL" - Gal_1:6-8

THE GOSPEL VERSUS "ANOTHER GOSPEL" - Gal 1:6-8

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." -- Gal 1:6-9

In these words the apostle establishes for all time the authority and validity, the finality and fixity of the Gospel he was called to preach, the Gospel that is handed down to us by inspiration, and preserved for us, in the sacred Scriptures.

So assured is Paul that he pronounces a curse upon those who proclaim any other gospel. This is not personal pique, spoken in a spirit of revenge upon those who were disturbing his converts in these churches of Galatia. No indeed. They were perverting the Gospel of CHRIST and thereby offering affront to GOD and to "the grace of Christ." He denounces them with the anathema of GOD. Let all stand in awe: GOD HIMSELF WILL SAFEGUARD HIS GOSPEL, SO DEARLY PURCHASED AT SO GREAT A PRICE - OF HIS OWN SON!

1. "Another -- Not Another"

These words do not make sense in our English translation, but they do in the Greek. Two different words are used. The first "another" is HETEROS, from which is derived our heterodox, meaning one of a different kind; the second is ALLOS, meaning in the same class, one within the same class; while HETEROS is but an imitation, not to be classed with the genuine.

That is, these two while they appear much the same are antithetical; they are opposed to each other; they are on opposite sides.

For illustration, I take a silver dollar and place along with it a paper dollar. The latter is ALLOS, just as good as the silver dollar, since the United States government validates it, both are equal to 100 pennies. But I have in my possession ANOTHER (HETEROS) dollar; to the untrained eye it looks just like the paper dollar, but it is HETEROS, only an imitation, a counterfeit of the genuine.

What is the idea of a counterfeit? Similarity without reality or validity. Since its purpose is to deceive it is made to appear just as much like the genuine as is possible. Thus the unwary will not detect the difference. This is Satan's method, as revealed in our Lord's parable of the tares: the darnel of the Orient is so similar to the wheat that in its earlier stages it is almost impossible to detect it, hence it passes for wheat.

Now, the counterfeit dollar illustrates the deficiency of the counterfeit gospel in these respects:

1. It is lacking in authority: man-made, not government authorized, it is under the ban, the anathema of the law; so is everyone who circulates it.
2. It is lacking in Quality: silver is the metal of redemption; in this the counterfeit gospel is like the dollar, deficient.
3. It is lacking in Utility: the genuine dollar is worth 100 cents; this one is worth nothing, will buy nothing (except through deceit), and is worse than useless - because attached to it is a criminal offense - a felony.

Folks, if you don't get anything else out of this study - get this!

Satan also ordains ministers!

What is the Genuine Gospel?

Paul is so confident he has the true Gospel -- a confidence we will trace to its source -- and so mercilessly denounces the false, it surely behooves us to become familiar with the earmarks of the genuine. As the bank clerk is trained to detect counterfeit money, so should we be skilled in recognizing the false gospel as against the law.

As we examine this antithetical Epistle, written to expose the false and expound the true, we will find three essential elements, and only three. We may readily relate them to the three persons in the Godhead. Lacking in any one of these essentials a gospel so-called is not the genuine Gospel of GOD. These essentials are: a supernatural person; a supernatural book; and a supernatural experience.

2. A Supernatural Person

It is "the gospel of Christ" (Gal 1:7; Rom 1:16). There is only one CHRIST, the CHRIST of history; yes, and of prophecy. He has revealed Himself through certain immutable facts imbedded in the annals of the race. Through these facts all who will may know Him.

(1) A supernatural birth: "made of a woman" (Gal 4:4; Gen 3:15); a fact that alone explains His unique person. Luke's account of the nativity is the mother's own story given to the doctor, Doctor Luke. Who has the hardihood to contradict the mother, as though she did not know?

(2) A unique teaching: "All bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (Luk 4:22); "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). In all the learning of nineteen hundred years, especially the recent progress that has been rendered a ten-year-old textbook antiquated, nothing that Jesus ever taught has been outmoded. His teachings are the perennial fountain of human thought.

(3) A spotless, sinless life. Majestically Jesus lived His life, never apologizing for anything He did, never correcting Himself in any way. At its close He could issue the challenge: "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" (John 8:46): and His judge twice declared, "I find no fault in this man" (Luk 23:4; Luk 23:14). Jesus taught a new standard of life, and forthwith He Himself lived it. Wonderful! No one since His day has succeeded even in approaching it.

(4) A supernatural death. The one man who had no need to die, He purposefully set about to give up His life, saying, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world" (John 18:37; John 12:27). Born to die; accomplishing His life's purpose through death (Heb 2:14). Onlookers at the cross saw deity revealed and cried, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Mat 27:54).

(5) A supernatural resurrection. Cemeteries hold all their recruits in silence, save One. Men do not naturally rise from the dead, but Jesus said that He would (Mat 16:21), and against all odds He did. "Declared to be the Son of God with power ... by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1:4). Without this fact, there would be no gospel, no Christianity. It would have failed.

(6) A heavenly, age-long ministry. He entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb 9:24). Thus entering, He sent the HOLY SPIRIT to carry on what He "began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1), gathering unto CHRIST as the head of His mystical body, the Church. Meanwhile CHRIST is carrying on His saving work in heaven: "Able also to save them unto the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25).

(7) A supernatural return, the climatic revelation of Himself. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works" (Mat 16:27). While still future, this event is treated as an assured fact, culminating the revealing of Himself to men.

These facts are unalterable. Imbedded in history, no one can root them out. Through them we know, believe on and appropriate the person and saving work of CHRIST, the first essential of the Gospel. (Note that two of these facts, the death and resurrection, are counted sufficient ground for faith unto salvation -- Rom 10:9).

3. A Supernatural Experience

Here we reach the real vitals of the Christian faith. The focal point of the Gospel is THE HEART-LIFE of the one who believes it. Does it solve the problem of human living -- or only partly so, as the false gospel suggests? Does it beget a transforming experience? Does it meet human need?

GOD the Son has come, offering Himself as man's deliverer. GOD the Father has explained what He was accomplishing in and through the Son. Now GOD the HOLY SPIRIT has come -- see Gal 4:6 -- to give to us an experience. It is to be an experience of the Person, in accordance with the terms, the promises and provisions of the Book.

This is chiefly Paul's argument in Galatians. He has experienced CHRIST: "It pleased God ... to reveal His Son in me" (Gal 1:15-16); "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal 2:20). And he has deep anguish of soul over his Galatian converts because a false gospel is robbing them of a like experience: "My little children, of whom I travail ... again until Christ be formed in you" (Gal 4:19). In other words, Christian experience is meant to be, in a sense, by a similar operation of the HOLY SPIRIT, a re-incarnation of CHRIST. What a conception! How easily spoiled by any system not Christ-centered.

Moreover, the HOLY SPIRIT so unites us to CHRIST that Christian experience becomes a reproduction in us of the essential facts of CHRIST's threefold revelation.

CHRIST died: WITH HIM we died (Col 2:20).

CHRIST arose: WITH HIM we are risen (Col 3:1).

CHRIST has appeared in heaven: WITH HIM our life is now hid in GOD (Col 3:1-3).

CHRIST will appear again: WITH HIM we shall appear in glory (Col 3:4).

Again, the HOLY SPIRIT by indwelling us purposes to reproduce in us the very characteristics of CHRIST (Gal 5:22-23). Thus our identification with CHRIST is made complete, resulting in a Christ-likeness absolutely unattainable in any other way.

These are the essentials of the Gospel -- repeatedly called "the gospel of God" because it bears the imprint of GOD the Father, GOD the Son and GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. It has cost GOD much. He is very zealous for it. He will defend it against all man-handling. Any perversion of it calls forth His anathema - or curse.

Is such anathema too severe? No indeed. The souls of men are at stake. Any other gospel simply does not work. It leaves men on Our Side, wallowing in the trough of their own self-effort. Only the supernatural Gospel of GOD transfers us to His Side, there to experience Him in His delivering, transforming power.

Dear reader, which side does GOD see you on today?

03.03. A REVELATION VERSUS A REASONING - Gal_1:11-12; Gal_2:2

A REVELATION VERSUS A REASONING - Gal 1:11-12; Gal 2:2

Where does a preacher, or a soulwinner, get his authority to speak for GOD? What sets Christianity apart from just another religion?

A Question of Authority

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ;" "And I went up by revelation" -- Gal 1:11-12; Gal 2:2

If the Christian faith is NOT a revelation of GOD it is merely another religion; possibly the best, but still one of the many, on a human level, subject to man's alterations and altercations.

The Judaizers of Paul's day wanted to make the Christian faith a revised version of the Jews' religion, subject to its legal regulations and requirements. Then it would be THEIR religion; they could keep it within the realm of their own reasonings. Their successors of our day are doing the same.

What the Christian faith needs is a return to its birthright -- an authoritative revelation. Take it, or leave it alone!

The Damascus Road Experience

To discredit Paul's message, these Judaizers must discredit the man. He is not an apostle, they said; he cannot qualify; he has never seen the risen Lord.

Paul devotes a chapter and a half to a detailed refutation of this calumny. He had seen the Lord, as He revealed Himself to him on the Damascus road. He had also heard the Lord speaking with him. It was a crisis experience. From being determined to destroy the faith, he became its most ardent and convincing advocate. Paul was no neurotic, easily swayed; he was schooled in all the learning of his day. This right-about-face, traced as it is here in Galatians to its supernatural source, was utterly disconcerting to the enemies of the faith, as indeed it has been ever since.

A Christ-Centered Viewpoint

From that day forward Paul was a changed man. He had a new outlook upon life. He experienced an utter reversal of values; "What things were gain to me" -- his attainments in the Jewish religion -- "those I counted loss for Christ" (Php 3:7, with Php 3:4-6). What he formerly prized he now esteems but "... dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" (Php 3:8-9).

Paul's repeated "but" carries the antithesis of a crisis experience. No trends here; no groping for something better. He knows himself taken out of the column of self-effort (Php 3:3) and flesh-confidence to the column of GOD's beneficiaries in the bestowment of His righteousness. It was a clear-cut break with OUR SIDE over to HIS SIDE.

Not by a process of reasoning but "by revelation of Jesus Christ" Paul acquired a complete system of Christ-thinking and living. Through CHRIST's words from heaven, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" (Acts 9:4), he saw CHRIST indwelling His Church, fully identified with His people, suffering in all that they suffered.

In the silent years that followed, the quiet times spent in Arabia (Gal 1:17), this realization of identification matured into the intimate conception of the Church as the body of which CHRIST is the Head (Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18).

A head and body constitute an organism. It is complete in itself, with its own laws of growth, "building itself up in love" (see Eph 4:12-16). A great conception this! Nothing can be added to a body! Controlled by its head, it requires no external laws for its regulation. The Christian life is Christ-centered and Christ-controlled. So constituted, it is fully self-sufficient. The apostle will defend its sufficiency against all comers.

Man Seeks Freedom of Thought

The chief enemy of the Gospel is human nature. Man is proud. Especially is he proud of his own thinking. He does not want to be told what to do or believe! He dislikes having a supernatural revelation handed to him; it leaves too much room for speculation. He likes to "discover truth"; then it is HIS truth, something he can be proud of.

Many of us who willingly acknowledge that man's MORAL nature is perverted by sin -- the evidence is incontrovertible -- still refuse to realize that man's MENTAL processes are likewise warped, biased and undependable because of sin. The Corinthians prided themselves on their thinking. Read 1Co 1:1-31, 1Co 2:1-16 for GOD's estimate of human thinking that set aside divine wisdom, climaxing in a statement of man's utter incapacity for spiritual things:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1Co 2:14).

It is to be feared that the average preacher of our day is feeding his mind upon human thoughts; and, naturally, these mould his own thinking and preaching, when the charge is, "Preach the Word."

I was in a metropolitan preachers' meeting when the visiting speaker, a popular pastor, advocated preachers reading a BOOK A DAY (preparation for book reviews). Only a sense of courtesy restrained me from asking what he would advise as to habits of reading the Bible.

On a transcontinental trip I was thrown in with a preacher who had just pocketed a call to a pulpit under the eaves of an outstandingly modern university. He had with him a case containing a dozen to a score of books. From them he was busy gleaning the latest "trends" of thought. Later I came to know his ministry. His people testified that it lacked the Gospel. Human thought crowded it out.

The reason men of our day repudiate Paul's theology and turn with preponderant emphasis to the teachings of Jesus is crystal clear. By ridding themselves of a supernatural interpretation of those teachings, climaxing in His death and resurrection -- an interpretation which is rigidly unsusceptible of alteration -- they leave themselves free to give their own interpretation. They are free to speculate as to what those "teachings of Jesus" SHOULD mean for "the modern mind."

What Christendom needs is a renewed fear of GOD's anathema upon all perversions of the pure Gospel. It seems that nothing but such fear will bring us back to its unadulterated purity.

And we, with our very best intentions, need to exercise great care lest our ministry be but Galatianizing our people, through exhorting them to a goodness of life which is not definitely the expression of an inliving Presence.

03.04. CHRIST INLIVING -- I CRUCIFIED - Gal_2:20

CHRIST INLIVING -- I CRUCIFIED - Gal 2:20

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
-- Gal 2:20

These amazing words of the apostle we conceive to contain the FINEST, CLEAREST statement in a single sentence anywhere to be found of how the Christian life is really to be lived. But why is it here this early in the Epistle, before the exposition has even begun? And why is it in the first person singular, when it gives the great essentials of Christian living for all believers?

Many times I have quoted these words and spoken from them, but never until now have I seen them in their true light. They are the clincher to Paul's claim for the Gospel he preaches. It works. It is authoritative, authenticated as it is by the presence and power of the Author Himself.

It is as though Paul said, "The Christ-centered Gospel I preach is all-sufficient. I am demonstrating its sufficiency in my own experience. Since I met CHRIST on the Damascus road my life-principle is entirely changed. I no longer depend upon self-effort, much less law regulation. CHRIST lives in me. The life I NOW live is Christ-controlled. His control is perfect and complete.

Distinctive New Covenant Truth

We can never be sufficiently grateful to the HOLY SPIRIT for giving to the Apostle Paul a ministry that lays undying emphasis upon the indwelling presence of CHRIST; that since He has died, has risen and ascended He has become "a life-giving Spirit"; that this presence is the covenanted promise to all believers, and that this presence is the distinctive characteristic of the New Covenant.

It is nothing short of tragic that the average Christian, seemingly oblivious to these great facts, is still living in Old Testament truth. Of course, the Old Testament is still, blessedly true, and we derive great joy and strength from appropriating its precious promises; but what makes the Christian life Christian is CHRIST Himself, incorporated into human living.

Examples of the distinction are plentiful. Take the Psalms. "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Psa 16:8). "Thou art with me" (Psa 23:4). "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous" (Psa 34:15). "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psa 61:2). "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me" (Psa 40:17). "Let Thine hand help me" (Psa 119:173). "My help cometh from the Lord" (Psa 121:2). "The Lord hath done great things for us" (Psa 126:3).

These are typical expressions of an Old Testament saint's confidence in the Lord as his helper. Where is He? Outside, watching, guarding, guiding, upholding. (And many of these expressions of confidence are carried over in the New Testament Scriptures, for they are true for us as well.) But

the typical New Testament truth brings us to a life centered in an inward, abiding presence, and that presence is our resource for a "walk in newness of life." "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them" (2Co 6:16). "Know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you?" (2Co 13:5). "Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15:4).

That such a stupendous fact, filled with divine potentials, should be brushed aside to reduce Christian living to a mere matter of behaviour is a Satan-engineered calamity. That any group of believers at all taught in the Word, much less any preacher or teacher of that Word, should "fall for it" -- what a piece of strategy on Satan's part to defeat the Gospel. Let us beware!

Identification in Full Operation

The text heading this chapter, Gal 2:20, embodies the principle of identification in its fullest extent. It is this that gives to it peculiar significance for the defense of the Gospel. We are all "by nature" identified with Adam -- his children, in the grip of death. The Gospel reveals GOD's provision of the plan -- a marvelous plan it is -- and the power to transfer us over completely and effectively to another allegiance, even to Himself. His provision is in the person of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, ministered by the HOLY SPIRIT.

How did He do it? By three steps, so important, so essential to the Gospel that every Christian should ponder them well:

1. He became identified with us in flesh and blood.

The marvel of the ages this, that GOD the Creator would become the creature, walk this earth as a son of Adam, calling Himself the Son of man. Thus sharing our lot He brought to it the perfections of His own sinless being, deliberately purposing to die our death, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver" us from "bondage" (Heb 2:14-15). So He "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from" being identified with Adam and "this present evil world" (Gal 1:4).

2. We became identified with Him in death and resurrection.

The sons of Adam, now the sons of GOD. We have changed sides. We have "passed from death" -- the death column, "unto life" -- the life column. What effected the transition? Our sharing in His death and resurrection as though actually ours. "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (2Co 5:14). "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1Pe 2:24). These are but a few of the many scriptures of the New Covenant, revealing its purpose and power to bring us through the experience of the death of CHRIST out into the living reality of His resurrection life. By His death and resurrection made ours we have been brought over onto His Side.

All Christians understand and believe the first step, whereby HE DIED FOR US. So few enter into the realization of the second step, whereby WE DIED WITH HIM.

3. He now identifies Himself with us in living presence.

This step is wholly dependent upon the two preceding. If He had not died for us, and we had not died with Him; if He had not brought us through death and resurrection over onto His Side, He

could not now give Himself to us in actual presence. The New Covenant literature goes on, especially in Ephesians and Colossians, to explain this life-union as the very nature of the Christian life. It is that alone which makes Christian living possible. We are in a head and body relationship to Him. Such identification is not only complete but practical. The head controls the body; the body expresses the head, its will and wisdom. This union constitutes a sovereign personality, not subject to rules and regulations. Thus, Christian living is Christ-centered and Christ-controlled.

What these three basic steps total to is this: GOD's aim and purpose in the Gospel is not to make good people, a mere matter of conduct; but rather a people "peculiar" to Him -- so peculiar to Himself that He can come and live in them and be Himself the regulator of their lives. This is really wonderful!

Stated boldly, stripped of superficialities, the Christian life is a re-incarnation of CHRIST. He who walked the earth nineteen hundred years ago walks again in us: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." He who once shrouded His glory in a tent of flesh now trusts that glory to the tenting of our flesh -- see John 1:14; John 17:22. He who once found flesh and blood expression for Himself in one body now claims a similar expression for Himself in any body -- yours and mine -- the bodies of all who will believe and receive the benefits of the Gospel.

Four Practical Steps in Realizing the Life

The life thus depicted is too wonderful for words. It is staggering in its possibilities. To think of anyone missing it! "But," says some doubting Thomas, "It's wonderful, if -- if it works, if one could live it." Let us acknowledge that if it fails to work, the failure is ours, not His. As in the case of an automobile with the engine running at full speed and the wheels standing still -- plenty of power but no transmission -- we have failed to transmit and transmute His power into our daily living.

Gal 2:20 is, as we have suggested, is the most perfect statement of the nature of Christian living anywhere to be found. It's a classic. Every Christian should carry in mind the reference and its content -- Gal 2:20 -- as we do John 3:16. It is a fly-leaf from Paul's experience; but he is stating for all of us the essentials of Christian living.

Here are four steps, simple but inescapable: I have been crucified with CHRIST; it is no longer I that live; CHRIST lives in me; Now the life that I live is one of utter dependence upon Him. These words are an inspired prescription for successful living. Then let us take these steps as directed, wisely concluding that they point the way to the finest life known to man:

1 -- Know that You Have Died.

This is the distinctive mark of the Christian -- the experienced Cross. Not merely that CHRIST died FOR us, but that we died WITH HIM. In this matter the Word is explicitly clear: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him" -- picturing a crucifixion EN MASSE -- "that the body of sin might be destroyed". "If (since) ye be dead with Christ" (Col 2:20). The practical effect in our person is: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal 5:24).

This is the first step in a changed personality. Other people live their own lives, only to face death. We have already died, and have entered into life (read John 5:24). Death must precede real life. That is what happened in yonder wheat field: the thousands of grains of wheat died; now new life

has sprung up. Consider how Jesus applied this fact to His death -- and ours as well (John 12:23-24). It's GOD's one way of dealing with sinful human nature -- Crucify it! And He did!

Our inclusion in His crucifixion is the indispensable basis of fellowship with CHRIST. He has died, risen, and entered into new life. And we haven't died? Then the Cross would separate, hopelessly. But now it unites us. We are one in death -- one with Him and in Him. While the Scriptures clearly establish this fact and its necessity, for the art of living we must CULTIVATE THE CONSCIOUSNESS THAT WE HAVE DIED. Learn to live in the reality of it. Think it! Live it!

2 -- Know that CHRIST Lives in You.

What happened when you became a Christian? You "received Him" (John 1:12). According to His own word, "I will come in to him" (Rev 3:20), He actually came into you. He came in to stay, to "live." Then, of course, you aren't the same person as formerly. You have another Person living in you. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27).

Ponder well this startling fact. Who is this CHRIST? There is but one CHRIST: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb 13:8). And He lives in you! Nothing could be more wonderful.

Consider Him in His "yesterday"; "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made"; "By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible ... He is before all things" (John 1:3; Col 1:16-17). And this wonderful Person who made everything is today, right now, this very minute and each succeeding minute, living "in you"? Say, you ought to be wonderful, too!

Consider Him in His "today": "Who is even at the right hand of God"; "Upholding all things by the word of His power"; given the "name which is above every name" (Rom 8:34; Heb 1:3; Php 2:9). And this wonderful Person lives where? "In you"! What sort of a person, think you, should you be?

Consider Him in His "for ever": "The government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa 9:6-7). And this world ruler lives today "in you." He can bring peace to this troubled world, and He can't bring peace to your troubled heart? Then something is wrong, so very wrong. Lack of transmission? Is something in the way, hindering Him? Would you HINDER, even defeat this wonderful Person?

3 -- Take Yourself Out of His Way.

"It is no longer I that live." Do you dare make that a practical reality? It's the key to the whole situation. It will prove the hardest step you ever took; but take it. Possessed of "all power," you are on the threshold of a wonderful life. Courageously take out of the way the thing that is blocking that power. That something is in New Testament truth, "you."

The philosophy involved is the exact opposite of the world's. But it fits the facts. The world's philosophy has failed; this works. You have "Christ in you"; then do everything to let Him realize Himself, His traits of character, His life in you. Paul did it, outstandingly. Read Php 3:7-10. Says Paul: "My most prized attainments I counted by loss to gain CHRIST, to know Him, His power, His fellowship." What did this involve? Hear his testimony: to realize the new life in CHRIST, "I die

daily" (1Co 15:31). Can you do any less and hope to succeed? Hearing this, will you also heed? Your greatest problem will always be yourself -- always until you match His death with yours in a firm, meaningful "no longer I."

Dear friend, your future is unlimited -- limited only by the degree to which you limit Him. Any future failure is simply the failure to let Him live out His faithfulness in you. He "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" -- displaying this ability in us personally -- but it is "according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph 3:20), that is, the degree of freedom we accord Him. The art of living is to give Him unlimited freedom to exercise His faithfulness in us. Possess your possessions and your future is assured.

03.05. GRACE VERSUS LAW - Gal_2:21

GRACE VERSUS LAW - Gal 2:21

Coming to the doctrinal portion of our Epistle, and particularly now as we consider Gal 3:1-29, we find the argument is carried forward by three basic antitheses. One the one side -- Our Side -- are the three great words: Law, Works, Curse. Over against them -- on His Side -- are the words: Grace, Faith, Promise.

By these three we are brought to the glorious, triumphant conclusion of Justification by Faith. This also is antithetical. The sum total of law, works and curse is a state of "condemnation" -- a word we must needs borrow from Romans, where it is used in sharpest contrast to "justification," but the idea is ever present in Galatians.

It may prove helpful to set these contrasts before us so that we can visualize them and the better follow the argument:

- LAW GRACE
- WORKS FAITH
- CURSE PROMISE
- CONDEMNATION JUSTIFICATION

Facing these contrasts we must ever keep in mind that the words in the first column represent Our Side, and they are charged with utter inability to get any one over onto His Side.

Turning to the first antithesis, law and grace, we find it is basic to the entire doctrinal discussion. Paul's defense of himself and his Gospel is climaxed in a statement involving this contrast:

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Gal 2:21 (Note: that in this verse the word "righteousness" has the same root word as "justification.)

Law Demands -- Grace Gives

GOD has but two ways of dealing with men; He must deal with them under law or under grace. These are strict opposites. Law sets up a certain standard of conduct and imposes a penalty for its infringement. Grace finds a way of setting aside the demands and penalties of law. Grace gives, and keeps on giving.

What is Law? Whether it be the moral law, or merely human law, or the personal laws that regulate life's living, the underlying principle is always the same. That principle is justice. The law exacts something of us. In justice the law penalizes us for failure to meet its requirements. If we break the laws regulating our operation of a car, there's a fine or worse. If we disregard the laws of health we reap the consequences, known as sickness. Just so the law of GOD; to remain under it is to

experience the just exactions of its demands.

My friend, never ask for justice from GOD. He has warned: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Eze 18:4); "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). Justice will surely pay those wages. If there is any way at all for you to get out from under, by all means do so.

What is Grace? It is the exact opposite of Law. We call it GOD's undeserved favor. It is that; but it is far more. GOD has graciously found a way of meeting the demands of His law in His own person. We deserved death, under Law. He put Himself under law and took its penalty -- death. So, having thus satisfied every demand of the law, having taken upon Himself what we deserved, He is now free to give us what we did not deserve. This is grace. It is GOD getting us over onto His Side where He is free to love us, and love us, and love us -- unrestrainedly and unconditionally.

The Limitations of the Law

Law, as we have considered it, is a constant disappointment. Through the centuries it has failed to improve the condition of man and of the world in general. It will continue to fail. These reasons are these:

1 -- Law is limited by man's ability to keep it. This is serious indeed. Law as a system of life is like a bridge connecting man and GOD: one end rests in divine authority; the other end rests in human ability. Man's end has broken down completely. The Westminster divines stated the case in these condemning words of the Shorter Catechism: "No mere man, since the fall, is able in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of GOD; but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed." History has proved by its repeated failures that this is all too true.

2 -- Law cannot compel a man to keep it. We have a law against stealing; so nobody steals? Oh, yes, they do! We have a law against lying; so nobody lies? Oh, yes, they do! The most law can do is offer the threat of penalty for its violation. If a man's desire to disregard the law is greater than his fear of the penalty, the law breaks down. And usually the penalty fails to beget a desire to keep the law.

3 -- Law is defeated by man's "flesh" nature. The fatal weakness of law is that it must appeal to that in man which is averse to keeping it. Man thinks he is going to do better; but -- "when I would do good, evil is present with me" (Rom 7:21). The flesh has its own mind; what is it? "The carnal mind is enmity against GOD; for it is not subject to the law of GOD, neither indeed can be" (Rom 8:7). Such an indictment leaves no hope in the law. Hence the Gospel has come to do "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh" (Rom 8:3).

The case against the law is that it leaves man helplessly on his own side. Why should anyone who has tasted the grace of GOD that puts man over on His Side ever be tempted to revert to the exactions and requirements of law?

The Sufficiency of Grace

Grace, as we have seen, is GOD's way of dealing with us other than by law. Grace is GOD Himself setting aside the requirements of law, because He Himself has met those requirements. Grace is GOD substituting Himself for law, as the controlling principle of life.

1 -- Grace says, "By grace ye are saved" (Eph 2:5). That lost man, described as "dead in trespasses and sins," responsive only to the world, the flesh and the devil, "by nature the children of wrath" -- that any such person should be saved is a miracle of grace. "But God" in His mercy, love and grace met every demand of His holiness and justice toward us we were -- met it in the person and saving work of CHRIST, leaving absolutely nothing for us to do, or that we could do, for our salvation. Hence -- "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Please read Eph 2:1-10 for this setting forth of saving grace.

2 -- Grace sustains. The books of the New Testament, from Romans to Revelation, with few exceptions begin with "Grace and peace"; as though to say, that anyone is able to live a Christian life due to GOD's sustaining grace. Are we afflicted. He reassures, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2Co 12:9). Are we under trial? "But He giveth more grace"; and learning to submit ourselves thereto, He "giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas 4:6 -- note the "giveth grace" twice in this one verse).

3 -- Grace supplies a new principle of life. Law demands; grace gives. Law supplied no ability to keep it; we were left on our own resources -- and we had none. Grace supplies everything needful to life's living, even life itself. When by faith we take CHRIST as our Saviour we receive eternal life as a gift; we receive the HOLY SPIRIT; we are placed in GOD's favor, in a position where His grace keeps abounding to every good work -- read and mark 2Co 9:8.

Thank GOD, we are no more under law, but under grace. To go back under the old system is to break the supply-line of His abounding grace.

But a word of caution is needed. Grace is not antinomian; it will never lead us to act contrary to law. That the law was a temporary expedient -- only "until" the sufficiency of grace in CHRIST should be ours.

03.06. FAITH VERSUS WORKS - Gal_3:2-3

FAITH VERSUS WORKS - Gal 3:2-3

"Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" -- Gal 3:2-3.

Here is another striking, strongly contrasted antithesis; Law demands works; grace requires faith.

As law leaves us helplessly on Our Side, impotent to transfer us to His Side, it is evident that all works required by the law are equally impotent. As grace alone has positioned us on His Side, so faith lays hold of all the riches that are ours by His saving and sustaining grace.

The Impotence of Works

Man naturally wants to DO something. If there is anything he can do, that appeals to him as it fits well into his scheme of life. But --

1 -- Works of the law are "dead works" . (Heb 6:1; Heb 9:14). The man that does them is by nature dead; hence his works are dead. They may satisfy his conscience, but they are powerless to give acceptance with GOD.

2 -- Works of the law leave the worker "under the curse" (Gal 3:10). When we consider the real nature of the law, as we did in the study "Blessing versus Cursing" we realize that all we may do under it is powerless to lift its curse. All our works are wasted effort, all to no purpose.

3 -- Works of the law fail to give favor with GOD. This is the repeated declaration of scripture: "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal 2:16, see Rom 3:20; Rom 4:2-5; Gal 3:11). GOD's method of making men good is through the goodness of Another; not by man's doing anything, but rather by his believing what GOD Himself has done.

The Efficacy of Faith

Faith, on the other hand, does everything that works fail to do. Rather, it enables GOD to do what man is impotent to do.

1 -- Faith brings us over into the favor of GOD. Among many, many scriptures this one is especially precious: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 5:1). Repeatedly men are exhorted to believe (the Greek verbal form of faith) unto salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). GOD has no other way for man to get over onto His Side; and man through persistent effort has failed to find any.

2 -- Faith lays hold of GOD. Faith is man's impotence taking hold of GOD's omnipotence. Just as the trolley arm claims the resources of the powerhouse, so faith releases the resources of GOD.

3 -- Faith claims the very life of GOD: "That believing ye might have life" (John 20:31). "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36).

4 -- Faith possesses the Spirit of GOD (Gal 3:2).

5 -- Faith claims the indwelling CHRIST (Eph 3:17).

6 -- Faith moves GOD to the utterly impossible with man (Mat 17:20).

7 -- Faith alone makes it possible to please GOD (Heb 11:6).

8 -- Faith lays hold of GOD's faithfulness.

9 -- Faith motivates the life, issuing in "good works." "Faith without works is dead" (Jas 2:20; Jas 2:26). Works evidence the reality of faith. In the recital of Heb 11:1-40 great exploits are attributed to faith. Says the narrator:

"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." -- Heb 11:32-34.

Faith laid hold of GOD, and had these wonderful accomplishments to its credit. But it did more. Faith emboldened these Old Testament notables to undertake these exploits. Faith worked. Faith did what works could never dare to undertake, and daring, would have failed. Faith works, because GOD works through faith.

Thus we are saved, not by good works but unto good works. Grace enables, faith empowers, and the works follow.

"I would not work my soul to save,

For this my Lord has done;

But I would work like any slave

For love of GOD's dear Son."

03.07. BLESSING VERSUS CURSING - Gal_3:13-14

BLESSING VERSUS CURSING - Gal 3:13-14

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." -- Gal 3:13-14.

What an antithesis (or paradox) is now before us! It is intended to remind us of the scene in Israel's history when, upon entering the land, they were to divide into two groups -- an antiphonal chorus, as it were -- the one on Mount Ebal, the other on Mount Gerizim. The group on Mount Ebal were to take the law with them, and from this mount was to go forth "with a loud voice" the warning of "Cursed be he," "Cursed be he," "Cursed be he" who disobeys its demands. Then across the valley came the echoing chorus of "Blessed shalt thou be" for heeding the voice of the Lord. Read Deu 27:1-26 and Deu 28:1-68. Israel's history has been a prolonged experience of the curse, with but brief interludes of the blessing.

What is the Curse?

Shall we regard the Ten Commandments, embodying the highest possible moral standard for regulating human conduct, a curse? No, indeed; they have been the basis for the world's best jurisprudence. Where, then, lies the curse?

1 -- The Law's insistence upon obedience from men who are by nature sinners. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal 3:10).

The law is a system that requires continuous obedience, not to one point but to the whole. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas 2:10). If I break one law I cannot plead my obedience to a score of other laws to get me off; I am in the toils of the law for breaking just one.

Thus we see that nature and intent of the law: not as a way of salvation; never, but as a system of showing up man's sinfulness. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom 3:20); "That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Rom 7:13). "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions" (Gal 3:19), that is, to make us consciously transgressors.

To understand the intent of the law we must consider its characterization in 2Co 3:1-18. It is called "the ministration of condemnation" and "the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones." This, note, is GOD's characterization of the Ten Commandments; they bring the curse of condemnation and death to sinful man.

And the teachings of Jesus, instead of easing the situation, make it far worse. In the Sermon on the Mount He made the infringement of the law to consist, not in the outward act but in the sinful

condition of the heart. Thus the highly respected man, as society sees him, may be a murderer or an adulterer in the sight of GOD. See Mat 5:21-22; Mat 5:27-28. Jesus was demanding a rightness of heart, a "righteousness [that] shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees" (Mat 5:20), men who prided themselves upon their law performances but were utterly condemned by the spirit and intent of that law.

2 -- The law fastened its curse upon our Lord Jesus CHRIST. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal 3:13).

While the Jews executed by stoning to death, they had the custom of impaling the dead body on a tree. Their law said, "He that is hanged is accursed of God" (Deu 21:23). Deliberately, voluntarily, the Blessed One, having proved Himself sinless, allowed the law to pronounce Him worthy of death and place Him on the tree that He might Himself become "accursed of God." Reading the psalms of the suffering Saviour -- see Psa 22:1-31 and Psa 69:1-36 -- we are in the presence of an agony far greater and deeper than physical suffering. Forsaken of GOD! Hanging between heaven and earth, rejected of both, acceptable to neither. Despised; yes, made a curse!

-- Why all this? "For us." "Made sin for us"; "Wounded for our transgressions; bruised for our iniquities"; "Bare our sins in His own body on the tree"; "Gave Himself for our sins"

-- to what purpose? -- "that He might deliver us." With this awful picture before our eyes of what the law could, would and should do to us, but did it instead to our Substitute, thus "redeemed from the curse of the law" we can sing from hearts filled with gratitude:

Free from the law, O happy condition,

Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;

Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,

Grace hath redeemed us once for all.

Now are we free -- there's no condemnation,

Jesus provides a perfect salvation;

"Come unto Me," O hear His sweet call,

Come, and He saves us once for all.

"Children of GOD," O glorious calling,

Surely His grace will keep us from falling;

Passing from death to life at His call,

Blessed salvation once for all.

-- P.P. Bliss.

3 -- The law imposed a burdensome yoke.

As a system of life it prescribed the minutest details of one's conduct; do this, and don't do that. Cursing with the death penalty for its infringement, it equally cursed with its demands for daily living. So much that Peter, at the council gathered in Jerusalem for the consideration of this vexed question, pleaded: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts 15:10). From this cursing, galling yoke CHRIST has come to deliver, saying,

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Mat 11:28-30).

What is the Blessing?

Law demands; grace gives.

If we will but come out from under law and its curse, come under the provisions of grace, GOD will give, and give, and give. Under grace He gives favor, He gives life, He gives Himself. In fact, He delights to give. Thus a threefold blessing is set before us:

1. -- The blessing of Abraham (Gal 3:14) In Scripture Abraham is the primal illustration of faith: "He believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen 15:6).

Above all else GOD wants faith -- faith that CREDITS Him and His word. In Abraham's case it was faith in the promise of a physically impossible seed; but that promised seed, Isaac, was the key to the promised Seed, CHRIST. It is through this Seed, by the same operation of faith, that we, too, come into the favor of GOD. So this Gospel that included us by faith was preached before "unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Gal 3:8-9).

2 -- The promise through faith (Gal 3:14). Note the repeated occurrence of "promise" -- seven times in this one chapter (Gal 3:14; Gal 3:16-18; Gal 3:21-22; Gal 3:29). It is upon this word that the argument for grace as against law, for faith as against works, hinges. Neither law nor law-performance has any promise -- other than penalty for falling short of law's demands. But grace through faith brings promise upon promise. Note verse Gal 3:16, "to Abraham and his seed," referring to CHRIST as the one channel through which the promises are passed on to us.

What, then, is the specific promise accorded to us through CHRIST? When He had finished His work on our behalf, He bade His disciples to "wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4), namely, the HOLY SPIRIT. Of all the gifts of grace the HOLY SPIRIT is the greatest. He it is who makes the plan of redemption operative and effective. It is His presence that makes Christian living distinctive. "The promise of the Father" -- to whom? Primarily to the Son, in the ages past when this plan was agreed upon in the Godhead. As though the Father had said, "Son, if You will take upon You flesh and blood, and give Your life a ransom, I promise to give the HOLY SPIRIT to all who believe upon You, thus to unite them to Us and enable them to live our life upon earth."

3 -- A covenanted blessing, ours as an "inheritance" (Gal 3:18). This is the climactic point in the argument against law and works. One does not work for an inheritance; it is one's by right of birth, or adoption. The law had nothing to do with GOD's blessing to Abraham; it could have no part in that blessing since it came "four hundred and thirty years after" (Gal 3:17). The blessing was

wholly of promise (Gal 3:18). And now GOD has passed on to us as children of Abraham this method of dealing, namely, by grace through faith, under the New Covenant, a new agreement with promises still more wonderful than those of the Abrahamic covenant, for CHRIST "is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb 8:6).

How Christian people need to be aroused to a realization of their riches under the New Covenant, a covenant of life, a covenant that secures the gift of the HOLY SPIRIT, the promise of the Father, to all who believe. And all this is ours, not by merit, not by working for it, but by way of inheritance. So the chapter concludes: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:29).

03.08. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH PLUS NOTHING - Gal_3:24

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH PLUS NOTHING - Gal 3:24

What is justification by faith? Christians say that it is the essence of the gospel. How can Christians claim to be saved without doing a thing but believe?

This study will answer that question - and in so doing, bring assurance and security to the heart of GOD's people.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" -- Gal 3:24

The sum of all the antitheses (or paradoxes) we have considered is in the caption of this study. They compel the conclusion that GOD has left us to but one way into His favor, namely, by faith and by faith alone.

If we resolve to do our very best, all that we can do leaves us under law with its unmet demands, therefore under the curse of the law, even death and condemnation. We are still on Our Side, with no ability to get ourselves out of our trouble. Only faith will transfer us to His Side, where He can deal with us in grace, as His own children, heirs of His gracious promises, partakers of His own life, possessed of His HOLY SPIRIT.

This conclusion is definite and decisive, with no middle ground, sealed to us by this solemn, summary declaration: "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal 3:22). So important is this statement.

If the Bible speaks GOD's mind, and it does, then all who think to commend themselves to GOD by their conduct, all who seek to come into His favor by trying to be good, are simply trying to get out of prison. They are guilty of attempted jail-break! They are making their condition worse, inviting a more severe sentence. There is but one way out.

What is Justification by Faith?

All that man can do leaves him helplessly on Our Side, lawfully "imprisoned under sin." If anything is to be done about it GOD will have to do it. So the Scriptures mercilessly show man his condition that, ceasing from his own doings, he may fasten his attention upon what GOD has done -- done to lift man over onto His Side, justified from all these ugly charges against him.

Justification, then, has three steps:

1. Man has sinned, and GOD declares "all under sin," deserving the death penalty.
2. GOD provided a Sinless One, having no need to die for Himself but purposing to take our death penalty upon Himself. This He did, and GOD accepted of His death, in that He raised Him from the dead.

3. All who will accept what He has done for them and come over "into Christ" GOD is free to declare righteous in His sight and deal with them as such. By faith they have changed sides; they are now on His Side, in His favor.

That is, justification is a declarative act on GOD's part. He has DECLARED us all sinners "in Adam"; now He is free to DECLARE us all righteous "in Christ." Faith alone can make the transfer.

The Westminster divines stated it well: "Justification is an act of GOD's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of CHRIST imputed to us, and received by faith alone."

This statement is supported by many Scriptures, such as: Eph 1:7; Rom 3:24; Rom 4:6; Rom 5:18; Gal 2:16; 2Co 5:21. "By faith alone" is especially enforced by these:

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law"; "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom 3:28; Rom 4:4-5).

It is clearly evident that GOD's plan is such as admits of no admixture of man's efforts: on man's part they are futile; on GOD's part they are an offered affront.

Why is the "faith alone" principle so offensive to man? Why does he so persistently revert to the law principle? Faith alone hurts his pride; law affords him an opportunity to do something. He will accept GOD's plan of salvation if only he can do something toward it. GOD says, No. Take it by faith, or leave it alone.

The Gospel Paul Preached

The preaching that brought salvation to these Galatian Christians is recorded in Acts 13:14-43. Having first of all obtained audience with the children of Israel, Paul rehearsed with them GOD's dealings with their fathers through Moses and David, leading on to David's greater Son, pointing out that they had fulfilled the Scripture in putting Him on the cross, but that GOD had also fulfilled the Scripture in raising Him from the dead. Having dwelt upon these two great saving facts -- "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" -- Paul comes quickly to his conclusion, that salvation is to be had only in Him:

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).

Note the two alls: "All . . . justified from all"; something which no law and no adherence to law could accomplish. Why?

Law's Fatal Futility

The great desideratum of human existence is "life". There is nothing man values so highly as life. Not having life, he has nothing. At any cost man must have life.

The indictment of law is that it cannot meet this, man's greatest need; it cannot produce life. Man is spiritually dead -- "dead in trespasses and sins" -- and law leaves him dead. Do, do, do all that the law demands, yet all the doing fails to generate a spark of life. So we read: "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal 3:21).

The notable fact is that man, in a scientific age, has never been able by scientific process to produce life. GOD still holds the secret of life within His own wisdom and power, yes, within Himself.

GOD is life; GOD is its source.

Man's story is that he began with God-breathed life. GOD "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen 2:7). The life man had was GOD's life, God-breathed, God-imparted. GOD was its source. But man allowed Satan and sin to separate him from GOD, from his source of life, even though he was warned, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen 2:17). That day his spiritual life was ended, and his physical life was shortened to a brief span of years.

That is man's history, history of death, death, death, death, and with death, darkness. What he desperately needs is life, and the light which life alone enables him to see.

So, now, "what the law could not do ... God sending His own Son" delivered us from the state of death by placing us under the control of the Spirit's life: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law -- the control -- of sin and death" (Rom 8:3; Rom 8:2, with Rom 7:24).

So the Gospel is this: the same GOD who breathed life into man at the beginning brings the Good News to life-bereft man, saying, "I am come that they might have life" (John 10:10). "I am the life" (John 14:6). (Read the gospel of John for its oft-repeated "life"). Even Jesus' words are words of life (John 6:63).

How shall we obtain this life? Work for it? No, indeed; even our physical life did not come that way. Be good for it? We have no goodness; that comes with the life. No, it must be a gift. "I give unto them eternal life"; "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (John 10:28; Rom 6:23).

If not of works, then it must be by faith alone -- faith PLUS nothing. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom 4:5): "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph 2:8-9).

Law's Time Limit -- "Until"

There is a further argument against resorting to law and its works: it was meant to serve a merely temporary purpose, a sort of stop-gap provision. Given four hundred and thirty years after GOD, by His dealings with Abraham on the basis of grace, had established the principle of Justification by Faith, the question is raised as to why it was given at all. The answer is: "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed -- Seed -- should come to whom the promise was made" (Gal 3:19).

Elsewhere we read, "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom 3:20), that is, it makes us conscious that we are sinners: "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Rom 7:13). Naturally we think well of our conduct until the law shows us up. Recently I parked my car in a perfectly good spot; then I noticed a sign. Walking back I read its prohibition of such parking. Had I left my car there that law would have made me a conscious transgressor. So the law shut us all up under sin, making us deeply conscious of our need of a Saviour.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal 3:24). It has served its purpose; it has taught us our need; it has delivered us over to CHRIST, who, as the Giver of life, has in turn delivered us from the power of death and darkness unto "the justification of life."

Dear reader, if you are still on Our Side, depending on self-effort or fancied personal goodness, realize that all such is futile. Only justification of life through faith in CHRIST will transfer you to His Side and to His favor. GOD's salvation is such that you must be justified by faith alone, or leave it alone.

03.09. SONS VERSUS SERVANTS - Gal_4:7

SONS VERSUS SERVANTS - Gal 4:7

What is sonship? What does it mean to say that we are the sons of GOD?

This study will answer that question - and in so doing, bring assurance and security to the heart of GOD's people.

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." -- Gal 4:7

Through this succession of antitheses we have reached the privileged position of sonship. The sons of GOD; think of it! Why should any one be content to continue in the condition of servants?

Justification of life brought us to such a glorious pinnacle that Paul cannot leave it without a peroration, brief though it be. Just as in Romans 5 justification leads to a listing of its benefits, so here:

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." -- Gal 3:26-28).

This peroration is the Spirit's preparation for the Ephesian letter that is to follow. It is the Ephesian truth. No man-administered ordinance has done this. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free" (1Co 12:13). Baptized into complete identification with CHRIST -- His body. We have become the "one new man" He had in mind all the while. No room for old distinctions here! We are a part of the person of CHRIST. Away with the old rules and regulations; this new man is to be Christ-controlled.

Children, Yet Servants

Christian require training; rightfully they are placed under discipline. While undergoing this needful discipline "the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all" (Gal 4:1). Recently I was in a well-to-do home where the mother refused to have a hired servant; she wanted her four girls trained in housekeeping experience, so they did the work of a servant. Many of our leading industrialists began as employees in the lowest ranks; they submitted themselves to discipline as laborers; though heirs of all, they were no better than the servants about them.

Such is the condition of childhood, in the years of minority, but only "until the time appointed of the father." Father and child alike looked forward to the day of full-grown sonship. Doubtless the reference here is to the custom by which the father would publicly and officially declare his boy to have attained his majority and thus recognize him as his heir.

One Son -- Many Sons

Just so our Heavenly Father. The Old Covenant was a covenant of discipline. The best it could do was to treat us as "under age," in need of training, subject to regulation. But GOD looked forward to bringing us out of our minority into the state of majority. How would He do it?

"When the fullness of time was come" for Him to do this for us "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal 4:4-5). The great moment of human history has arrived; something very wonderful is taking place. It should command the closest attention of scientific men, for it is the turning point of destiny for the race.

Adam was "the son of God" (Luk 3:38). But he failed as the head of the race and led it away from GOD into sin and death. Now GOD will have another Son, a Sinless One, sinlessly born of a woman, virgin-born, born of the Spirit -- very GOD, yet very man. It is "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin" (Rom 8:3).

GOD has come over to Our Side, making Himself one with us in our lot, "born under [a subject to] the law," meeting Himself all its demands in life and in death, all because He wanted sons, wanted us as His sons, wanted to undo the robbery Satan committed in stealing man from Him, wanted to redeem us from being subject to law, wanted to bring us over onto His Side to live with Him as His sons.

GOD has done all of this "that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal 4:5). He has officially heralded us and welcomed us as His sons. We who once were condemned under law now are in GOD's family. Could anything be more wonderful? What a tragedy that many continue to live in the servile spirit of minority, under law regulation, refusing to grow up spiritually.

The Spirit of Sonship

Sons of GOD, we must have the Spirit of His Son. It would be tragic indeed to belong to a royal family and still serve in the spirit of a slave.

The Christian life is a "life"; nay it is "His life in us." Only those who have His life are qualified to live a Christian life. Note carefully the repetition of "sent forth" (Gal 4:4 and Gal 4:6). As GOD sent forth His Son, so now, just as definitely and with as well-defined purpose, He has sent forth His Spirit. The Son was sent forth in one body, identifying Himself with the race; the Spirit was sent forth "into your hearts," identifying Himself personally and individually with believers. The Son gave His life for us; the Spirit gave His life to us.

Let us fully comprehend what GOD is doing. It is a new thing. He is uniting us to Himself, intimately, in the spirit-life, to live our lives in conscious oneness with Him, His sons along with His one Son.

The HOLY SPIRIT is variously entitled, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, of holiness, of wisdom, of glory, the Spirit of GOD, in accordance with the varied aspects of His ministry. Here He is called "the Spirit of His Son," because He has come into our hearts to minister conscious sonship to the Father. His presence alone begets the cry, Abba, Father. (See the same statement in Rom 8:15; there "we cry," here the Spirit does the crying in us.)

Any one can speak of deity as GOD. To do so means nothing more than the recognition of His existence. No relationship is implied. But a Christian is in the endearing relationship of son to a father. "Abba," translated, is our "papa." It is Hebrew, and joined to it is pater, the Greek word for father. Thus Jew and Gentile are joined together through CHRIST in the common fatherhood of GOD.

Upon what condition is this priceless benefit of the Spirit bestowed? "Because ye are sons." Nothing more. Nothing to be added. This gift of the Spirit is in the covenant, the promise of the Father. Just as soon as we step over onto His Side by faith in CHRIST He claims us as His. In that father and son relationship we were immediately "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph 1:13).

"If a Son, Then an Heir"

GOD our Father has made us, who were utterly condemned, His heirs. He wants to bestow all that He has upon us, as in the parable of Luke 15 the father is heard to say, "Son, all that I have is thine."

Romans carries the fuller declaration of our heirship:

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." -- Rom 8:15-17.

The imagination is staggered before such a statement. GOD our Father owns everything. CHRIST, His one Son, "He hath appointed heir of all things" (Heb 1:2). And now -- can we take it in? -- He has made us in His New Covenant "joint heirs with Christ." Look up into the heavens; there are trillions upon trillions of worlds. Whose are they? Ours! CHRIST's and ours! And since the Father has made us "joint" heirs with Him He cannot possess any of the inheritance without us. That is what joint heirship means; we must share together. That's the ultimate of being on His Side.

Child of His love, all things are yours -- He tells you this in 1Co 3:22-23 to arouse you to a realization of riches beyond your utmost powers of imagination to comprehend. Consider the universe. Whose is it, but His and yours? Then live royally.

03.10. FREEDOM VERSUS BONDAGE - Gal_4:9

FREEDOM VERSUS BONDAGE - Gal 4:9

What is spiritual bondage? What can cause a Christian to lose his spiritual freedom?

This study will answer that question - and in so doing, bring assurance and security to the heart of GOD's people.

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" -- Gal 4:9

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" -- 2Co 3:17.

Freedom! What a word! Yet, sad to say, millions upon millions of human beings are utter strangers to it.

Liberty! How priceless! Yet how hardly do men attain it and retain it. Well runs the adage, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

The Christian faith is a liberating faith. It sees men in a state of servitude, and says, "I have come to set you free." Its promise is, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"; "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:32; John 8:36).

These Galatians were accustomed to pagan slavery. Now that they are freed, they are like the Israelites who, brought out of years of bondage by the power and intervention of GOD, were often tempted to return to Egypt that could offer them nothing but a severer servitude. "How turn ye again" and "desire again to be in bondage?" Fickle Galatians! But merely samples of fickle Christians. When will we learn the full and blessed freedom of being on His Side? and the peril of being drawn back again to Our Side?

The World A System of Enslavement

Viewed from whatever angle, political, industrial, moral, social, spiritual, even mental, man has lived for these millenniums in a state of servitude. The history of mankind, truly written, is one prolonged yet vain struggle with the forces that enslave the race. How came men to be barbarians? Why should any one be pagan? Whence the degradation we witness, whether in the heart of Africa or in the heart of civilized Europe? The answer is that men have gone down before forces that have wrought for their enslavement.

Who built the pyramids of Egypt? Gangs of "citizens" serving as the slaves of their Pharaoh. Who carried on the conquests of a Babylonian or a Roman civilization? Citizens reduced to military servitude. We all know the serf system of the Middle Ages. What means the industrial strife of our day? Men chafing under a yoke of service, even though it is well paid.

The much-heralded Atlantic Charter, with its Four Freedoms guaranteed by the two leading liberty-loving peoples of the earth -- where is it today? A by-word of wishful thinking and planning! A devastating World War, fought to avert tyranny and ward off threatening despotism, fought to establish freedom for all people -- where is the freedom? Sin and selfishness are again in the saddle, enslaving men.

Then there are the personal habits that enslave. A man feels free to take a drink; soon he has lost his freedom not to take a drink. A person feels at liberty to smoke a cigarette; soon he discovers he must have another, and another. The little cigarette has robbed that person of his freedom.

Religious Slavery Man's Worst Enemy

The vast, vast millions of earth's population are in a state of religious enslavement. It is appalling. Who are those devotees at the shrines of Shintoism and Buddhism? Slaves to religious fear and superstition, vainly seeking to pierce an impenetrable veil of darkness. Who are those marching multitude to Hinduism? Or those men and women crawling along the ground? Perhaps they are headed for the polluted waters of the Ganges in the vain effort to wash away their sins. What of those people in countries where they crawl along gravel-laden streets and climb steps on their knees to kiss the foot of a Catholic statue? These are religious slaves, victims of a system that dictates doing something to merit favor with their gods.

Jesus saw the men of His day in a like bondage. Their scribes had divided the law into some seven hundred enactments, as I recall: they must do this; they must not do that. Jesus said, "You are slaves to your law." They resented it: "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" (John 8:33).

LOSING OUR LIBERTY

What happened to the Galatian Christians under Judaizing influences can easily happen to us under the influences of formalism, legalism or mere disregard for the liberating power of the cross and the principle of justification by faith alone.

We are all subject to self-esteem. Unconsciously and unwarily we slip back from His Side with its provisions of grace and all-sufficiency, back to Our Side -- back to dependence upon self-effort and various forms of self-commendation and self-sufficiency.

We return to "the elements" suggesting that which is elementary, or the mere "rudiments of the world" (Col 2:8). That is, as the Greek word means, we are going back to first principles, back to our ABC's, back to the things we learned as children. Which means this: we are giving up our position as sons and all the privileges of our majority, to place ourselves once more as mere children under a pedagogue, under a child trainer, subject to rules and regulations. How foolish!

Once more we remind ourselves that GOD has but two ways of dealing with men: by law and by grace. Grace gives life, gives the HOLY SPIRIT for living the life. Law appeals to what man has for obeying it, to the "flesh," to self-effort.

So again Paul's crucial question confronts us: "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal 3:3).

("Whoever goes back to the Law loses the knowledge of the truth, fails in the recognition of his sinfulness, does not know GOD, nor the devil, nor himself, and does not understand the meaning and purpose of the Law. Without the knowledge of CHRIST a man will always argue that the Law is necessary for salvation, that it will strengthen the weak and enrich the poor. Wherever this opinion holds sway the promises of GOD are denied, CHRIST is demoted, hypocrisy and idolatry are established" (Martin Luther's Commentary).

"The Rudiments of the World"

The issue is perfectly clear. Either stay on His Side, where His grace provides Himself as the motivating control of life -- "the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"; or go back to Our Side, to the self-discipline of law, which has only rules and regulations to offer. Which means this: you are back under the world's system; for law, whether civil or religious, is the best the world can do to control human life.

Then these elementary religious regulations are enumerated: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years" (Gal 4:10). What are they? Badges, such as one wears upon his lapel, indicating his connections, the things for which he stands. These are badges of religious bondage. Such a badge makes us no better than a Hindu; in fact, he may be far more devoted in his religious observances than we. They are the badge, unblushingly worn, that we have left His Side and gone back to Our Side.

(Some friend may fear that this teaching is carrying Christian liberty to the point of license -- a license to ignore customs sacred to GOD's people. Not so. The test in these matters is not merely what we do, but why we do it. Christian freedom observes a holy day because it is holy to the Lord - the Lord's day.)

Against all these rudimentary religious observances Paul warns the Colossians by showing that the cross ushered us into a new sphere of life where these things have no claim and are altogether out of place; that with CHRIST we died, were buried, were raised to newness of life. Thus He was taking us out from the bondage of these things:

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." -- Col 2:14-17

The circumcision advocated by ordinance is now superseded by "the circumcision made without hands ... the circumcision of Christ" (Col 2:11), even that of the heart, which makes a man responsive to the mind and will of GOD. It is the cross-attained control of the Spirit.

Re-gaining Our Freedom

To the Apostle Paul this lapse into legalism is exceeding serious. With great depth of feeling and agitation of spirit he pleads with his readers to recover themselves to the Lord's Side and to the freedom of life there is in Him. For such recovery He has this one plea, this one remedy as all-sufficient:

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

-- Gal 4:19

The Christian life is, virtually, the re-incarnation of CHRIST. Nothing short of this will meet the case. The Son of GOD, formed in one body by the Spirit, now formed in the believer's body by the power of the same Spirit.

How bold! The Creator come to live in the creature, to be his life and to Himself control that life. GOD knows no other way. Nothing short of this is really Christian.

Now we see the affront these elementary religious rites offer Him. They not only bring us under their bondage; they put the inliving CHRIST under bondage. To think of the indwelling CHRIST having to go through this rigmarole of law-performances with us!

To give this in-formed, inliving CHRIST His full freedom the practical effectiveness of the cross must also be considered. It is thus Paul concludes his discussion of this matter with the Colossians: "If ye be dead with Christ ... If ye then be risen with Christ." Does this make any difference? Ah, yes. The cross has put us on the other side, on His Side, with the cross between us and our old mode of living. Listen!

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." -- Col 2:20-23

The Christian life is a set-free life, lived on a higher plane, above the do-this and don't-do-that considerations. Its one aim is to please a Person in a life conformed to His controlling presence.

When we come to understand the true nature of the Christian life, that it is Christ-centered and Christ-controlled, we discover a freedom and joy we have never known before, and the heart sings for very gladness:

"Now none but CHRIST can satisfy,
None other name for me;
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in Thee."

03.11. NEW COVENANT VERSUS OLD COVENANT - Gal_4:22-24

NEW COVENANT VERSUS OLD COVENANT - Gal 4:22-24

An Inspired Allegory

"Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these (women) are two covenants." -- Gal 4:22-24

An allegory is defined as "figurative treatment of one subject under the guise of another."

It contains no convincing argument; rather, it pictures truth. So the allegory before us adds nothing to the doctrinal antithesis Paul has now concluded in Galatians 1-3; rather, it illustrates and illuminates it. It sharpens the antithesis. One is made to see that he must choose His Side and stay on it; there can be no playing around from one side to the other.

The Genesis account of Abraham and his two sons is familiar to all. GOD had promised him: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen 12:3). Yet Sarah had no son; so she proposed giving Abraham her servant, Hagar, to wife. It was an earthly, fleshly expedient -- just to help GOD out. But GOD refused to accept the son, Ishmael; and Sarah herself repudiated both mother and boy. They were slaves and could be nothing more. Than GOD intervened and Isaac was born to Sarah, by GOD's power, according to His plan, in fulfillment of His promise. Thus we have the antithesis:

Sarah and Her Son versus Hagar and Her Son

Now the allegory unfolds: the two mothers are two covenants, known to us as the New Covenant and the Old Covenant, while their sons are the children of these covenants, with their nature and status definitely fixed before GOD.

Hagar symbolizes Mount Sinai "which gendereth to bondage" (Gal 4:24), her children being born under the law there given, powerless to change their status as bondmen. During slavery days in the United States the law gave a child born to a slave woman the status of his mother; even though his father was a free man, he was a slave, the property of his mother's owner. Now Sinai, says Paul, "answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children" (Gal 4:25). At the time Paul wrote Jerusalem was still standing and her children were slavishly carrying on all the rites and ceremonies directed by the Sinaitic law.

Sarah stands for "Jerusalem which is above," which is "free" (Gal 4:26). She is "the mother of us all," so we have the status of the free-born. To get the full force of this allegorical antithesis one should take the time to read it in fuller detail as given in Heb 12:18-24. Over against the terrifying experience of those who came to Mount Sinai to be put under Law, we read, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem ... and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."

The privilege of being on His Side, under the provisions of the New Covenant, free and joyous, destined for our Father's house -- these privileges are so evident, one wonders how any one would willingly revert to Our Side, to the bondage of law-works and self effort. The New Covenant affords:

Bigger Progeny (Gal 4:27).

Sarah was barren, yet GOD made her to rejoice as the mother through whom all the families of the earth are blessed. On the other hand, the Old Covenant has for this present age been left sterile, sadly so. Through the Gospel GOD's life-line is reaching out to the ends of the earth to bring many sons to Himself and to His heavenly abode.

Better Promises (Gal 4:28) "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." The New Covenant is a covenant of promise: the promise of favor with GOD, of His life and very presence, of the HOLY SPIRIT and power to live the life. The resources of GOD's free-born are inexhaustible. Those resources are Himself given to us.

Bitter Persecution (Gal 4:29). "As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." The antipathy begun in Ishmael toward Isaac is perpetuated in their descendents. The children of the flesh cannot understand or appreciate the children of the Spirit. Their presence is an offense. One may live a merely religious life and avoid persecution, but for those who live the life of GOD upon earth, as CHRIST did and suffered for it, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2Ti 3:12).

"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free" (Gal 4:31). "Therefore"! -- as we pass from doctrine to duty. What is the "therefore"? What is the Christian's supreme obligation? Not to law, but to live out his freedom.

03.12. STANDING FAST VERSUS FALLING AWAY - Gal_5:1-6

STANDING FAST VERSUS FALLING AWAY - Gal 5:1-6

What happens when a Christian Fails -- What is he to do next?

This study will answer that question - and in so doing, bring assurance and security to the heart of GOD's people.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
-- Gal 5:1-6

"Therefore!" As in all Paul's church Epistles this word marks the turning-point from doctrine to duty. It gathers into itself the entire doctrinal statement that has preceded and focuses its full force upon practical day-by-day living. It transmutes the teaching into a practical way of living.

Only now do we feel the full appeal of the Galatians antithesis. Christian living is a matter of staying "on side" -- His Side, with its dearly-purchased freedom. It is a matter of resisting every influence that would get us "off side", back onto Our Side, back to an endless round of self-effort.

The sickening failure everywhere evident, in the church and in the individual, is right here. Our multiplied "activities," our fine "program" which keeps us so busy -- all tends to make us self-conscious rather than Christ-conscious. We are doing something; we tend to forget what CHRIST has done and is doing. Even our preaching emphasis upon duty tends to drag us over to Our Side. We talk about the many unsolved problems engulfing society; resultantly, the vast majority of Christian people lose sight of the complete solution of all problems -- "In Christ."

What is Christian Liberty?

The Christian, born of GOD, is GOD's free-born man. He is His son, His heir; all that GOD has is his. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom 8:32). He has already "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph 1:3). These blessings include His unqualified favor, "justified from all things," the bestowal of His life, the gift of His Spirit, access to His presence in prayer -- everything to be desired.

Christian liberty is a life so lived that these provisions of grace continue to operate.

Saved by grace initially, we must be kept by grace continually.

Life imparted by grace must be sustained by grace.

Justified by grace (Rom 3:24), we must be sanctified by grace.

Standing in grace (Rom 5:2), we must walk in grace.

We must be taught, trained and disciplined by grace (Tit 2:11-13).

We are to grow in grace (2Pe 3:18).

We are to experience the riches of His grace (Eph 1:7), not only now but eternally (Eph 2:7).

In the severest trial His grace proves itself sufficient for us (2Co 12:9), and as we humble ourselves He keeps adding more grace (Jas 4:6).

He calls Himself the GOD of all grace (1Pe 5:10), able to make all grace abound toward us, that we may always have all sufficiency for all things (2Co 9:8).

It is evident that GOD has a thorough-going program of grace. Grace set us free; grace sustains us in a continuous experience of freedom. This is Christian liberty, staying on His Side, in His favor, where His freeing grace continuously operates. In this freedom we are to "stand fast" at all costs.

What is Falling From Grace?

So very many hold a superficial conception of grace. They think of grace as sort of booster, or bracer, a spiritual vitamin to insure against failure. Do the best you can; GOD won't fail you; He'll see you through: GOD helps those who help themselves. Not so. GOD has but two ways of dealing with men, two great principles: law and grace. Grace is GOD finding a way to set aside the demands of law and our deserts under it, having taken those deserts upon Himself, that He may be free to pour out upon us His goodness and kindness, even His very life.

"Falling from grace," better understood by thinking of "falling away from grace," is crossing the line -- changing sides -- to come under the requirements of law, thereby forfeiting the provisions of grace.

Many think of falling from grace as falling into sin, such as drunkenness or some such evil. That is not what falling from grace is, at least initially; however, as we shall soon see, its ultimate result may be something such as that.

Falling from grace is giving up GOD's provisions under grace, as much as to say, "I'd rather depend on what I can do for myself, or on what some one does for me." In the case of the Galatians it was circumcision. This seemed a harmless thing to do; but they had it done because the law prescribed it. Paul says, "That one thing labels you; you're under the law as a system of life; you've obligated yourselves to keep the whole law; you are severed from CHRIST; you've served notice on GOD you are going to do the best you can for yourself; you've cut the supply-line of His grace."

In our day falling away from grace for the many thousands takes the form of depending upon what the church can do for them. They are relying upon church membership -- they really and implicitly trust it for their spiritual security; they depend upon baptism, especially the preferred form, and what it guarantees to them; they go regularly to the Lord's Supper; they give of their means, not of

the Lord's portion; they are punctilious about certain church duties. I recall one such church member who said, "I wouldn't dare miss on Easter."

If the Apostle Paul were here today, observing modern church activities, sad at heart over the lack of spiritual life and power, he would say to all such, "You are severed from CHRIST; you have left His Side and are busy commending yourselves to GOD! It is all a vain show."

Dearly beloved reader, I have observed these things from years, and widely. I am persuaded that Protestantism along with Catholicism, has in it vast numbers who have left the side of grace -- if they were ever on that side; -- and are inviting GOD to deal with them on the basis of their works.

What is more; it is greatly to be feared that most such, through ignorance of Bible truth and by reason of the type of preaching prevalent today, never really understood GOD's proposal of grace and provision for dealing with them under grace.

****BBB Editor's Note:** Catholicism as a system was never of grace, therefore those in it have not "fallen from grace" - they have always sought to establish their standing with GOD by works, especially for salvation. Catholicism is a works-based religion, and is not based on faith in the finished work of CHRIST on the cross.

Christ-Controlled or Self-Controlled

This is the issue before us. In terms of practical living the Galatian antithesis resolves itself into the question: Do I want CHRIST to control my life? Or do I prefer to run my own life? This is the choice before us.

Life on His Side is, in the provisions of grace, a person-to-person relationship -- "I in you"; "I will dwell in them and walk in them" (John 15:4; 2Co 6:16); the other Person is in control. Back on Our Side life becomes a one-person affair; that person is thrown upon his own resources.

On His Side life is spiritual, with spiritual ideals and aims and experiences that thrill the soul. The fallen-from-grace life, though it be intensely religious, is essentially a moral life; "I" call upon myself to live up to certain standards of conduct that satisfy my religious sense of right and wrong.

It is Rom 7:1-25 life as against the Rom 8:1-39 life. In Rom 7:1-26 the pronoun "I" occurs 38 times; "I" am trying to live up to a standard set for me, but there is something in "I" that foils my best efforts. The attempt ends in a defeatist mood, a sense of wretched failure (Rom 7:24). That mood is reflected in church life today. Religious life, a solo effort to solve one's problem, is deadening and discouraging.

But Rom 8:1-39! Another Person is introduced into human experience, and with Him a new control -- "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"; and this control by Him "has made me free" (Rom 8:2). The "I" has disappeared; we can now use "we" -- He and I are living a joint life, I in Him (Rom 8:1) and He in me (Rom 8:10). My responsibility, so far removed from the former self-effort, is so to yield to Him that He can realize His life in me. Now life is "we" living together.

How practical this is. It works! This becomes the more evident when the relationship is carried over into Ephesian truth, a relationship of head and body -- He the Head, while the believer constitutes the body. The head, of course, is in undisputed control; the body maintains an attitude of

instinctive yieldedness.

Grace has attained a marvelous solution to man's problems: he is free in the freedom of His Creator-Redeemer living His own life in and through man. Beside it the world system of control is truly "weak and beggarly."

Life in the Home versus Work in the Shop

The Christian life is still more; it is "faith which worketh by love" (Gal 5:6). The faith-life sets up the highest possible control and motivation -- the love bond. Grace not only establishes a head and body union; it joins us to CHRIST in marriage -- "married to Another" (Rom 7:4; see Eph 5:31-32).

Love is the highest motivating power known to personality. Love moved GOD in the overcoming of the greatest possible obstacles (John 3:16; Rom 5:8). Grace brought us over onto His Side, in the realm of divine love, where "the love of Christ constraineth us" (2Co 5:14). What a let-down to fall away from grace, drop His love out of our lives and plod along on our own, in dependence upon self-effort and self-motivation.

The situation, to use a modern illustration, is much like that of a man leaving home for the shop. He lives at home; he works at the shop. As he goes forth his wife's kiss and words of encouragement linger with him. Her love warms his heart.

As he enters the shop his eye falls upon rules tacked up on the wall; and there are certain city ordinances to be observed. How different, he thinks, from the life at home. During the day a watch is kept to see that men observe the regulations of the shop. The men are conscious of working by rules, by orders, and by the clock.

At the close of the day is our friend so fond of the shop routine that he asks for a copy of the rules to take home and post on its walls -- just to see that he doesn't break any of them? No, indeed.

What a relief to enter his home: its atmosphere is love; its life is free. Love regulates and motivates, each wishing to please the other. The home is so sacredly sovereign that no police ever intrudes to ensure that city ordinances are being observed. How beautifully free is the life that flows from a heart filled with true love. Grace has given us such a life; and grace enables us to live it.

When a Christian Fails -- What?

We are in the realm of practical Christian living. In this realm we meet many disappointments, many embarrassing situations and problems. There are failures, plenty of them. Seemingly true Christians fail to live the life.

I am persuaded that every such serious lapse is, at root, a case of falling away from grace.

It cannot be otherwise. Grace supplies all the resources of GOD for life's living, even GOD Himself. "Christ liveth in me." If I am living where grace operates to supply these resources, I am "kept by the power of God." If I move out from the realm of grace, its supply is cut off; I am thrown back upon my own resources, and "I" fail. "I" do what "in CHRIST" I could never do.

We all know Christians whose lives are a puzzle. I think with sadness of preachers who are doctrinally sound, outstandingly so. They are known as gospel preachers, proclaiming the Word of GOD and the cross of CHRIST; but --. Here is one who cheats the government in his tax return; here is one who lies; another is mean, unkind, inconsiderate; another "gets mad"; another is foul in personal speech; another treats his wife contemptibly; another is guilty of immorality in one form or another; another is labeled "crooked."

How shall we explain such lapses? Has the Christian faith failed? No, indeed. The explanation is this: doctrinally, they are on His Side, in the realm of grace; practically, they are back on Our Side, fallen away from grace. Grace can no longer operate to exercise His control, so "I" is back in the saddle, denying in practice the gospel preached from the pulpit.

To make this matter perfectly plain and practical I often give a testimony such as this: I couldn't be dishonest: I couldn't knowingly keep a nickel that didn't belong to me. And it's not because I aim to be honest. I might mean to be honest, but temptation might overtake me and be too strong for me. I am honest, I couldn't keep that nickel, I simply couldn't because I live to please CHRIST, and I know it would hurt Him. Yes, it would raise a barrier between us. A nickel would becloud the sunshine of His love in my heart. That love, that Presence in my life, that purpose to please Him -- this is my all-sufficient guarantee of honorable, upright living.

This is one guarantee of heart and life purity. I could be impure; men far better than I have been, but CHRIST in me -- never! The life in grace, the life of faith ministers CHRIST to the heart every moment -- it's the way to live, the only way. Friend Christian, label your life:

"KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD."

03.13. SPIRIT VERSUS FLESH - Gal_5:16

SPIRIT VERSUS FLESH - Gal 5:16

We have this antithesis summed up in two comprehensive words: flesh and Spirit. On Our Side it is flesh; on His Side it is Spirit.

"I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." -- Gal 5:16.

These are the two antithetical elements of life, the two opposing resources upon which life must depend. If we are living "our" life, it's flesh; if we are living "His" life, it is Spirit.

These are the basic terms of our identification with the human family and with the divine family. "In Adam" we all inherit the flesh; "In Christ" we all inherit, by covenant right, the Spirit. The Flesh has its way of living and expressing itself. The Spirit has His way of expressing Himself. The two are "contrary." Now our antithesis becomes a sharply drawn antagonism.

The Christian's Problem Plainly Stated

These words, of course, are addressed to Christian people, those who have undertaken to live the Christian life, for only believers have the HOLY SPIRIT; but such also have the flesh -- persistently so. It is explained that "these are contrary the one to the other." Their aims and purposes are diametrically opposed. Each says "No" to the other. Each checkmates the other's moves. The result is a stalemate for the Christian -- "ye cannot do the things that ye would" -- until the problem finds a solution.

Evidently, in one sense, the Christian has a harder time than other folks. If I am an unsaved man and want to do a thing, I go ahead and do it. If I am a saved man, I may want to do it and the Spirit may say, "No, you not to do it." What a miserable way to live! Is there no solution?

The situation reminds us of the country preacher's exposition of the doctrine of election: "The Lord is votin' for you, and the devil is votin' agin' you. Whichever way you vote, that's the election."

So our way out is, "Walk in the Spirit." Give the Spirit a free hand, the full right of way. Let your life be the practical day by day expression of His life.

GOD's Estimate of the Flesh

"Flesh" is the Bible's word for human nature. Leaving off the "h" and spelling it backwards, we have "self." Flesh is the self-life. It is what man is, left to himself. At times self behaves very commendably; again, it behaves very selfishly. When not well in hand it shows itself off. The front page of our newspaper reveals that human nature is out of hand much of the time.

Man tries to educate it, to train it, to discipline it; he passes laws to compel it to behave. But GOD? -- GOD unsparingly condemns it. He says it is incurably bad. The flesh has a mind of its own and that mind is "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom 8:7). GOD makes clear

that He has no confidence in the flesh. Therefore His children are described as those who "have no confidence in the flesh" (Php 3:3), but rather join Him in self-condemnation, saying, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom 7:18).

It is a great step forward for a Christian, especially one reared in the church, who has never been, as we say, "deep in sin," when he humbly and whole-heartedly accepts GOD's estimate of his inheritance "in Adam," thus to be thrown in complete dependence upon the Spirit, his inheritance "in Christ." His great gain is that, being now "led of the Spirit" and under His control, he has no need of being "under the law" (Gal 5:18). The HOLY SPIRIT has come into his life to take the self-life in hand and keep it under control.

The Potentialities of the Flesh

The variety of ways in which the self-life expresses itself, or may find expression for itself, is now given a full listing, in a catalogue that is not at all complimentary to human nature -- read Gal 5:19-21. It is a startling list; we are ashamed of it before we read it. It begins with the baser sins of sex and passion, but it takes full account of the more refined sins that "get by" in polite society.

A more comprehensive arraignment of fallen human nature is found in Rom 1:26-32. Another is in 2Ti 3:1-7. These should be read and pondered. They are a valuable part of the "all scripture" that is inspired of GOD and "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2Ti 3:16). Dear Christian reader, if you would understand yourself and the workings of your nature that so often have baffled you and even alarmed you, study your Bible; know what it has to say about you, apart from the Spirit.

The Apostle Paul did not invent these charges; he is but following our Lord who had this searching word for the men of His day:

"That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within and defile the man" (Mark 7:20-23).

In these four listings the children of Adam are charged with sex sins, social sins and spiritual sins. Not that any one person would be guilty of all of these; they are the potentialities of human nature, the evil channels through which it may find expression. I have never been a drunkard; but I have a nature capable of drinking. I have never murdered; but I share with the race a nature that is capable of murder. I do not get angry; but if my nature were disciplined, I would. Thank GOD, we of America did not commit the atrocities laid at the door of the Germans and Japanese during World War II, but humbly we should acknowledge that we have a nature that apart from the restraint of Christian ideals is capable of such deeds; for GOD "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). We are left no room for boastfulness, but much reason for thankfulness.

"BUT"

What GOD can put into one word! But! It stands here (Gal 5:22), between flesh and the Spirit, as the focal point of our prolonged Galatian antithesis. If we have ever doubted that the teaching of this Epistle is essentially and sharply antithetical, this crucial "but" dispels such doubts.

It is this antithesis that largely characterises Scripture; there is no middle ground. Read the first Psalm; its three "but's" carry the whole teaching. There are many "but's" of salvation, notably, John 1:11-13; Rom 6:23; Php 3:7; 1Pe 1:18-19; Rom 3:21 (the turning point from condemnation to justification); so likewise Eph 2:4.

Here we are facing the "but" of sanctification. Christian living is an equally sharp transition from the old to the new, from trying to make the flesh behave to allowing the Spirit His full freedom to work. Again we face Paul's crucial question: "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Dear reader, have you a clear-cut "but" between your former and your present way of living? Not to have spells defeat.

Fruit" of the Spirit versus "Works" of the Flesh

Vital to our problems is the distinction unfolded in the two words, "fruit" (singular) as against "works" (plural). The flesh provokes a wide-range gamut of works; the Spirit produces a blended whole of Christian character.

The flesh has its variety of expression, destructively working this and that, with no necessary connection between them. A man may be a thief, but not a murderer; a liar, but not a drunkard. He may experience anger, but not envy; passion, but not pride.

When I was a lad I joined a temperance society. The evils of intemperance were represented by a box with supposed snakes on the inside, while holes on all four sides were labeled with the havoc wrought by strong drink. One was poverty; another, dishonesty; another, suicide. One never knew out which hole the snake would put its head. Just so are the outcroppings of the flesh.

Some of these works are in disrepute among us, such as adultery, drunkenness, murder, and the like. Others are quite respectable. One may be quarrelsome, given to fits of anger, of a jealous disposition, and retain the full esteem of his fellows. Yet, let us note it well, they are all in the same class. They are all equally in disrepute with GOD. They all remind Him of man's fall away from Him; they are the outbursts of life "in Adam." So He solemnly forewarns us, tells us before we go on indulging in them "that they which do such things" -- not just a few of the worst -- "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal 5:21)

The Spirit's Fruitage

Is there no remedy? Yes, indeed. GOD has provided a way out. "Walk in the Spirit." Stay, "abide," every moment on His Side, and these things of Our Side will never have a chance. Abide "in Christ" and you will be overjoyed at the "much fruit" resulting (John 15:1-5). The fruit of the Spirit, reproducing CHRIST in us, is Christ-flavored fruit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal 5:22-23).

What are these qualities? Not the nice exhibition of Christian character, nor yet the casual result of the HOLY SPIRIT living in us. They are the dead-in-earnest product of the Spirit's setting about to checkmate the works of the flesh. This is His way of doing it. This is the Spirit lusting against the flesh so that we do not fulfill its lusts. These traits are His answer, His "but," to the cravings of the flesh. They are His means of keeping us "on side."

Suppose we are lacking in these qualities. It is not merely a lack of Christian character; we are sinning against the Spirit; we are defeating His declared purpose in coming to live in us. Suppose we still have the workings of the flesh. It is not merely that these things are wrong and we ought to get rid of them. Far from that. We are grieving the Spirit; we are blocking His New Covenant program; we will not let Him carry out the purpose for which He came to live in us. Practically we are "off side," where we have no business to be.

"Love, Joy, Peace"

One of the most illuminating words of Jesus concerning the work of the Spirit is this: "He shall glorify Me" (John 16:14). He will magnify CHRIST in human living. Whatever CHRIST desires a follower of Him to be the Spirit will set about to make him. He will produce Christ-flavored fruit. He aims at Christ-likeness in the child of GOD.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love

"It is bound to be. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1Jn 4:16). Was Jesus concerned about our loving one another? "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another" (John 13:34). But what makes it "new"? "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." That is, His love is setting a new standard for loving that outmodes all others. Love, not those who love you, but those who hate and despise you. Do you say, "I can't do that?" A good confession. "Very well," says the Spirit, "I will supply the love; I will love that way in you."

I go into church where they seem free to "bite and devour one another." One would think this command of Jesus was not in their Bible. How can they? Only because they are living back on the human side, dependent upon human affection that fails, cut off from the supply of divine love that never fails.

A man confesses to cherishing ill-will in his heart. He says, "That fellow wronged me, and I hate him." There are many such wrongs; life is pretty much that way. Let us analyze the matter. Who does the hating? Would you say, the HOLY SPIRIT? Would you dare lay it to Him? No. Then it is "I," myself, the self-life. Put the blame where it belongs. "I" have failed. Why? Because I was not abiding in Him; I got back on Our Side where alone such feelings can be cherished.

Gladly, thankfully, I yield myself to the HOLY SPIRIT to work His love in me, that the lustings, the tendencies of the flesh, under whatever provocation -- anger, ill-will, envy, quarrelsomeness -- may not be fulfilled in me.

"The fruit of the Spirit is joy."

And you do not have joy? What are you doing? Simply refusing the HOLY SPIRIT His freedom to do what He came into your life to do. That is extremely serious; far more than a mere defect in Christian character. Read your Bible concerning joy. CHRIST expects it: "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11). GOD commands it: "Rejoice evermore" (1Th 5:16) -- at all times, under all circumstances. "The joy of the Lord" -- His joy, ministered by the Spirit -- "is your strength" (Neh 8:10). Then the lack of it is our "weakness."

"But," some one says, "I am so difficulty circumstanced; I am discouraged -- I can't help it." Very well. Ask yourself, who is discouraged? Is it the HOLY SPIRIT? Is He having such a hard time that He has grown discouraged? Never. You are discouraged. You are consulting your feelings, your fears, your circumstances, and in your failure to "abide," the HOLY SPIRIT can't have His way and produce His fruit.

Have we considered the paradox of Christian living: naturally, we have sorrow; supernaturally, we have joy. Where was Jesus when He bequeathed to us His joy? Under the shadow of the cross, with the sorrows of the world's sin about to engulf Him, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," His face "so marred more than any man"; yet He says, "My joy." The HOLY SPIRIT faithful to Him under trial, kept ministering strength to Him, even His joy. The Apostle Paul experienced this paradox and demonstrated joy under great trials. Read his recital of them in 2Co 6:4-10. He says of his experience, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" -- Paul practiced the joy he preached -- then he adds, to enlarge upon the paradox, "as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2Co 6:10).

Friend, read your Bible for its joy. I recently went through the Psalms, marking every note of joy and gladness. What a rebuke to sadness! Paul from the Roman prison writes the Philippians a prolonged appeal to rejoice. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Php 4:4). But the Greek is, "I will say, Rejoice." Circumstances may be against it, but since the Lord expects it, "I will say, Rejoice," in the strengthening of the Spirit. A sad, long-faced Christian only advertises himself and the fact that he is failing; there, "I will rejoice."

"The fruit of the Spirit is peace."

And you do not have peace? What are you doing? Frustrating the express purpose of the Spirit in coming to live in you. Jesus left us His peace, saying, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you" (John 14:27). It is a proven peace, persisting under greatest trials: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Unquestionably CHRIST expects us to have peace and display it; but, knowing human failure, the Spirit says, "I will make it My business momentarily to produce peace."

"But," some one says, "I am so situated, my trials are such I cannot help worrying. If we must worry, let's do it scripturally! But no one has come forward with a single verse. If you could find one you would only prove that the Bible contradicts itself, for repeatedly it forbids it: "Don't worry"; "Let not your heart be troubled"; "Be careful for nothing"; "Fret not thyself." And the HOLY SPIRIT in us is our constant enabling for carrying out these injunctions.

Read your Bible for its peace. Take Php 4:6-7 to heart, and practice it. Peace is the twin sister of joy; one cannot live without the other. Peace is the badge of a Spirit-indwelt believer. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body" (Col 3:15). Literally, let the peace of CHRIST for which, for the experiencing and displaying of which, you were called to be members of His one body, rule, arbitrate, settle all questions in your hearts; that is, act as the umpire between the promptings of the flesh and the divine purposes of the Spirit.

Christian, you were called to peace, the opposite of worry; called to perpetuate CHRIST's peace on earth; called to display His peace as evidence of your allegiance to Him. You had no right to

join the Church of CHRIST and go on worrying, thereby practicing a denial of Him. His peace is the badge of your being on His Side. You can worry only by falling away from the grace that constantly ministers peace.

"Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness"

"The fruit of the Spirit is longsuffering."

And you are lacking in it? You are quick-tempered and easily provoked? What are you doing? You are successfully checkmating the Spirit's aim to develop Christ-likeness in you. Consider your Lord, "Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not" (1Pe 2:23). Hear your Lord proclaiming Himself: "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Exo 34:6). The HOLY SPIRIT has taken up residence in you to make you like Him, like Himself.

"But," some one says, "I get so impatient," or "I had such an exasperating experience and lost my patience." Lost my patience! Friend, the best of us have very little patience. But who gets impatient? You wouldn't accuse the HOLY SPIRIT of ever being impatient. No, it's you. A friend was telling me of his trials with a house trailer, and said, "I got so impatient." I looked at him and said, "You! who make such a profession of CHRIST."

There is just one remedy -- only one. Confessing that you, left to yourself, will always fail. Don't try to be patient; then you might be, but only at times. Live on His Side, availing yourself of His strengthening. Listen! "Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power" -- one might think he was being equipped for some great undertaking, but no -- "unto all patience and longsuffering" -- and that isn't all -- "with joyfulness" (Col 1:11). A double fruitage of the Spirit is ours: His patience, and His joy along with whatever suffering we are called to endure.

"The fruit of the Spirit is kindness"

Why is there so much unkindness, even among Christian people? There is but one explanation. We brush aside the Spirit to be free to indulge the self-life. We get back on Our Side where the flesh holds sway. "Charity (love) suffereth long, and is kind" (1Co 13:4). Kindness follows with longsufferings. In our care to "grieve not the Holy Spirit" we put away the harsh things, such as bitterness, anger, and malice, and make room for kindness: "and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted" (Eph 4:30-32).

If indeed we have not fallen away from grace, the fact that we are in fellowship with Him will evidence itself in a Spirit-bred spirit of kindness, shown even in our speech: "In her tongue is the law of kindness" (Pro 31:26). Spirit of GOD, make us kind.

"The fruit of the Spirit is goodness"

Where shall we go for goodness? Not to ourselves: "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom 7:18). Even Jesus refused to be called good if regarded as a mere man: "Why callest thou Me good? none is good, save one, that is God" (Luk 18:19). Therefore it is said of man, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psa 14:3; Rom 3:12).

How gracious of GOD to find a way to fit Himself into our lives that through a vital process of appropriation His goodness may become ours. This is the work of the Spirit, and this is the blessed result of walking in the Spirit.

"Faith, Meekness, Temperance"

"The fruit of the Spirit is faith."

Whence comes faithfulness? It is an attribute of GOD. GOD is faithful. "Great is Thy faithfulness" (Lam 3:23). Under the New Covenant this Faithful One has found a way of living in us to make His faithfulness a characteristic of His children.

A man says, "I am so undependable; I disappoint myself and my friends." A worthy confession for us all! We can all distrust ourselves. But the HOLY SPIRIT makes a man wholly dependable, in observing engagements with promptness, in keeping promises, in meeting obligations, so that, staying on His Side where He can work, we display His faithfulness in us, to the praise of the glory of His grace.

This threefold grouping relates the fruit of the Spirit, generally speaking, to life's threefold responsibility: to one's self, to one's neighbor, to one's GOD, thus -- Inward Graces (selfward) -- love, joy, peace. Outward Graces (neighborward) -- longsuffering, kindness, goodness, and Upward Graces (Godward) -- faith, meekness, self-control."

"The fruit of the Spirit is meekness."

Meekness is the spirit of humility. Of Himself our Lord says, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (Mat 11:29). Paul beseeches the proud Corinthians "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2Co 10:1). Our Lord's earthly life was one long refusal of pride and self-seeking, climaxing in the voluntary self-abasement of the upper room and the cross. GOD seeks humility in His children; it is the cornerstone of Christian character. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas 4:6).

Man is naturally proud. Pride is in his nature. Turning to Jas 4:5 we find the Spirit "lusteth" against the proud in His desire to make man humble. Left to himself, to self-effort on Our Side of the cross, the self-effort will continually crop out in native pride. When we live on His side the Spirit graciously takes all this native tendency in hand and produces a humble meekness that displaces pride.

"The fruit of the Spirit is temperance."

Whence comes self-control? Surely, we think, this is something I must do for myself. But, no; this, too, is the Spirit's business. "I" would fail, so He has taken over even this. The Greek word has a prefix, "en", in. It means to be controlled by an inward strength, an inward mastery. It is an in-control, in the realm of the spirit, where the Spirit does His work. Instead of imposing restraining habits upon the self-life, it invades the very citadel of the self-life. It deals with self's desires.

One confesses sadly, "I don't know why I act this way; I just lost control of myself." Fine confession! You are on the wrong side of the cross. Get over onto His Side and the Spirit will operate on your self-life that causes this lack of control; He will take you in hand. Spirit-controlled, you will be genuinely, inwardly self-controlled.

Not in the Realm of Law

"Against such there is no law" (Gal 5:23). What law would you suggest as needful to regulate any one of these qualities? There is none needed. The HOLY SPIRIT has lifted us out of the realm of law and become Himself the law, the ruling principle of life. He has put Himself in control. For the letter of law kills and cramps, but the spirit of freedom in CHRIST gives life -- and keeps on giving.

What is more, this work of the Spirit is based upon the perfect work of the cross in slaying the old self-life: "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal 5:24). What a portrait of a Christian! In His crucifixion for me CHRIST included my flesh-life -- not merely the sins but the sin principle. This is true of every believer. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with" CHRIST (Rom 6:6). Insert the word "jointly" to get the full force of the Greek. Our old self-life was on the cross with CHRIST, jointly dealt with in His death to sin. To His cross He took my temper, my passions, my tendency to evil. Thus CHRIST accomplished a victory for me over every moving, every prompting of my flesh-life.

This is simply wonderful. But if I say on Our Side of the cross the flesh still lives and appeals. Failing to enter into His victory I must do the best the "I" can. But life on His Side of the cross is totally different. Here the Spirit is constantly checking out for me the values of this accomplished victory of self-crucifixion. I'm not doing it; He is doing it. My responsibility, since I "live in the Spirit," is to "also walk in the Spirit" (Gal 5:25). If I give expression to Him momentarily He will momentarily see to it that I do not "fulfill the lust of the flesh." CHRIST's victory for me is now the Spirit's victory in me.

SPIRIT VERSUS FLESH - Gal 5:16

THE EVIDENCE OF SALVATION

Salvation is a three-tense experience: in the past, from the penalty of sin; in the future, from the very presence of sin; for the present it is salvation from the power of sin. I am presently saved by the activity of the Spirit from the activities of the flesh. But -- am I? Do I have the evidence?

To aid us in determining this let us do a bit of visualization of what happens on either side of the cross:

OUR SIDE - The Flesh Side

Immorality

Murder

Drunkenness

Anger

Envy

Strife

HIS SIDE - The Spirit Side

Love

Joy

Peace

Goodness

Faith

Temperance

This is merely a representative listing of the activities of the flesh: the first three -- we utterly condemn these; the second three -- these we mildly condone.

One says, "I am so thankful I am saved from immorality and drunkenness." Why, my friend, your flesh never expressed itself in these channels; the HOLY SPIRIT had not need to busy Himself saving you from them. But your flesh did sow itself in fits of anger, or a bit of jealousy, or a strain of quarrelsomeness that made you "hard to get along with." It is from these the Spirit seeks to save you.

To illustrate: Here is a man given to drink; in his unsaved state his flesh craves it. Tired of it all he enters a mission, accepts CHRIST, and is saved. He says he is. Two weeks later you see him and he is in a drunken state. Is he saved? "Oh, no," you say, "he wouldn't go on drinking if he were saved."

Before you were saved your flesh indulged in a show of anger or perchance, jealousy. And now -- how many years is it? -- Your flesh allows the same indulgence. Are you saved? Where is the evidence?

You fully expect the Spirit to take from the drunkard the very desire for drink; he is no longer a slave to it, but is freed from its power. Why does He not do the same for you? Why do you consider yourself saved when you remain under the power of your former flesh-habits?

Dear friend, discouraged with your self-life, come over to His Side of the cross, to the grace side, where there is abundant grace to cope with all our sin, where the Spirit delights to take our case in hand and set us free, where we are presently and evidently saved.

Once when teaching Galatians in a city of the South, using a blackboard for illustration, the pastor's wife brought their three-year-old boy every morning. Somehow he took in the teaching, His Side versus Our Side of the Cross. Some days after the meetings had closed little Stevie was behaving badly. His mother reproved him, saying, "Stevie, what is wrong with you this morning, that you are acting so badly?" Stevie reflected for a moment, then he said, "Well, I got on the wrong side of the cross."

Friend, that's it! That explains every failure, a failing to "abide" in CHRIST and draw upon His resources. Confess it as frankly -- "On the wrong side of the cross."

03.14. SOWING AND REAPING - Gal_6:7-8

SOWING AND REAPING - Gal 6:7-8

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." -- Gal 6:7-8.

The antithesis between the flesh and the Spirit is now carried to its practical conclusion. "None of us liveth to himself" (Rom 14:7). If I am living to the self-life, to please self, my brother will suffer from it and be robbed by it. If I am living an un-selfed life, un-selfed by the Spirit, my brother will have occasion to rejoice and be benefited by it.

Sowing to the Spirit

Our social contacts, especially among brethren of the faith, are a test as to whether we are living in the Spirit; they are also an opportunity for the Spirit to express Himself through us. Three illustrations are before us:

1 -- Considerateness for a brothers "faults" (Gal 6:1).

The brother is not persistently living in sin; he has been overtaken by it. GOD has made provision for his restoration, by confession: "If we confess ours sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). But are we cooperative with GOD? If we are genuinely "spiritual," this is an opportunity the Spirit is giving us to manifest the fruit of the Spirit -- in a spirit of meekness.

One of the perils of advanced spiritual experience is a spirit of censoriousness. I have seen it time and again. We have accepted a high standard of conduct for ourselves; we think all Christians should measure up to the same standard. If they do not, we sit in judgment upon them. Before we realize it our spirit is harsh; we are not spiritual at all -- in our attitude toward our brother we have practically denied the Spirit.

2 -- The bearing and sharing of burdens (Gal 6:2-5).

Here is the same sort of test applied to our daily contacts. Scripture has a threefold prescription for burdens, covering our obligation to self, neighbor, and GOD.

(1) Everyone must bear his own burden (Gal 6:5). Here the Greek word refers to one's personal, inalienable responsibility which he must not shirk -- such is my responsibility as a father and husband -- this I must "bear."

(2) The burdens caused by shifting circumstances, such as sickness or misfortune (Gal 6:2). Such burdens we are to share.

(3) The Godward aspect of burdens, as occasions for experiencing His sustaining and strengthening (Psa 55:22). "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." The Hebrew seems to say, "What GOD has given you, roll back upon Him"; thus the burden becomes a bond between you and your Lord for trusting Him and experiencing Him in a new way.

In each instance the burden is meant to be a blessing. Especially is this true of our brother's burdening need; it draws out our love and sympathy. Thus the fruit of the Spirit finds expression and grows thereby.

3 -- Fellowship in giving and receiving (Gal 6:6).

Christian people should enjoy a free exchange of values among themselves. The word for "communicate" is a beautiful word, meaning to share, to have things in common. The preeminent opportunity for this exchange, by way of sowing to the Spirit, is between those who are taught the Word of GOD and him who teaches. The latter gives the values he has -- a knowledge of the Word; the former acknowledge the value received by communicating to him "in all good things." Paul commends the Philippians for this fellowship with him "concerning giving and receiving" (Php 4:15). Thus giving becomes a "grace," an expression of the Spirit (2Co 8:7).

GOD has provided for the support of the gospel in this manner, on a basis of exchange, just as I buy a pair of shoes. I ask the merchant, "How much are they?" "Ten dollars." [1940] He prefers my ten dollars to the shoes; I prefer the shoes to the ten dollars. We exchange, and are both happy over it. Christian people grow in grace when they recognize this principle of giving and receiving as essential to spiritual practicalities.

These are but illustrations of the many and various channels the believer is to find for sowing to the Spirit.

As We Sow We Reap

Sowing and reaping are linked together by the inexorable law of kind. From the beginning this law has been in the constitution of things -- "after his kind" (Gen 1:1-31 - nine times). In the physical realm the farmer respects the law; he sows his seed, expecting to reap in kind. In the spiritual realm, men think to beat the law; they sow to the flesh, hoping to reap in the Spirit. It can't be done. And some even hope for a spiritual reaping from no sowing whatsoever. How very foolish!

Likewise, the harvest embodies the law of increase. We sow our seed, confident of a larger return -- "some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred" (Mark 4:20). While encouraging the sowing to the Spirit, this law solemnly warns against sowing to the flesh. "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind" (Hos 8:7). "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren." (Jas 1:15-16).

The other day I witnessed a suicide. A man, given to drinking, had attached a hose to the exhaust of his automobile, feeding the monoxide fumes into the car and into his lungs. I arrived as the police and ambulance men were giving up their efforts to resuscitate him. The family were moaning, "O, Dad, why did you do it?" Why? Sin had brought forth death.

And the son, a big, burly fellow, bent over the body, cursing GOD. I pleaded with him, but to no avail. He, too, was reaping from the sowing of a godless life. Just one sad case of reaping among

the thousands, millions.

Thank GOD for the privilege of living on His Side. We who live in the Spirit, let us sow, and sow, and keep on sowing to the Spirit. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal 6:9). Let us give fullest expression to the fact that we are on His Side by seizing every opportunity to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal 6:10).

03.15. "I" CRUCIFIED VERSUS THE WORLD - Gal_6:14-15

"I" CRUCIFIED VERSUS THE WORLD - Gal 6:14-15

This topic considers the biblical question of separation.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." (Gal 6:14-15)

GOD's one way of defeating the world is to crucify it, and with it the "I" to whom the world makes its appeal.

As the flesh was crucified jointly with CHRIST, so likewise the world that works hand in glove with the flesh for my undoing. GOD's great antithesis is carrying through to care for every point of practical difficulty. I and the world must be separated; so I and the world are set on opposite and opposing sides. If I am on His Side I am not on the world's side. If I am on the world's side, giving my allegiance to the world, I am no longer on His Side; I have denied the cross and the CHRIST by which and by whom -- both translations are equally permissible -- the separation was effected. I am back on Our Side; there is no middle ground.

What Is the World?

GOD ought to know. He has faced its opposition for millenniums and seen it bring its subtle methods to a high degree of efficiency in our day.

The world is a part of a closely coordinated triumvirate of evil: the world, the flesh, the devil. They appear as partners in man's undoing: in the temptation to fall away from GOD into sin (Gen 3:6); in man's present fallen state (Eph 2:2-3); in drawing the Christian back into the world (1Jn 2:15-17). The same appear in our Lord's temptation (Mat 4:1-11).

They are inseparable; they work together; they have identical aims.

The world -- from the Greek kosmos, or world-system -- may be defined, in its bad, ethical sense, as the order or arrangement "under which Satan has organized the world of unbelieving mankind upon his cosmic principles of force, greed, selfishness, ambition, and pleasure" (C.I. Scofield).

The world offers man everything he could wish; everything to satisfy his intellectual, physical, social, esthetic, and passionate craving; everything to keep him content in his present condition -- everything but GOD. "For all that is in the world" -- designed to appeal to "the lust of the flesh," to "the lust of the eyes" as they look upon the things of the world and crave them, to "the pride of life" Satan-injected into man's veins -- "is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1Jn 2:16).

Friends, search the Scriptures, with a good concordance or a chain reference Bible, for what GOD has to say about the world. He knows; you should know it as He knows it.

Delivered from the World

CHRIST came all the way from glory to deliver us. It cost Him His life to accomplish this deliverance: "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal 1:4), and in achieving such deliverance He was carrying out "the will of God and our Father."

CHRIST's life was itself one long triumph over the world, signaled by His words at its close: "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Its selfishness and greed -- He had refused it all. Its hatred, slander, and persecution -- He had met it all with divine patience, meekness and gentleness (2Co 10:1).

The world gave Him a cross -- that also He endured, "despising the shame" (Heb 12:2). His death -- was it a defeat or a triumph? He died thus, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb 2:14-15). Hear the cry of the victor, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31).

Delivered from the world, its fears and their final outcome, death; from the world's god, the pride, ambition and selfishness he implants in his devotees. Then -- to think of it is grief of heart -- some Christian people persist in living world-ly lives, persist in being known for their world-liness. How can they? Only through ignorance, we trust. Only by getting "off side." They have necessarily left His Side and gone back to the bondage of Our Side.

The Principle of Separation

Running all the way through Holy Writ is an urgent, underlying principle -- that of separation. So long as GOD allows evil in the world He must adhere to this principle of separation from it. Considered historically:

Among the antediluvians the line of Seth was GOD's people. When they disregarded this principle of separation and intermarried with the descendants of Cain, evil multiplied and gave occasion for the judgment of the flood.

GOD began anew with Abraham, saying, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee" (Gen 12:1). He obeyed, with one exception -- Lot. Gen 13:1-18 is an exposition of the principle of separation: "Separate thyself"; "and they separated themselves the one from the other" (Gen 13:9; Gen 13:11). Then GOD was free to pronounce abundant blessing upon Abraham, "after that Lot was separated from him" (read please, Gen 13:14-17). And now comes the experience of restored fellowship (Gen 13:18), and by contrast the dismal failure of worldly Lot (Gen 14:1-24, Gen 18:1-33, Gen 19:1-38). And, remember, we are the spiritual children of Abraham (Gal 3:7; Gal 3:29).

The history of Abraham's descendants, the children of Israel, is the same. In Egypt, type of the world, they were in bondage. When delivered from Egypt and led into the promised land, they were called to separate themselves from the inhabitants of Canaan, as "a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people ... an holy nation" (Exo 19:5-6). So Solomon prayed, "For Thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be Thine inheritance" (1Ki 8:53).

(Read and study also Deu 32:8-9; then the sadness of the "but," Deu 32:15, when this separation is forsaken).

The ups and downs of Israel through Joshua, the Judges, and the Kings, is wholly a matter of separation observed or separation forsaken. The latter prevailed; GOD had but one course, the major operation of separating them from their land and all it meant to them, into the bondage of Babylon. Read please -- do read it -- this sad harvest from the sin of non-separation, 2Ch 36:15-21.

Considered prophetically:

Spiritually the present state of the world is a mixed field of wheat and tares: "Let both grow together until the harvest," but the harvest is the appointed time of separation into different lots and destinies (Mat 13:30). While all are to be raised from the dead, there will be two kinds of resurrection (John 5:28-29). Yes, and two times of resurrection; so that "they that are Christ's," as distinct from those who are not, are to be raised at His coming from among the dead (see 1Co 15:23). The wicked dead are left for their appointed lot and judgment.

Considered presently:

Present living should conform to future prospect. Separation will obtain then, why not now? It should, and must, if we would keep "on side."

Read with bowed heart our Lord's prayer for His own (John 17:1-26). Some sixteen times He uses the word "world"; seven times He refers to His own as "given" to Him by the Father (how precious is a gift!). By such expressions as these He forever separates us, His gifts, from the world: "The men which Thou gavest Me out of the world" (John 17:6); "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou has given Me, for they are Thine" (John 17:9); "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14).

The Power of Separation

What is to bring about a life of separation? If I am expected to live this way, must it be by self-will and determination?

Then I would be in constant danger of giving way to the world's appeals. No; it's the cross! The cross "by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." There it stands, the cross, between me and the world that formerly claimed me. Something has happened to me; and something has happened to the world. The bond of responsiveness has been broken. The world had me by the eyes, ears and nose: I used to see, hear and smell all of its allurements; it had me at its beck and call. Now that "I" has died -- died with CHRIST, a new "I" -- risen with Him -- has been endowed with a new sense of seeing, hearing, and smelling, so that I recognize and appreciate spiritual values not found in the world's offerings. I find my life on a higher plane; I move in a different sphere. Crucifixion broke my bondage to the world; the resurrection that followed gave me a life of liberty.

But more. It is "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Its power to separate is not impersonal; rather, it's the power of a person. That Person lives today to make His cross operative; He lives in me. I was crucified to the world and raised to live a new life; CHRIST was crucified and raised to live His

new life in me. The result: I am separated from the world, and separated to CHRIST. My life has a new center, a new set of desires, an entirely new outlook.

Considered typically, Separation has this twofold aspect as taught through the Tabernacle: the linen curtain of the court separates from the world outside, while the house line separates the believer to Father, Son and Spirit living within.

Every Christian should have a testimony ringing with the reality of this experience. I am glad to give my testimony in the words of a man referred to by Dr. Ironside. He had been in deep sin. After his conversion one of his friends in sin said to him, "Bill, I pity you -- a man that has been such a high-flyer as you. And now you have settled down, you go to church, or stay at home and read the Bible and pray; you never have good times any more."

"But Bob," said the saved man, "you don't understand. I get drunk every time I want to. I go to the theatre every time I want to. I go to the dance when I want to. I play cards and gamble whenever I want to."

"I say," said Bob, "I don't understand it that way. I thought you had to give up these things to be a Christian."

"No, Bob," said his friend, "the Lord took the 'want to' out when He saved my soul, and He made me a new creature in CHRIST JESUS. I simply don't 'want to' do those things anymore."

In a real sense the Christian isn't giving up any thing. He is giving himself up to CHRIST. Then CHRIST takes care of the rest.

The Peril of Non-Separation

The above facts make perfectly evident to us all the true nature of the Christian life, as over against any other life, and the true purpose of CHRIST in establishing the New Covenant and in bringing us into it. That life is not just a good life; that purpose is not to make good people, with varying degrees of goodness as they may elect to live the life; rather, it is to have a PECULIAR people, peculiar to Himself, peculiarly His own, now and eternally.

(Our English word, 'peculiar,' when rightly understood, is full of meaning, and none more appropriate could be chosen. As Webster's Dictionary tells us, 'peculiar is from the Roman "peculium" which was a thing emphatically and distinctively one's own, and hence was dear'. A single word sometimes contains a sermon. And what a sermon we have here! To be a peculiar people is not to be an odd people. Still less to be a people noted for ungraciousness or rudeness. It is to be 'emphatically and distinctively' the Lord's own people, and therefore to be very specially dear to Him" [Tom Olson in Now]. Could there be any finer description of our bridal relationship?)

That peculiar, intimate relationship of endearment -- we giving ourselves to Him; He giving Himself to us -- is nothing short of a marriage union. It was to this end that He took us with Him through crucifixion, through death to every bond that previously obligated us -- to the law, yes, and to the world -- that we might be free, as a new creature, to be "married to Another," even to the risen, glorious CHRIST (Rom 7:4).

Thus GOD sees every child of His joined to His Son in a sacred, indissoluble union. He has brought us to His Side as a bride. We are joined in a life-union to the most beautiful, wonderful person in the universe. The HOLY SPIRIT is busily engaged in making us over into His likeness -- the fruit of the Spirit. To leave His Side, to go back to Our Side, to the reviving of the flesh and its cravings for the world -- what is it but gross infidelity! It is consorting with His enemy! It is adultery!

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (Jas 4:4)

This is exceptionally strong language; it couldn't be stronger. And GOD means it! GOD sent His Son to deliver us from the world. He sent His Spirit to bring us into a vital marital union with His Son. He holds us precious to Himself in these bonds. Then we deliberately turn our back on the entire set-up, playing fast and loose with the world? He counts it infidelity -- adultery in the spirit.

Where are we? We are hopelessly back on Our Side. Allowing our flesh to draw us into friendship with the world, we have not merely broken fellowship with Him; we have made ourselves His enemy. Worldly Christian, GOD means it; you had best believe it.

An adulteress! What an ugly word. But the sin is far more ugly. If adultery of the flesh is offensive, how much more adultery of the spirit! While the one is grieving to the Spirit in His lust against it, the other is a grief to the Father, the Son and the Spirit. It is an abomination in His sight.

Dear reader, thinking yourself free to be a so-called worldly Christian, consider what you are doing. The world is GOD's enemy. It put CHRIST on the cross. It would do it again. You are friendly with it and its ways. What can GOD do but count you on the other side? He says you have made yourself His enemy. There is no middle ground. You are sadly "off side."

Won't you turn again to CHRIST, to live in Him, to let His love constrain you to a life of utter devotedness to Him?

Oh, the joy of full salvation!

Oh, the peace of love divine!

Oh, the bliss of consecration!

I am His, and He is mine.

-- Rebecca S. Pollard

When I survey the wondrous cross

On which the Prince of glory died,

My richest gain I count but loss,

And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,

Save in the death of CHRIST, my GOD;

All the vain things that charm my most,

I sacrifice them to His blood.
See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?
Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.
-- Isaac Watts

03.16. POSSESSORS VERSUS PROFESSORS - Gal_6:17

POSSESSORS VERSUS PROFESSORS - Gal 6:17

Possessors versus Professors

"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" -- Gal 6:17

The word "marks" carries the sense of "brands," referring to the branding of slaves with the marks of ownership. Thus the slave was bound to his master. Paul sees himself bound to the Lord JESUS CHRIST by marks upon his body incurred in His service. One should read the listing in 2Co 11:23-33. These are the marks that count, as against the superficial markings of circumcision which Paul is combating as being of no avail. Back of these markings of Paul is the real, divinely administered circumcision -- that of the heart.

In this final antithesis the distinctive marks of a genuine Christian are set over against the superficial tests by which a man may readily be rated as a Christian when he is not.

Thinking of the Christian life as a matter of conduct we are judging by appearance. The danger of being deceived is well illustrated by our Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares. In the orient tares, or darnel, are a growth so fully simulating the wheat that only an expert can detect the difference, especially in the earlier states. So, if we think of the Christian as one who does something, such as going to church, reading the Bible, giving generously, we are apt to be fooled by mere appearances -- just an imitation, an attempt to be like the genuine.

In the series of antitheses making up the message of Galatians the distinctive marks of a Christian are brought to light.

They define the real Christian in unmistakable terms; they distinguish him from among his fellows. They set him on GOD's side.

1 -- His Birth

The man Christian is of royal birth. Others are born once -- into the human family; he is born a second time -- into the divine family. This is one of Jesus' MUSTS. Responding to it Christian is "a new creature" (Gal 6:15). "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:26). A Christian CAN behave differently because he IS different. Let us note the antithetical "but" placed between these two births: one is of the flesh; the other is of the Spirit.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12-13)

This is the initial distinguishing mark, short of which nothing counts. The chief, vital consideration is Life -- divine life, His life.

Could men but see this they would not continue to confuse the Christian faith with mere religion and religious obligation. I am reminded of a friend's experience in seeking to lead a man into the Christian life. He was well dressed and intelligent. My friend explained what it means to receive CHRIST as one's Saviour, but just when he thought he was succeeding the man revealed his utter lack of comprehension. He said, "Mister, I want to tell you: I have a wife and nine children, and I can't take on any more responsibility."

Responsibility! when the Christian faith bestows Life -- life that alone enables one to meet his already existing responsibilities.

And how do we receive life? Work for it? Never. The only way we know is to be born with it. As we were born into the human family, just so must we be born into the divine family, "born of God," without effort on our part.

Nowhere in all Scripture do we see so clearly and convincingly as in this antithetical message of Galatians the absolute need of an imparted life -- imparted by saving faith in JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

2 -- His Standing With GOD

Christian is "justified by faith" (Gal 3:24), which means that he is cleared from all charges against him as a sinner. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" (Rom 8:33-34). No one! because GOD justifies by setting His own righteousness to our account, and that righteousness is perfect. There is no flaw in it. Every Christian has that standing with GOD. Yours is as good as mine; mine is as good as yours -- it is GOD's own righteousness.

The difference between Christian and all his fellows is then tremendous, eternity-wide. Others have no standing with GOD (other than to be condemned); Christian has a standing that is absolutely perfect.

That such an incalculable benefit -- passing from a position of no standing to one of perfect standing -- should be a bestowment of sheer grace on the part of the bestower, with nothing of merit or desert on the part of the recipient -- this is so "too good to be true," so far beyond human comprehension, it is Good News indeed. To convince man that there is no other way into GOD's favor and to make this point stick like a barbed arrow in man's consciousness -- to do this one thing -- Galatians was written, that by a long series of antitheses, one by one man's false hopes of doing something to right himself with GOD might be torn from his breast.

Man is made to understand that the only basis of favor with GOD is "the righteousness which GOD's righteousness requires Him to require" -- a righteousness found nowhere in the sons of Adam but only in His own flawless life in flesh and blood, that we -- marvelous proposal -- "might become the righteousness of GOD in Him."

3 -- His Start In Life

Christian has his one great problem solved at the very outset -- it is himself, the handicap of a sinful bent received through his Adam inheritance. That sinful "I" was crucified with CHRIST (Gal 2:20). His promptings to sin -- the lust of the flesh -- CHRIST included in His cross achievement

(Gal 5:24). With these handicaps removed, forces that defeat the thousands of his fellows, Christian can face life with absolute assurance of succeeding.

Man usually learns the hard way -- by experience. He's so confident he can overcome his old self-life, until repeated failure teaches otherwise. In my most recent ministry a fine young woman, graduate of a Bible training school, came to me confessing defeat. What was it? A woefully ungoverned temper. That girl is on top today in the blessed knowledge that CHRIST included her temper -- yes, the temper to her uncontrollable -- in His cross, a victory ministered to her momentarily by the HOLY SPIRIT indwelling her for that purpose. Living on His side of the cross, the word "Done" covers all our need.

4 -- His Resources

Christian has infinite resources for life's living. They are supernatural -- the inliving CHRIST (Gal 2:20) and the indwelling Spirit (Gal 4:6). This inner presence is for a purpose. Not only is his natural disability cared for in self-crucifixion; this is but to make possible the moving in of a divine resident. CHRIST lives in him -- He said He would (Rev 3:20), and He does.

The Spirit has a program of rehabilitation that is unsurpassed. Christian has resources that no one in this world can imitate; they distinguish him from all his fellows. No one can have the Spirit of GOD but by faith in the Son of GOD. This supernatural resource is of immense practical value for daily living. Christian is never let down. CHRIST is always reassuring him: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2Co 12:9). Difficult days come, but He whispers, "Lo, I am with you alway" (Mat 28:20).

"The work that we count hard to do,

He makes easy, for He works too.

The days that we find long to live

Are His -- a bit of His bright eternity,

And close to our need His helping is."

Christian, instead of trying to "get by" on his own self-effort, has as his major responsibility the demonstration, every moment of every day, that these divine resources now his are utterly and unquestionably sufficient. The fact of these resources -- GOD inliving this bit of humanity -- is staggering. Christian is here to prove its practicality at every turn of the road. "The power that worketh in" you does indeed what no other power can do.

5 -- His Position Among Men

Christian is a free man, where others are bound. He has been delivered. Men are enslaved, an enslavement that has wide ramifications. Within are the workings of the flesh, its passions and appetites; without are the fears and forebodings common to men. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). This Christ-bought, Spirit-wrought freedom is the birthright of the believer. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal 5:1). Christian is a free man, gloriously free.

As I write a friend, returning from abroad, tells me the most impressive feature of life in Europe today is fear, written upon the face and showing even in the walk. In such a world as ours Christian is called to demonstrate that he is freed from fear and every other force that enslaves the sons of men. In this Christian need not, must not fail, for he has chosen sides with One who says, Fear not, "but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

6 -- His Supreme Occupation

Christian has one supreme aim in life, to reproduce CHRIST. To that end CHRIST is formed anew within him (Gal 4:19). To that end the Spirit busies Himself bringing forth the Christ-flavored fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). Christian yields his body and all his powers that through him CHRIST may live again on earth and men may see CHRIST in the distinctive traits of Christian character. Christian is not occupied with showing people how good he is, calling attention to himself and his attainments. CHRIST lives in him; therefore he so lives that men may recognize the Christ-likeness in him.

If ever there was a challenge, this is it: to turn over one's body to the HOLY SPIRIT, placing all of its powers at His disposal for the realization of His declared purpose to bring out in our lives those traits of character that best reveal CHRIST's indwelling presence. To be thus occupied co-operatively with the Spirit is a life-time undertaking.

To my mind the highest conception of a Christian life, the distinctive purpose it serves on the earth, is found in the statement that "we" -- ordinary Christian people who have come over onto His side to let Him live in us -- that "we are... a sweet savour of Christ" -- to whom? -- "unto God."

7 -- His Relationship

Christian "belongs" -- he belongs to CHRIST in an indissoluble union. Others have relationships that are entanglements.

Christian belongs to CHRIST so supremely, even as a bride to her bridegroom, that other associations take a secondary place or cease completely. This is life, some One, the most wonderful in all the universe, to live for. "To me to live is Christ" (Php 1:21). Christian has found Life!

But more. The water of life has turned to the wine of love. When we received CHRIST into our lives we received a great lover, the Lover of our souls. To respond to His love, to live out day by day this lover relationship -- this is the elixir of life.

Dear reader, do not be content without these distinguishing marks being yours. When you stand at last in the glorious presence of our blessed Lord Jesus and He shows you the marks of His redeeming work upon the cross, the nail prints and the pierced side, you will be ashamed of the superficial marks of mere conduct or character to claim a place at His Side. May you have the genuine marks of the redeemed by which to take your place and feel at home in your Father's house.

Practical Suggestions for Realization

Christian, knowing he is called into a life characterized by this seven-fold portraiture, soon discovers a threefold responsibility on his part. If this life is to be practically realized in his experience, he must give full and continuous cooperation: in the realm of self-crucifixion; the realm of world-crucifixion; in the realm of Christ-likeness.

1 -- Repudiate every prompting of the self life. Recognize the source of any such thought, feeling or action, that it is not of the Spirit but of the flesh. Then, immediately, instantly, repudiate it. Do not argue with it, do not try to resist it. Put it out of your life at once. The failure is not in the flash of feeling; it is allowing one's self to "entertain" it. Soon such thoughts, such feelings, such purposings will leave, hardly to return. Of his own experience Paul testifies, "I die daily" (1Co 15:31). Every Christian, wishing to prove his death with CHRIST a practical reality, will discover this daily necessity.

2 -- Refuse every claim of the world. The world has many artful ways of seducing the beloved of the Lord. Christian must recognize them as of the world and as aimed at breaking the bond of love and devotion between him and his Lord.

The more quickly and decisively we refuse every claim of the world upon us, the sooner will we build a barrage of protection against it. We establish our position on His Side of the cross. The world ceases to invite us; the world ceases to expect us. We are becoming free!

3 -- Keep a clear channel between yourself and CHRIST. Let likeness to CHRIST be your one aim in life; nothing of self-interest or pre-occupation can be allowed ever to side-track you. Such likeness comes only by close, constant association. Ours is a life of fellowship with CHRIST (1Jn 1:3). Should sin break the fellowship, confess it at once (1Jn 1:9) and the channel will be cleared.

Exalt CHRIST every day in every way. Never deny Him. Think CHRIST. Talk CHRIST. Be able to say, "I have allowed no cloud between me and my Lord. To me to live is CHRIST!"

Friend of mine, on which side are you:

Our Side? His Side?

04.00.1. LIFE, LOVE and LIGHT

LIFE, LOVE and LIGHT The Gospel of John and First Epistle of John By Norman B. Harrison, D.D.

Pastor, Bible Teacher and Evangelist

Author of "His Salvation as Set Forth in the Book of Romans," "His in a Life of Prayer,"

"His in Joyous Experience," "His Sure Return," "His Indwelling," "His Side Versus Our Side"

***** The Life that Abides and Abounds *****

04.00.2. Preface to the eSword Edition

Preface to the e-Sword Edition When I first discovered the amazing power of e-Sword, I was connected to the internet with a 56k fax modem. My enthusiasm for the program and its plethora of resources motivated me to stay up all night downloading its riches. I spent the next several days exploring the amazing variety of study material. As a busy pastor, I've tried to assemble a classic research library. As a busy pastor of a small church, I've tried to inexpensively assemble a classic research library. E-Sword immediately added many valuable assets that I hadn't yet purchased; and those resources that e-Sword duplicated were much easier and faster to use than the paper versions.

Since that wonderful first week, I've discovered many more treasures through Google searches. Then one day I realized that I owed a debt. I made a contribution to Rick Meyers (Rick - you are the modern day Gutenberg; should the Lord not return in the near future like I believe He will, you will do for Bible study the next 100 years what Gutenberg did in the 1500's), and then started looking for public domain resources to convert to .topx files. And so my personal journey has come full circle: from the excitement of discovering e-Sword to the excitement of creating .topx files for others. Like Rick quotes from Mat 10:8, "freely ye have received, freely give."

Thank you, Dear Family, for understanding my debt and graciously tolerating my near compulsive computer use for hours on end. My thanks to the creator of e-Sword, Rick Meyers - www.e-sword.net. Thank you, Norman Harrison, for converting your studies into eternal print. A very special thanks goes out to Brother Virgil Butts. He is the man who painstakingly typed out this manuscript. This text - and many other excellent reference works - is available at his website www.baptistbiblebelievers.com. Visit him often! I would also be remiss to neglect to mention Mr. Jason Briggs, Mr. Ed Sandlin, & Mrs. Pamela Marshall, who have so enriched my own ministry. And of course most of all, thank You Lord Jesus for saving my soul for all eternity. This Edition

There have been no changes made to Brother Virgil's manuscript of Harrison's work, except for the following:

Scripture references have been converted to Scripture hyperlinks using the "Format Scripture ToolTip."

A few obvious Scripture reference errors have been corrected, as well as some obvious spelling errors.

The copy and paste process may have unfortunately removed some of the italicized print. While the words have not been changed, some of Harrison's emphasis may be missing. It is with regret that I have not taken the time to correct this. The sense is still accurate. [By the way - would you understand this paragraph without italics? Of course!] Also, the italicizing of the foreign words have been lost. It is my hope that the reader will be able to follow the flow regardless of these flaws. They - the flaws - are mine, not Harrison's.

I am quite sure my edition of Harrison's work is rather imperfect. I pray that, nonetheless, it will be productively useful in the study of God's Word.

Finally

If you haven't joined the e-Sword Users group, visit www.e-sword-users.org and check it out. This is a free group, with lots of third-party resources (like this one!) and help from other e-Sword users. May the Lord bless you as study His word.

Dr. David Thomason

Florida, 2010

04.00.3. Copyright Information

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04.00.4. Dedication

Dedication

DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED COMPANION IN LIFE WITH AFFECTIONATE APPRECIATION OF THE YEARS OF DEVOTION AND UNFAILING SYMPATHY IN THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL

04.00.5. Outline/Table of Contents

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04.01. THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

PART ONE THE GOSPEL OF JOHN THE MANIFESTATION OF LIFE, LOVE AND LIGHT

CHAPTER ONE THE GOSPEL OF LIFE "I came that they may have life" (John 10:10) The Gospel of Life would be a very fitting title for our fourth Gospel; thirty-five times the word recurs, and the thought is everywhere present, even to the saturation point; yet it is likewise the Gospel of Love and of Light. The three, in fact, are inseparable. This is so for the simple reason that they have to do with the being, nature and activity of GOD Himself, and GOD is inseparably one. The Trinity is a mystery; so also are many things within the realm of human observation and experience.

Man himself is such a mystery. Of a threefold makeup, body, soul and spirit, no thought, word or act can find expression in the sphere of one without savoring of the other two; he is a three in one and one in three.

Take electricity, for illustration. We have it and make daily practical use of it. Yet we are compelled to confess that we know not what it is. It mystifies the men who "handle" it most. However, this is evident to all: electricity manifests itself as (1) energy, (2) heat, (3) light. When our appliances seek for power, to turn the wheels of industry, they minimize the light and heat; for heat, to cook our food or fire our furnaces, they minimize the energy and light; for light, to illumine our homes and streets, they minimize the energy and heat. Yet in either one of the three the other two are present. It is impossible to have one without the others; they are inseparable. So our Lord JESUS CHRIST came, He the Son, manifesting also the Father and the Spirit. His is a threeperson ministry. His Gospel is Life, plus Love, plus Light.

I The Value of Life

Life is the most valuable possession we have. Nay, it is more than a possession; it is our very self. Personality apart from life is in the very nature of things impossible. Existence hinges upon life. The dog ceases to be when life ceases. It was, but no longer is. Hence, if the life of man does not persist through death, then we ourselves cease to exist. And for this present - what will a man give in exchange for his life? Pawn what he is for what he may have? To do so is to give up his very power to have. When he barter away his life and breathes his last he leaves it all, be it ten dollars or ten million. Life is the key to everything we are and have; it is our priceless possession; it is our very all.

II The Nature of Life

What is Life? We do not know. With all our knowledge and research it remains a mystery. We experience it, but we cannot produce it or explain it. Why? Is it because GOD has the secret locked up within Himself? Doubtless. When we see Him we will know life - know it in all its secrets and in all its fullness.

JESUS had much to say about life and being.

He spoke of Himself as the self-existent One, the "I Am," the One who exists independent of source, circumstance or sense of time. (GOD is the only being of whom this is true.) Then He gives a definition of life, life as man needs it. "This is life" - life eternal, unconditioned by time, such life as GOD's is - to "know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). From this we get the thought that life is something dependent upon relation to that which imparts and sustains it.

- The electric lamp, for example, finds its life in relation to the power-house.
- The tree finds its life in relation to the soil and sunshine; the branches, in a continuous relation to the parent stem from which their very life and sustenance are drawn.
- The physical man finds his life in appropriating relation to food and air containing the elements essential to his existence.

Then - how can we miss it? - the spiritual man finds his life in a like relationship.

All this takes us one step further back to

III The Source of Life

Let us now read John 1:1-4. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." (Then man must trace his being back to Him, for, as we go on to read,) "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." Our Life and our Light!

He it was who purposed that we should be in His likeness, of an order superior to the beasts about us. The one authoritative account of our origin, the only account that explains, reads:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them" (Gen 1:26-27). This it is that makes mankind in general, you and me as individuals, of a different order from the animal; He, the source of our life, "lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). The margin says, "every man as he cometh into the world," as though He had guarded against our being "deficient" by personal, individual attention at the time of our coming into being. Oh, how much we owe to Him! What have we that we did not receive, even to our very life?

IV The Need of Life

Now we are prepared to go deeper. JESUS made it plain that He looked upon men as no longer possessed of the life bestowed in creation.

He declared that this fact, namely, their lack of life, was the whole point and occasion of His coming. "I came that they may have life" (John 10:10).

He reproached their unbelief, saying, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life" (John 5:40).

These and like deliverances from the lips of JESUS make evident that His teaching and redemptive work are based upon the fact that man in his natural state is known to GOD as devoid of spiritual life.

Let us read carefully, fitting ourselves into the picture: "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" (Eph 2:1-5).

Here we have sin's historical inception in Genesis 3 traced to its spiritual sequence of death in all men, plus GOD's gracious meeting of man's need with renewed life from Himself.

Hence His declaration to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7) - born from above, a new accession of life from the Source, even GOD. And now He lays bare the Father's heart: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish" (as we must in our natural, lifeless state), "but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). And John states his purpose in writing: "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John 20:31).

V The Way of Life

Surely the Way of Life has now become plain to our minds and hearts. JESUS is Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6).

Consider now these words of His: "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26). Having "life in Himself," He came, lived, died, rose again, and ascended, that we might have life through Him. Today, triumphant above, He has become "a life-giving Spirit" (1Co 15:45).

All we need is a believing, receiving relationship.

Hence we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). And the simple statement of the far-reaching result is this: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Wonderful! And simply by believing. How very wonderful!

Now go back to the first crucial statement of faith and its effect.

Mark well: "As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). A new start! A new birth! A new life! How? By receiving Him, who has "life in Himself," that He may impart life to us.

VI The Needs of Life But life has its needs, as inanimate things have not. A stick we may leave lying at our door, unheeded for days - we have done it no harm; but a plant demands attention - it

is alive.

Spiritual life has specific needs.

These needs He is prepared to supply.

- He is the Life-Giver;

- He is also the Life-Sustainer. Not merely the "I Am," the self-existent Source of Life, in the abstract; but "I Am - the Bread, the Light, the Giver of Water (the HOLY SPIRIT), the Way, the Door, the Vine to the branches, the Shepherd to the sheep."

What are these? The things absolutely indispensable to life, to its sustenance and guidance.

Consider for a brief moment how essential to life are the things by which JESUS designates Himself.

- Who for a single day goes without bread, life's necessary food?

- Who passes a day without the benefits of light?

- without the refreshing of water, internally and externally?

- without walking a way marked out for the feet?

- without entering a door to the home or shelter to which it admits?

Evidently, then, by such language JESUS is saying to us, "I am your All; apart from Me ye can do nothing; daily, momentarily, draw upon My supplies of Life for your every need." The least that the follower of CHRIST can do, once he has sought and claimed the supreme gift of Eternal Life at His hands, is to meet the conditions for keeping that life vitalized, with its every need met day by day. The care that we see bestowed upon the physical man should shame the careless Christian for his neglect of the spiritual man. To keep the life in a state of fullness, to maintain the life abundant, the simple secret is to "abide" in Him, thereby continuously to draw upon Him.

VI The Many-Sidedness of Life

Life is varied. Men are variously employed. Life comes to have, in consequence, a variety of viewpoints. We look out upon life through the familiar window of our daily occupation and circumstances. We are appealed to by conceptions akin to our daily round.

Now the amazing thing about our Lord JESUS CHRIST is that He fits into everyone's thinking. He is kin to every man in his day by day round of duty. He is so many-sided, each can find his CHRIST in the mould of his own occupational life and day-by-day experience. The following is an expansion of the I AM's of John's Gospel to include other similar designations of Scripture:

To the architect - the Chief Corner Stone (1Pe 2:6) To the artist - the One Altogether Lovely (Song of Solomon 5:16) To the astronomer - the Bright and Morning Star (Rev 22:16) To the baker - the Living Bread (John 6:51) To the banker - the Unsearchable Riches (Eph 3:8) To the biologist - the Life (John 14:6) To the botanist - the Lily of the Valley (Song of Solomon 2:1) To the bride - the Bridegroom (Mat 25:1) To the builder - the Sure Foundation (Isa 28:16) To the carpenter - the Door (John 10:9) To the doctor - the Great Physician (Mat 8:17) To the educator - the Great

Teacher (John 3:2) To the engineer - the New and Living Way (Heb 10:20) To the farmer - the sower (Mat 13:37); the Grain of Wheat (John 12:24); the Lord of Harvest (Mat 9:38) To the florist - the Rose of Sharon (Song of Solomon 2:1) To the geologist - the Rock of Ages (Isa 26:4) -- ("It is more important to know the Rock of Ages than the age of rocks"-Bryan) To the horticulturist - the True Vine (John 15:1) To the jeweler - the Precious Stone (1Pe 2:6) To the jurist - the Righteous Judge (2Ti 4:8) To the juror - the Faithful and True Witness (Rev 3:14) To the king - the King of Kings (Rev 19:16) To the lawyer - the Advocate (1Jn 2:1) To the lover - the Beloved (Song of Solomon 2:16) To the metaphysician - the Alpha and Omega (Rev 22:13) To the news gatherer - the Good Tidings of Great Joy (Luk 2:10) To the philanthropist - the Unspeakable Gift (2Co 9:15) To the philosopher - the Wisdom of GOD (1Co 1:24) To the preacher - the Word of GOD (Rev 19:18) To the ruler - the Prince of the Kings of the Earth (Rev 1:5) To the sailor - the Anchor of the Soul (Heb 6:13) To the sculptor - the Living Stone (1Pe 2:4) To the servant - the Good Master (Eph 6:9) To the shepherd - the Good Shepherd (John 10:11) To the slave - the Redeemer (Gal 3:13) To the soldier - the Captain of Our Salvation (Heb 2:10) To the statesman - the Desire of All Nations (Hag 2:7) To the student - the Truth (John 14:6) To the theologian - the Author and Finisher of Our Faith (Heb 12:2) To the traveller - the Guide (Psa 48:14) To the toiler - the Giver of Rest (Mat 11:28) To the troubled - the Comforter (John 14:18) To the widow - the Husband (Isa 54:5) To the sinner - the Lamb of GOD (John 1:29) To the Christian - the Lord JESUS CHRIST (1Th 1:1)

Many-sided indeed is our CHRIST, commanding the attention of all. Yet our Gospel ever carries us from a mere knowledge about Him, to the need of knowing HIM, teaching us that to know HIM - JESUS CHRIST the sent of GOD - this is life eternal (John 17:3).

Yea, this Gospel was written of purpose "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John 20:31).

Dear reader, do not allow yourself to think that you have no need of this life.

"A friend says to me, 'I have not time or room in my life for Christianity! If it were not so full! You don't know how hard I work from morning till night. When have I time, where have I room for Christianity in such a life as mine?'"

- It is as if the engine had said it had no room for the steam.

- It is as if the tree had said it had no room for the sap.

- It is as if the ocean had said it had no room for the tide.

- It is as if the man had said he had no room for his soul.

- It is as if the life had said it had no time to live, when it is life.

It is not something added to life; it is life. A man is not living without it. And for a man to say, 'I am so full in life that I have no room for life,' you see immediately to what absurdity it reduces itself" (Phillips Brooks). Without CHRIST you have no life. CHRIST came that you might have life. It is yours for the taking.

04.02. THE GOSPEL OF LOVE

THE GOSPEL OF LOVE

CHAPTER TWO "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16) "Having loved His own . . . He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1) John's Gospel is, as we saw in our previous study, the Gospel of Life, of Love, and of Light.

We found that "In Him was life" and that from Him we have received life, first in creation, then in His new creation as we believed upon Him unto eternal life. For the present study we view it as a Gospel of Love.

Love is back of the Life, as the impelling power for its bestowment. Sixty times the word love occurs in John's Gospel. Then, to get the whole panoramic sweep of John's message, all athrob with a marvelous love, we should include a glimpse of his other writings.

He who leaned upon his Lord's bosom, drank deeply of His love, delighted to designate himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved," how wondrously he has written of love.

Here is a taster's sample, from the Apocalypse, the Epistle, the Gospel:

"Unto Him that loveth us" (Rev 1:5).

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1Jn 3:1).

"For the Father loveth the Son" (John 5:20).

"For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me" (John 16:27).

I The Nature of Love No one would think to describe or dissect love. Like the beauty and fragrance of a flower, when you have dissected it, you have spoiled it. It must be taken as it is.

We may say, however, that of the three - Life, Love and Light - Love is the most personal.

It comes nearest to expressing the real person of GOD - "God is love."

It is through love that we apprehend Him most intimately.

Through His Life we live; through His Light we know; through His Love we abide in intimate union with Himself.

Some one has sought to separate love into two constituent elements: desire and delight. Desire broods over us, longs for us, woos us and claims us as its own; but only that, when so claimed, Delight may rejoice in us and lavish upon us its richest treasures. Such is human love at its best. Such preeminently is the love of GOD.

II The Gift of Love In the expression of its desire, love delights to give.

Hence the heart of the Gospel: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." No one has ever fathomed that verse. All we can do is to contemplate its depths, as though looking into the very heart of GOD. For the moment let us think of the one expression - "God so loved . . . that He gave" (John 3:16 a). The one naturally follows the other. It is the one explanation of the Incarnation. GOD loved, so He gave.

What an anomalous thing it is that the people who tamper with the personality of JESUS CHRIST as the Son of GOD talk so loudly and glibly of the Love of GOD. Yet they are denying the one great manifestation of His love, namely, the giving of His Son to be our Saviour - "Born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that are under the law" (Gal 4:4-5).

If the Incarnation is not a stupendous reality, if GOD did not take His very own Son from His eternal glory, and "give" Him as told in the Gospel, then the world is robbed of a priceless possession, and the Gospel is rendered insipid and impotent. But if indeed He did thus give His Son, such perversions of the truth malign the love of the GOD of love.

III The Rescue of Love

Now we see love to the rescue, love in its desire. It yearns over its object. It will not see it perish. It will pay any price for its rescue. Hence, "God so loved, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." The case is well put in Eph 2:1-22. Our estate as perishing ones is described in Eph 2:1-3 -- - dead in trespasses and sins - separated from GOD - children of disobedience and therefore of wrath. But Love comes into the scene and "Charity [love] never faileth." The whole outlook of life is altered with the next glorious statement: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us" (Eph 2:4).

If Love's gift required the Incarnation, the full extent of the gift, going all the way to meet our case and make the rescue, required the Crucifixion. Bethlehem involved Calvary. To rescue us from perishing, He must perish, the Innocent for the guilty. So the High Priest unwittingly prophesied: "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50). To accomplish this purpose Love must give Himself in death. This He did, with the glorious result that we do not need to die.

"Oh, 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love, The love of GOD to me.

It brought my Saviour from above, To die on Calvary."

IV The Bestowment of Love "Should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16 c).

Here is love delighting. "The Father hath given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26). The Son comes and gives up what He has, gives up His life that we may have it, the life that is eternal. It is Love's supreme bestowment. It could bestow nothing more.

Hence the great sin is unbelief, because it is a sin against GOD and His love, because it wounds Him at His heart. For GOD yearns to bestow eternal life upon men, if only they will let Him. The way they let Him is by believing. The way they prevent Him is by unbelief. Our unbelief is sin against Love, against the gracious purposes of Love. It is sin against the remedy Love has brought, against the sharing of GOD's own nature and life which Love longs to bestow. Unbelief

leaves us outside the pale of His love leaves us without a remedy.

V The Demand of Love

Now that Love has offered itself and its gift - bestowment of Life has been accepted, Love turns to us, and rightly, with its demands. This brings us over into John 13:1-38. JESUS has now turned from a public ministry of appeal to men to a personal dealing with those who, through acceptance, have become His own, within the circle of His love.

- we have His life, being "born again."

- we have His nature, Love itself. And - we are His followers, those upon whom He must rely to perpetuate and propagate His life of Love. So He that "loveth us" turns to us and says: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." But He does not make this demand until He has Himself given us an exemplification of His own love, in the humility and self-forgetfulness of mind and heart and life required as love's vehicle. Let us bow our heads and hearts, His unworthy followers, as we read: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself" (John 13:3-4). Then, having washed their feet, He said: "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you" (John 13:15). But He had given us more than an example; He had given us a symbol of the power by which alone we can follow that example. The water in the vessel is the HOLY SPIRIT in these poor vessels of ours, cleansing us from our sin, our pride and our selfishness, that we might answer the demands of His love, keeping His commandment with a real love, the one for the other.

VI The Guarantee of Love

If Love makes its demands upon us, Love is itself the guarantee that that demand will be fully met. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words" (John 14:23). Not force, not coercion, not regulation from without; but a quiet, all-sufficient constraint from within - the love of CHRIST. Of course love works this way. The marriage altar hears the highest and holiest vows, most binding in character, but they are guaranteed fulfillment because sanctioned by an affection that will put them into practice.

Go into a house of business and instinctively men are watching the clock as its hands draw on toward five. Their work is measured and regulated by set considerations from without; there's a limit they cannot forget. But go into a house that is a home and learn the workings of love. A meal must be prepared; a garment must be mended; a child is sick or needs help. Love works on heedless of the clock - nine, ten, eleven, midnight - unconscious of time, unstinted in sacrifice, unlimited save by its own strength to endure and power to serve. "Charity never faileth."

JESUS rested His whole reliance right there. "If ye love Me, ye will keep My words." No question about it. JESUS depends upon the love-bond He has woven around our hearts, uniting us to Him. Therefore our responsibility is to keep ourselves in His love. It is our one duty; all else follows.

Hence, Love being such a supreme thing, so at the heart of the Gospel, John fittingly closes with

VII The Probing of Love

Self-reliant Peter has failed and fallen, and though graciously restored, somehow his life is not centered in his Lord. He has taken the others back with him to their fishing boats and nets.

JESUS comes out to the lakeshore and instantly, with the miracle we all recall, turns their minds and hearts again to Himself. They gather about the fire as His breakfast guests. Then He begins to probe their love. He addresses Peter. The others listen and know full well that He means them also.

It is Love that does the probing: "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest Thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep" (John 21:15-17). The Love that gave Himself supremely for us is now, with full right of search, saying to us: "Is your love for Me supreme? Does it command you? Has it supplanted 'these things'?"

- Will it suffice to separate you unto Me the rest of your life?
- Will it prove the fountain of an untiring service the remainder of your appointed days?
- Will it keep you busy, with unmeasured effort, tending My lambs, feeding My sheep?"

If this probing of love comes home to our hearts today, showing us how superficial our reception of His love, how niggardly our response to His love, till we are shamefaced before Him, there is a remedy. Have we ever tried it? - "the love of the Spirit" (Rom 15:30), i. e., GOD coming to love in us, through His love poured into our hearts by His Spirit.

It is not for us to try to love GOD, any more than we try to love our wives or husbands, our parents or our children. This is not what He asks of us. He has provided for our loving Him, and therefore serving Him, in and through the Spirit He has Himself given us.

What the world needs is a fresh sight of the sacrificial love of GOD in CHRIST. It needs to see it till its heart, hardened in sin, is broken before it.

Dr. Norman McLeod, the famous Scotch preacher, used to tell a touching story of a Highland mother and her boy, won by sacrificial love.

She was a widow. Taking her babe she started to walk across the mountains, some ten miles, to the home of a relative. A terrible snowstorm suddenly fell upon the hills, and little by little the mother's strength failed. Next day, when men found her body, it was almost stripped of clothing. Her chilled and dying hands had wrapped her own clothing about the child, which was found in a sheltering nook, safe and sound. Years afterward the son of the minister who had conducted the mother's funeral went to Glasgow to preach a preparatory sermon. Somehow he was reminded of the story he had often heard his father tell. Instead of preaching the sermon he had prepared, he

simply told the story of the Highland mother's love. A few days later he was summoned to the bed of a dying man. "You do not know me," said the man. "Although I have lived in Glasgow many years, I have never attended a church. The other day I happened to pass your door as the snow came down. I heard the singing and slipped into a back seat. There I heard the story of the widow and her son." The man paused, his voice was choking, his eyes were filling. "I am that son," he sobbed at last. "Never did I forget my mother's love, but I never saw the love of GOD in giving Himself for me before. GOD made you tell that story. My mother did not die in vain. Her prayer is answered."

04.03. THE GOSPEL OF LIGHT

THE GOSPEL OF LIGHT

CHAPTER THREE

"I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12) In our first study we saw that the: Gospel of John is the Gospel of Life - remarkably so, as though that were its one message and aim. In our second study we saw it as the Gospel of Love - marvelously so, as though Love were its one throbbing theme. And now we are to see that it is equally the Gospel of Light. Twenty-five times the word occurs, while the thought is still more dominant. We cannot have Life and Love without Light, any more than we can have two of the Trinity without the third. The dictionary defines light as "The essential condition of vision; the opposite of darkness." (It is, then, the revealer of that which we otherwise could not see; it is the enemy of darkness, which obscures and conceals.) Also, "An emanation from a light-giving body." (Light, then, requires a source.) Also, "The sensation aroused by the stimulation of the visual centers." (Light seeks to secure a response, its own purposed effect, in us.) Finally, "That form of energy which, by its action upon the organs of vision, enables them to perform their function of sight." (Light alone enables us to see and know).

These statements make it evident that light is essential to spiritual life, that it must have its source outside of us and find its response within us.

I The Light of Creation The opening words of John's Gospel take us back to the eternal Son of GOD, back yonder in a dateless "beginning" (John 1:1-2). He was the Creator - "all things were made by Him" (John 1:3). Not only so, but "in Him was life" (John 1:4 a), and that Life, imparted and given its highest expression, became "the light of men" (John 1:4 b).

Creation ends there. Man is its intended culmination and climax. That "Life," in His likeness, places us at the top, with a "light" that differentiates us from all other created existence. Life made man to share the nature of GOD; Light enabled him to share His knowledge and wisdom. Thus lightened, man's eyes saw, and ever see, what the animal's eyes have never seen nor ever will see. Man is akin to GOD. But the next verse (John 1:5) introduces the element of "darkness" - a moral state that can not "comprehend" the light. Here, then, is the great moral and spiritual struggle between good and evil, GOD and the Devil, life and death, light and darkness, as anticipated and portrayed in the majestic words - of which these in John are the counterpart - with which the Genesis account opens the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light" (Gen 1:1-3).

II The Light of CHRIST's Coming As GOD spake in the beginning, dispelling darkness with light; so in the fullness of time GOD spake with His appointed "Word" - the living Word, His very Self, incarnate, sent among us as "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh," to penetrate our spiritual

darkness and bring back to us the light with which He had originally blessed us. Yea, the first light of creation with the added light of re-creation. This is the story of John 1:6-14. Whatever other lights GOD sent us - all the prophets and now John, the forerunner and immediate witness to the Light - here is the "true Light which lighteth every man" (John 1:9). Yet man's hopeless, helpless state in darkness is shown by the fact that "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (John 1:10).

How much man needed CHRIST!

Note the next verse:

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John 1:11). They were in such blinding moral darkness that they did not know the Light when it came. They would not have Him. And men today are in that same condition, unaltered. Their rejection of GOD's Light is the strongest proof we have of man's moral obliquity, darkness and death. Every day that man lives in continued refusal of the Light he is proving GOD's portrait of him, in a ruined estate, all too true. But when men do receive Him - what? They get back the "light of life." They have Him, and He is the "Light of Life."

Please read what happens as though for the first time: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

Now we see! See what we had not the power of perception to see before! We see, through the Incarnate Son, the glory of GOD. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

III The Light of Conviction With John 3:1-36 we find JESUS stressing the need of the New Birth.

We hear Him say to Nicodemus:

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Ye must be born again" (John 3:3; John 3:7). And this necessity is enforced by the declaration that for this purpose GOD in His love gave His Son and sent Him into the world, "that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Men, however, do not acknowledge their need of a New Birth; therefore they do not feel their need of CHRIST. So, while "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world," but rather that it might be saved (John 3:17), the practical result is condemnation, self-induced by their attitude of rejection. The HOLY SPIRIT has taken great pains to make this doubly plain. Let us note carefully as we read:

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:18-21). The paramount need of today is that

this very Light of Conviction break in upon men's souls. The fact that they need CHRIST, plus the further fact that they refuse to take Him as Saviour, is prima facie evidence that they stand convicted and condemned.

IV The Light of Conversion

It is this light of which JESUS speaks in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The light of creation was a bestowment of His life - "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). The light of the new creation - redemption - is a new bestowment of His life. It is "the light of life"; life from the dead, from a state of spiritual darkness and inability to know spiritual things. This teaching of John 8:1-59 is given vivid illustration in chapter 9, when JESUS opens the eyes of the man "born blind." His first birth left him in darkness. JESUS brought to his eyes and to his soul the light of a new birth.

Today we have the spectacle of men who are spiritually blind discussing and judging spiritual things. College professors, scientists, once-born men, not acknowledging that they, equally with other men, were "born blind," are breaking into the realm of the spiritual and talking about things as much beyond them in their natural state as politics and finances are beyond a dog. The dog cannot know these things because they are above and beyond his sphere of perception. Just so are spiritual things to men until they receive their "second sight" - the light of life. (Read Paul's reasoning in point - 1Co 2:11-16). The noise that these men are making in their blindness reminds us very much of an incident related to us by an officer of our Church. It was a personal experience of his boyhood days. Of it he says:

"Bathing one morning at a seaside resort at the entrance to Belfast Lough, known as Donaghadee, a group of us were about to dive off the harbour when we noticed a bank of fog about 200 yards long moving slowly past the harbour and going up the Lough in the direction of Belfast. As I remember it today, it would have reminded one of the shape of a giant dirigible. The sky was clear all around. While we were watching it, the Liverpool cross-channel steamer hove in sight on its way up to Belfast. As soon as it entered the fog it began blowing the foghorn and slowing down to the same rate of speed that the bank of fog was going. It was a remarkable sight. We watched for fully half an hour and the steamer failed to come out of the fog in all that time. However, had the steamer been going at a greater speed than the fog she would have passed through it in less than five minutes."

These men, surrounding themselves with the mists and fog of doubt and unbelief, often willful in its nature, are not only crying loudly with their foghorns that they cannot see, but are brazenly denying to others the right to affirm the reality of that which we (once in their state but now declaring with the born-blind man, "Whereas I was blind, now I see", know by our recovery of spiritual sight to be a glorious reality. When we were resident in Alaska we had a striking illustration of the fact that what men need is not new truth or evidence so much as the ability to see the truth. Their difficulty lies with themselves. They need an ability to see that comes only with conversion, the result of an "inner light," wrought by the regeneration of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT. The town of Skagway is surrounded by mountains.

One is known as Face Mountain because it is surmounted by the face of a man. The features are in such clear, bold relief against the sky-line that tourists note it at once without the slightest

difficulty. One beautiful day we met a long-time resident and remarked on how clearly the face, blanketed with snow, stood out that afternoon. He replied, "In all these years I have never been able to see the face they talk about."

We said, "What! You can't see the face? Why man, look with me." And with our finger we traced the forehead, nose, lips, chin, until he cried, "Why yes, now I see it; now I see."

It had been there these thousands of years; all he needed was the ability to see it. That is all you need, my friend, to see GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST. Once seeing, you will know.

V The Light of Communion

Following conversion, in the possession of His life and nature we are capable of communion with Him as was not before possible. Into this communion of life JESUS leads us in the intimate teachings of John 15:1-27 : "I am the vine, ye are the branches . . . Abide in Me, and I in you."

It is a life lighted by His own immediate presence. A life in which He bestows His own Spirit upon us, promising that "He, the Spirit of truth, will guide us into all truth" (John 16:13).

Thus He precludes the possibility of His follower coming under the darkening shadow of uncertainty, if only he will live in this provision of union and communion: "He . . . will guide you." And as though this were not enough, lest we think ourselves at any time left to our own resources, this life provides for direct access to Him through prayer. And it is prayer to Him at the right hand of the Father, the place of "all power." "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24).

VI The Light of Consecration The Light wrought in us, by communion with CHRIST, now becomes the Light shining out from us, by consecration to CHRIST. It is the step by which sanctification merges into Service. This complementary truth is found in John 15:1-27.

Often we fail to recognize that the Vine and Branch teaching harks back to the imagery of the candlestick in the Tabernacle. The candlestick was designed with "branches" proceeding from the central stem or "vine," each branch carrying the representation of "fruit" upon it. The oil, the HOLY SPIRIT, flowing through the branch, produced the fruit in the form of light. Thus it is we are to abide in Him, yield to Him, draw upon Him, that He may bear His own fruit, that is, show forth His own light, through us.

Brought to the service side of the truth we are now studying, how forcefully we are reminded that light is not for ourselves but for others. It lightens us only that through us it may lighten those about us. Busy bringing light to others, JESUS said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:5).

These words, "as long as," anticipate the creating of new light centers, when, having gone hence and having planted His Spirit in our hearts, He could say of us, His candlesticks, "Ye are the light of the world."

Tracing this teaching on into the Epistles, where the appeal is based upon the fact of His abiding, candlestick relationship, believers find themselves pictured as being "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life" (Php

2:15 b, Php 2:16 a).

Every believer should adopt as his life-motto the words, so beautifully suggestive, inscribed upon the famous Eddystone Lighthouse, on the coast of England: "To give light and to save life." Our Lord's call to consecration, enforced by conditions of darkness about us, makes this our imperative duty.

VII The Light of CHRIST's Coming Again

It is most graciously significant that the Gospel narrative of our Lord's days in the flesh is not suffered to close without causing to shine upon the pathway of His followers the light of the promise that He will come again. In that dark hour when the Cross was casting its shadow across the heart of CHRIST and His chosen company, begetting fears and forebodings - in that hour of gathering gloom JESUS reassured them with the prospect of a glory He was going before to get ready, only that He might return and receive them into it, a promise and prospect that was to become the pole-star of the Church's hope through the years, often long and weary, of the Saviour's absence.

Then, as always since, those wondrous words dispelled the shadows from their hearts. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). And now the Gospel concludes with this light focused upon the heart and pathway of one individual disciple. Peter, having received the revelation of his prospective martyrdom, asked the Lord as to John's future. The reply burned itself into John's consciousness: "If I will that he tarry till I come" (read John 21:22-23). Through intervening years the now venerable Apostle (90 A. D.) had walked in that light, buoyed by the realization that the Lord Himself had intimated the possibility of His return within his very life-time. And when exile for CHRIST's sake befell him, there on Patmos he saw His coming in glorious vision and the comforting reality of it broke as a sunburst of glory in his soul! Just so for every child of GOD today; however dark the outlook of earthly circumstance, it is his privilege to walk facing the fadeless light of the Coming One and of the New Creation about to be wherein dwelleth righteousness and peace.

- How does our heart respond to our Lord's promise?
- Are we living daily in its pulse-quickening prospect?
- Does its light glorify the day-by-day round of drudgery?

Hoeing Cotton There's a King and Captain high Who is coming by and by, And He'll find me hoeing cotton when

He comes!

You can hear His legions charging, In the regions of the sky, And He'll find me hoeing cotton when He comes! When He comes! When He comes!

All the dead shall rise in answer to His drums; And the fires of His encampment star
The firmament on high, And the heavens shall roll asunder when He comes!

There's the Man they thrust aside, Who was tortured till He died, And He'll find me hoeing cotton
when

He comes!

He was hated and rejected, He was scorned and crucified, And He'll find me hoeing cotton when
He comes! When He comes! When He comes!

He'll be crowned by saints and angels when He comes;

They'll be shouting out "Hosannah!" To the Man that men denied, And I'll kneel among my cotton
when He comes!

Shadwell, from a Negro Song

04.04. THE ABIDING LIFE

THE ABIDING LIFE

PART TWO THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN THE EXPERIENCE OF LIFE, LOVE AND LIGHT

CHAPTER FOUR THE ABIDING LIFE "And now, little children, abide in Him" (1Jn 2:28)

Between the Gospel of John and the First Epistle of John there is the closest possible relationship. The latter supplements the former. Of this intent we are made at once aware as we turn from the opening words of the one to those of the other:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . In Him was life; and the life was the light of men . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace, and truth" (John 1:1; John 1:4; John 1:14).

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)" (1Jn 1:1-2).

Moreover, as we peruse the pages of the Epistle, so brief in extent, so majestic in thought, yet so strangely simple in the language that conveys it, we meet with the same three dominant and recurrent words that characterize the Gospel: Life, Light, Love.

Evidently here also we are dealing with the three simple, primal, irreducible elements by which Deity has manifested Himself to men. But more, interwoven with the above is another set of words that stand out upon these pages signifying an advance upon the Gospel view of Light, Love and Life.*

* The sequence of these words is somewhat inconsequential. However, there is reason for the order most natural to the Gospel not holding for the Epistle. In the Gospel, Life is first manifested; then the Love that prompted its giving; then the Light that results from its coming. In the Epistle, however, the possession of the Life is presupposed. All Christian experience is dependent upon the possession of Life: its development leads into the Light of Life; then the Love of Life; resulting in the fullness of Life itself.

They are: Fellowship, Know, Witness. These are expressions of experience. When Light, Love and Life are permitted to do their work; when they are appropriated and assimilated; when they really register in the heart and are given their wonted response in the life, they bring about a fellowship with GOD and with all others of like experience; they produce an assurance, a certainty that rests upon proven reality; they beget a witness within and without that spells victory for this life and the life that is to be.

Still more; there is one other word pervading all the pages of this Epistle, serving as the binder between these two sets of words. It is the little word "abide." (Its presence is found in the various words used by our Authorized Version, "dwell," "continue," "remain"). It occurs some twenty-three times. It is this word that marks and makes possible the advance of the Epistle over the Gospel. It is the key to Christian experience, by which the divine attributes are transplanted into human soil to the transforming of character and conduct.

What, may we ask, has intervened since the life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord that imparts to the Apostle's Epistle a viewpoint so definitely in advance over that taken in his Gospel, yet so closely related to it? The answer is, Pentecost. On that day the prophetic feast of centuries was fulfilled. The promised gift of the HOLY SPIRIT was given, sent from the presence of the Father by the glorified CHRIST (Acts 2:33). By His coming the Body of CHRIST was formed and believers were baptized into it. Since then, through the centuries, the Father's immediate response to the believer's faith in His Son is the bestowment of His HOLY SPIRIT, thereby building him into this already formed, mystical Body. This is the Abiding Life, the bringing to realization in experience of the blessed truths taught by our Lord JESUS CHRIST in the upper room, as recorded by John in his Gospel, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26. Nor is it the privileged experience of the few. It is the life into which, however undeveloped or unworthily lived, He has brought all believers by a common bestowment. That all may enter into its blessedness, as a possession whose wealth is priceless, such is the purpose of this post-Pentecost supplement of the Gospel. As JESUS taught, so has Pentecost wrought.

1. THE POSITION OF BELIEVERS IN CHRIST. Grafted into the Vine we are henceforth identified with Him in a union of nature and a communion of life. As we "abide" in Him, He abides in us; the knitting of natures becomes actual, the flow of life continual and effectual. As the branch is nothing and therefore can "do nothing" apart from, severed from the vine, so is the believer in CHRIST.

2. THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF THE SPIRIT. Given to us to "abide," He is the secret of the Abiding Life. By Him it is made possible. By His incoming the union with CHRIST was effected. By His indwelling the communion of life is carried on. He is the "sap," and by its life-flow the branch takes on a likeness to the Vine, an inward, unobtrusive, transforming process.

3. THE PRACTICAL OUTPUT IN FRUIT-BEARING. "Herein," says JESUS, "is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit." Thus the entire Trinity is involved in the Abiding Life, just what we would expect from the fact that it is a triune experience, both in appropriation and expression, of Light, Love and Life. Nor must we fail to note some of the specified forms of fruit-bearing: love for one another; joy to the full; an emboldened prayer-life; a conformity to His commandment (John 15:7-14). As the tree is known to us by the flavor of the fruit we gather from its branches, so is CHRIST made manifest to the world today; it is by the ministration of His own life and nature through us, so abiding in Him that He flavors all we are and do. How utterly the world needs it! How utterly He depends upon us for it!

04.05. A FELLOWSHIP - THREEFOLD AND THREE-TENSE

A FELLOWSHIP - THREEFOLD AND THREE-TENSE

CHAPTER FIVE "That ye also may have fellowship with us" (1Jn 1:3) The first word in this Epistle designed to bring that which JESUS manifested in His earthly life over into Christian experience, to be experimentally known and proved through the living out of the Abiding Life, is "fellowship."

It is meant to be:

I A Fellowship in Light, Love and Life

It is John who, with the utmost simplicity and directness, gives us three irreducible statements of the being and nature of GOD: "God is Light" (1Jn 1:5); "God is Love" (1Jn 4:8); "God is Spirit" (John 4:24).

Here, then, we are handed the key to this remarkable Epistle, so simple and fundamental in its truths as almost to forbid analysis. Dividing at the beginning of chapter three:

(1) "God is Light" determines the truth and teaching, the life, character and conduct of the first half.

(2) "God is Love" in like manner dominates the second half.

(3) "God is Spirit," Life in the absolute, therefore communicable, as in creation and again in re-creation, this is the pervasive element of the entire Epistle, that without which no other experience of GOD were possible, for if GOD were incapable of communicating Life, He could by no means communicate Light or Love.

This, then, bears out what we have previously noted that Life, the Abiding Life, is the "binder" of Light and Love, rendering the three inseparable in manifestation and experience (Gospel and Epistle) as they are, and ever must be, in GOD the Eternal.

1. A FELLOWSHIP. And what a fellowship it is! The word, in the Greek, means a "having in common." A communion of possession and interest that results from a "communicating." How suggestive! It pictures precisely what is made possible by the Abiding Life, the communicating of life and nature from vine to branch, resulting in a community of possession, operation and expression.

2. A FRIENDSHIP. This is a word that greatly enriches for us the meaning of fellowship. In this same Vine-and-Branch chapter, after referring to the fruit from this union, JESUS says, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). Here is the inwardness of friendship, the readiness and desire not to withhold but to share with the other all that we know, have and are. JESUS has taken us into friendship. And now, from the glory, He has nothing to withhold - all that He is He communicates. In His friendship we have fellowship of the highest sort.

3. A COMPANIONSHIP. The word is of Latin derivation, meaning to "break bread together." This, in oriental custom, only friends do. And the doing of it affords to friendship its desired opportunity for fellowship. This longing is in the heart of our glorified Lord; "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20).

What a privilege to have CHRIST within, in the intimate fellowship of "table talk," communicating to us without reserve what He thinks, is, and has for us.

II A Fellowship, Past, Present and Future

What a range His fellowship covers. For He is a three-tense being, who "is, was, and is to come." He says of Himself: "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen" (Rev 1:18). When in the HOLY SPIRIT we are baptized into such as He we are baptized into a three-tense experience of Him:

1. MANIFESTED IN THE PAST, on earth, in the flesh, for our salvation (1Jn 1:1-3). At no time can we fail to root our Christian experience in His incarnation, life, death and resurrection. Paul, in his yearning for the best and truest fellowship, goes back to this: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death" (Php 3:10).

2. MANIFESTED IN THE PRESENT, in Heaven, for us and for our sanctification. He is there as our "Advocate with the Father" (1Jn 2:1-2). And now He has fellowship with us by and through His HOLY SPIRIT, that other Advocate, or Comforter (the same Greek word), sent to be "with us" (John 14:16). Note that He does not call the Spirit "an" Advocate, as though His was the only ministry of this sort, but "another" Advocate, lawyer, counsellor, one who cares for our case and meets our spiritual needs, He to "abide with us" while our Lord JESUS CHRIST carries on His advocacy for us "with the Father." One there, another here, "that we may not sin," that this barrier to our fellowship with Him, our Holy GOD, may be kept from coming in between.

3. MANIFESTED IN THE FUTURE, He will be, to the loving, welcoming gaze of His children. While we are already the children of GOD, in the blessed fellowship of the divine family that is ever the thought of this Epistle, yet it reaches on with expectation into the more glorious future: "it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1Jn 3:2). And future though this manifestation in His likeness be, the ministry of "hope" makes it a present, transforming factor in our fellowship: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1Jn 3:3).

Thus is secured a present kinship of purity that promotes and makes more possible the communication of Himself in His perfecting Light, Love and Life. It is ever presented thus in Scripture, called the "blessed hope," for He uses it to bless even now in bringing us into closer fellowship with, and likeness to Himself.

III A Fellowship Godward, Selfward, Brotherward

He who would read aright this Epistle and gather from its teachings that which will turn to his personal, spiritual profit, must:

1. KEEP THE WINDOWS OF HIS SOUL OPEN GODWARD, as the source of all spiritual life and blessing. "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Therefore we are exhorted to "have fellowship with Him," to "abide in Him," to live in such a manner that we may "know Him," to refuse everything, be it of the world, the flesh, or false doctrine, that militates against the vitality of the bond between us.

2. LET THE TRUTH HAVE ITS DESIRED AND WONTED EFFECT SELFWARD, as the vessel GOD has chosen into which to pour His truth, yea Himself. Confessedly such a vessel must be clean. Fellowship with unsullied Light, with unadulterated Love, with unspotted Life - such a fellowship cannot leave the heart and life unclean. At once comes a consciousness of sin. We are pained at the disparity between our walk and His. We are ashamed to receive His love in our hearts and there, with it, harbor hatred.

3. LET THIS HEAVENLY FELLOWSHIP FLOW OUT FROM HIM BROTHERWARD. GOD has constituted us a family, a redeemed brotherhood, to demonstrate the family characteristics, received from the Father. in our conduct the one toward the other. That which we receive in fellowship with Him we are to press on through a like true fellowship with them. Having our window open heavenward to bask in the sunshine of His love, we must hold our door open earthward, that others may feel the warmth and reality of that love, not in word and with the tongue but in such ministry as may be required.

Called to such a fellowship, its contemplation must lead to an abandon in which our blessed Lord takes the ascendancy over every possible interest of life.

Long years were spent for me In weariness and woe, That through eternity Thy glory I might know.

Long years were spent for me! Have I spent one for Thee?

Oh, let my life be given, My years for Thee be spent;

World-fetters all be riven, And joy with suffering blent: To Thee my all I bring, My Saviour and my King.

- Frances Ridley Havergal

04.06. THE TEST OF A TRUE EXPERIENCE

THE TEST OF A TRUE EXPERIENCE

CHAPTER SIX "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1Jn 2:6)

Utterly repugnant to the Apostle is the sham and pretense of mere profession. How futile to declare one's self in intimate communication with Light and Love if the life remains devoid of the qualities inseparably associated with Light and Love. So the Epistle proceeds at once to probe the life, using tests to which every believer must submit himself, tests that distinguish the genuine from the false. They reach finality in the words: "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1Jn 2:6).

I "He That Saith"

We are taken at our word; then a search is instituted for that which should be our experience in consequence.

Read thoughtfully 1Jn 1:6-10; 1Jn 2:1-6 :

- "If we say . . . " (1Jn 1:6), testing our falsity;
- "But if we walk . . . " (1Jn 1:7), glorying in the genuine.
- "If we say . . . " (1Jn 1:8), probing the self-deception;
- "If we confess . . . " (1Jn 1:9), pointing the way to a true experience.
- "If we say . . . " (1Jn 1:10), making doubly clear to us our sham and our sin in all its seriousness.
- "He that saith . . . " (1Jn 2:4), putting us again in the "liar" class;
- "But whoso keepeth . . . " (1Jn 2:5), rejoicing in the love of GOD genuinely evidenced.
- "He that saith . . . " (1Jn 2:6), the final summing up of the entire probing process. In it our professed fellowship with Him who is Light and Love is put to practical test: Is that Light and Love manifested in our daily walk?

II "Even as He Walked"

If we say that we are abiding in Him, His life, flowing into us and actuating us, should find a like expression in our way of living as it did in His. His walk, then, becomes the standard by which to gauge our walk. But how shall we set about conforming our walk, or manner of life, to His? Shall we single out certain of its circumstances and press ours into their mould? Ah, no, nothing so artificial! Nothing by way of imitation! It is the inwardness of His life, its controlling principles and passions, evidenced in His walk before men, that must constitute the norm of the believer's walk.

How, then, did He walk? John, in his Gospel, comprehends the wonders of that matchless walk as a manifestation of Light, Love and Life.

1. HE WALKED IN LIGHT. The light of His Father's presence, claimed by constant communion with Him and by a life in all things pleasing to Him; the light of His Father's favor, calling forth the commendation "My Son, in whom I am well-pleased"; the light of complete identification with Him, so that He could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and continue by tracing His words and works back to the Father as their source: "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" (John 14:10). He so walked in the light of His Father's face that when, on the cross, it must of necessity be withdrawn from Him, the experience was one of utter darkness and dismay to Him. He so walked that He was "the light of the world" and could invite others to follow Him with the assurance that they would "not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

2. HE WALKED IN LOVE. Oh, how He loved. In the world to convey and demonstrate the love that "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," our Lord "went about doing good," ministering to the needs of men, showing GOD's love to be kind and compassionate. Under test His love never failed; it went on loving. He not only loved His own to the end, but His enemies as well. Reviled, He reviled not again, but commended GOD's love in pouring out His life for men who hated Him with cruel, malicious hatred. What a standard for His followers: "Love one another as I have loved you"!

3. HE WALKED IN LIFE; that is, in the things that make for life rather than death, that conserve to life its truest character and enable it to give itself in blessing to others. Not only did our Lord not waste His life in any unworthy purpose, but He did not vitiate it by deviating from the pole-star of a divine purpose. His walk was the constant expression of a life-purpose: to do His Father's will and finish His work, declaring that this was His very meat and drink; to walk in sinlessness, a purpose that necessitated His keeping Himself unspotted from the world, that thus He might have a sinless life to offer up for us (cf. John 6:38; John 7:7; John 8:46).

III "Ought Himself Also So to Walk"

There is no mistaking this language. It is the Apostle's practical appeal in his Epistle by which He presses home to all believers the Pattern - life portrayed in his Gospel. We are "so to walk." Yet, Pentecost having come, the Lord JESUS CHRIST is more than a pattern, and must be if we are to walk as He walked. The secret must be inward.

1. THE POSSIBILITY lies in the fact that we are members of His Body. Given the control of His body, now as then, dwelling in us He will "walk in us." So, as we "abide in Him," He and we do the walking. It "ought" to be the same.

2. THE RESPONSIBILITY for so walking lies in this, that we are the manifestation of our glorified Lord for our present day. Only as we so walk can we rightly represent Him with whom we are inseparably identified, both inwardly, in the gift of His Spirit, and outwardly, in the thought of the world. In the light of the facts this responsibility is inescapable; this divine "ought" can never be removed.

3. THE NECESSITY for "so" walking lies hidden in the little word "also." "Ought himself also." How John delights thus to couple us with Him. In the precious 14th chapter of his Gospel, recording JESUS' teaching, are five "alsos," each time linking the believer with CHRIST in a relationship that suggests incompleteness but for the act or fact so set forth. Its use has the same force here in the Epistle. Consider the case. CHRIST having finished His earthly walk, GOD the Father lifted Him to glory and "gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is "His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph 1:22-23). As the head is not complete without the body, so is CHRIST incomplete without us. As He began His walk in the body of His flesh, so He must rely upon us, His present body, for continuing and completing that walk. His former walk is on record. Men read it and wonder. But it is remote, and doubtless He was a marvel-man. They are not convinced except as they see a corresponding walk in His followers. Upon this the faith of men waits. They must see that we "also so walk." On exhibition in Washington, D. C., is a certain copy of the Declaration of Independence. At first sight the penmanship appears much like that of any other copy. But one has only to stand in a particular position to detect the features of George Washington, the man who made the Declaration a practical reality. In its writing he is made to live again. Just so with everyone who "says," makes the declaration, that he has been set free from his past, only that he might enter into fellowship with the One who procured his freedom. The man who declares he is abiding in Him, that man's living and walking "ought" to disclose the fact to neighbors and friends in an unmistakable likeness to Him.

04.07. WALKING IN THE LIGHT

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

CHAPTER SEVEN "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another" (1Jn 1:7) Every privileged relationship of life carries with it a correspondent responsibility of opportunity.

Yet our Christian privilege is such as to minister an abounding grace of power for the discharge of every Christian duty. As no warrior wars at his own charges, neither does the Christian walk in reliance upon his own resources. He is but putting the Abiding Life into practice. He is bringing to expression the secret resources of a redeemed soul. He is demonstrating what it means to be brought out of darkness into His marvelous light. He is qualified for being and doing what is incumbent upon all believers. "For," says Paul, "ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph 5:8).

I Light at Its Source To know light, and therefore what it means to be in fellowship with light, we must trace it back to its source. As the swift-winged sunbeam that kisses our cheek, when passed through the spectrum, yields up the qualities of the energizing sun from which it emanated, just so is all spiritual light. "God is Light." And again, "In Thy light shall we see light." In GOD is light in the absolute, such light as, coming from GOD, makes known to men His being and nature.

1. LIGHT IS PURE. It suffers no admixture of anything foreign to it. It is incapable of adulteration or contamination. Nothing extraneous can by any possibility attach itself to it. What a picture of our Lord JESUS CHRIST manifesting the purity of Deity in His walk among men. Touching the unclean, He was not defiled. Passing through the haunts of sin and iniquity, in sympathetic contact with the shame and sorrow of human life, He emerged sinless and stainless. What a portrayal, as well, of the purity that must ever attach to and characterize the life that partakes of the divine nature.

2. LIGHT IS PERVASIVE. It enters the least opening accessible to it. It searches out the recesses that otherwise would remain dark, dank and dismal. It penetrates the gloom, leaving it no alternative but to flee before its presence. Science long since disclosed the value of this pervasive quality of light in laying hold of every lurking germ of disease, whether in the homes of men or in the human system. Such is the ministry of Him who came as the world's Light. So far from sin fastening upon Him, it could not even stand in His presence. How often men found themselves confronted with the penetration of His searching insight, only to yield up the sinful unworthiness of their thoughts and actions.

3. LIGHT IS POWERFUL, with a power that is peculiarly its own. No agency known to man travels so swiftly or so far, yet does its work so silently and unobtrusively. From the farthest stellar spaces it reaches to us, revealing yonder worlds upon worlds. From our sun it bears upon its beams a multiform ministry for the sustaining of life and the maintaining of industry. The power put forth in a single day is wholly beyond compute. Yet all is done noiselessly - there is no sound; and gently -

there is no jar, but a quiet persistent putting forth of its powers to heal and help.

All of this, and so much more, is our wonderful Light, in whom is "no darkness at all," and with whom He has brought us into fellowship, to a privileged sharing of these qualities with Himself.

II

Light in Us

He who said, "I am the Light of the world," turned to His followers with a declaration startling in its directness: "Ye are the light of the world." For this inescapable commission to lighten a benighted world we shall qualify only as we "walk in the light," that is, in abiding union with the Light, permitting Him to impart His qualities to us. Doing its wonted work in us:

1. LIGHT REVEALS. It is the Psalmist who says, "In Thy light shall we see light." Our darkness is doubly caused: absence of light and loss of sight. This latter lack is made up to us, restored in the New Birth. The former is remedied by the Abiding Life, the continual communicating presence of the Spirit, linking us with the source of all light, even with Him in whom is no darkness. Is it strange that such an association should bring to light a foul brood, hiding in the heart, whose presence we had failed to suspect hitherto? It required the Light to reveal them. But a continued disavowal of their presence, in a claiming of sinlessness in either nature or action (1Jn 1:8; 1Jn 1:10) belies the reality of the relationship we profess. On the other hand, sensitiveness to sin is the sign of His illuminating, self-revealing presence. Hence it is that some of the most godly saints, walking daily in a closeness of fellowship with Him, have been characterized by a confessed consciousness of sin beyond their fellows. They were living in the Light that made evident the contrast between themselves and Himself. This experience finds divine interpretation in the spiritual autobiography of the prophet Isaiah. It was when he "saw the Lord" in the pure, white light of His holiness that he discovered, and at once decried, a personal uncleanness: "Woe is me; I am undone; I am unclean." And that confession brought the full relief of a further revelation of the Lord as the GOD of cleansing.

2. LIGHT CLEANSSES. Twice the Apostle uses this word (1Jn 1:7; 1Jn 1:9) to assure us that our so great salvation not only reveals sin to us but relieves us from it. Calvary's cross that gave us "the blood of God" as the full and sufficient ground for sin's pardon also provided just as fully for sin's pollution. And as the need is continuous, so also the cleansing: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son keeps cleansing us from all sin." That the blood should prove continuously efficacious as sin's double cure, cleansing from both its guilt and power, two conditions are to be met.

Note the double "if" of cleansing: "If we walk in the light" (1Jn 1:7), that is, "keep ourselves clear to the light" (a word Paul uses in writing to the Philippians), harboring nothing that savors of darkness, concealing nothing that Light longs to search out and put away; and again, "If we confess our sins" (1Jn 1:9), the times and ways in which we have defiled ourselves by failure to walk in Light's perfect day. As we meet this latter condition He is "faithful and righteous" to "forgive and cleanse" - these benefits, claimed on the ground of Calvary's blood, are not a matter of mercy but rather of righteousness on GOD's part in carrying out the principles and provisions of the cross. Why walk in darkness, child of GOD's grace, when such a Heaven-lit path is your privilege all the way to glory!

3. LIGHT TRANSFORMS. Cleansing is in itself a negative process. It takes from rather than adds to. It prepares for something better. The Abiding Life is far more than a house swept and freed from dirt, yet empty and unbeautified. The Heavenly Guest, the indwelling Presence, having revealed the uncleanness of the heart, having responded to our cry of confession with His cleansing work, now proceeds to make over the home of our hearts in conformity to His holy tastes and desires. Is there hatred there in hiding? It is His delight to displace it with love - His love.

- Does He find a fondness for the world? He will turn our eyes to our blessed Lord and His loveliness.

- Does He sense in us a growing carelessness toward His commandments? He will foster in us a new faithfulness.

- Are we in danger of being deceived by the doubts and denials, the cults and the isms of the "last time"?

He is within to set us right with a divine insight and understanding. (All these are listed in chapter two of our Epistle.)

III Light through Us

We must ever remember that the ministry of Light does not terminate in us. Light bestows its blessing upon us and works its work in us that it may accomplish its mission in the world through us.

1. LIGHT REFLECTS ITS SOURCE. Every sunbeam calls attention to that mighty source of exhaustless energy from whose bosom it springs. In each moment of its shining the sun is magnified. In every place that it penetrates the glories of the sun are celebrated. So our Lord, calling Himself "the Light of the world," calls us to a life in Him that we in turn may minister light to others. These are His words, defining our responsibility: "Ye are the light of the world . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mat 5:14; Mat 5:16). In electricity we are familiar with the function of the transformer. By it the voltage of the high tension wire - too high for man's use - is transformed, stepped down and passed on at a voltage that is safe and serviceable. Every Christian is called to be a transformer. The human eye cannot look with safety upon the sun; even at so great a distance its glory is forbidding. So also is GOD. But His glory was manifested, stepped down to us, in human flesh. And when we beheld that glory He "shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ" - this, that we in turn might pass on the light, translated into terms of daily living.

Since GOD is love, one simple, practical test of our walking in the light is our reflecting of love in the daily relationship of life: "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1Jn 2:9-11).

2. LIGHT OPPOSES DARKNESS. It cannot do otherwise. It does so by its very nature. Light and darkness can never make a truce. When we are called "light in the Lord" and bidden to "walk as children of light," the further exhortation is inescapable: "For ye were sometime darkness, but now

are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light; . . . and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph 5:8; Eph 5:11).

John, with our Lord JESUS, sees the world as a system essentially opposed to GOD, out of which we were bought, from which we were dissociated that we might be united to Him. He views the world as darkness, dominated by "the wicked one." To walk in the light we must not bring ourselves under its sway, but rather reprove it. Therefore: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (John 2:15-17).

3. LIGHT RADIATES BOUNDLESS BLESSINGS. Actuated by limitless energy, with ceaseless activity the ray of light performs a ministry of blessing and benefaction beyond compute. Enfolded in its bosom are the essential qualities of its source, borne afar for the quickening and restoring of life. As we write, the latest discovered use of the light beam is to carry the mind of men in music or spoken word, much as he has formerly depended upon the electrified wire or the wireless radio. Surely the child of GOD has yet to realize the manifold ministry our blessed Lord waits to perform through His light in the soul of His people.

Living the Radiant Life

It should be evident that to walk in the light, as the Apostle portrays it, must result in a radiant life; a life that is marked not so much by effort to bless as by the instinctive outgoing of blessing. Such a life results from being continually energized at the Source. It is a life lived in the light of His countenance, only to let that light leap to our countenance.

Two instances grace the pages of the Old Testament, the one illustrative of the other. They occur in Psa 34:1-22 and Exo 34:1-35. The Psalmist tells the experience of certain of GOD's people: "They looked unto Him, and were lightened." Yes, they were - lightened with His light. But more is the meaning of the word! which is, "and were radiant." The light leaped to their faces, to be reflected back with a divine radiancy. It was an experience of GOD, plus its expression in blessing to others. Then Moses. He went up into the mount and let GOD talk to him. When he came down everyone knew where he had been. His face showed it. It shone. Separated from the world unto GOD he walked in the light until the light talked through him.

Thank GOD for radiant Christians, bespeaking the quiet and contentment of a divinely satisfied soul, seeing whom the world believes anew in GOD and hungers afresh after Him!

Recently a dear friend, well up in the business world, told the writer of the remark of a mutual acquaintance. Having watched, through the years, the consistent yet joyous life of this friend, he was constrained to remark: "If -- were to go wrong I would lose my faith in GOD and all the Christianity I possess." To him our business friend speaks of GOD. And why? That life, as the writer learns, is fed at the Source. Our friend loves to steal away for hours of quiet fellowship with Him. He is walking in the Light; and the life is radiant.

04.08. LOVING AS HE LOVED

LOVING AS HE LOVED

CHAPTER EIGHT "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (1Jn 4:11) The careful reader of our Epistle will have noted that the Apostle interweaves Love with Light, making the two inseparable, after the manner of his Gospel. His first reference to Love is a reminder of the "new commandment" as its standard of expression. Passing on to the Love section of the Epistle, where the word occurs no less than forty-six times in three brief chapters, his thought moves about three chief considerations: Love as it is in GOD; Love as manifested in CHRIST; Love as exemplified in and through His followers.

These three all emerge from the opening sentence:

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God" (1Jn 3:1). Behold: the amazing love of the Father; that love bestowed upon us in the person and work of the Son; resulting in our becoming the children of GOD, His "born ones," partakers of His nature, members of His family, set in the world to show forth the family characteristics.

I Love at Its Source

We shall never know Love - not human affection or sentiment but love as we have it in the New Testament - till we trace it back to its fountain-head, in the heart and nature of GOD. It is well for us to realize that the Greek word for New Testament "love" occurs nowhere in secular literature, and this for the simple reason that this love is known only through the revelation and experience of GOD Himself. In Him:

1. LOVE IS. Love has no existence apart from GOD, and GOD has no existence apart from love. Twice John affirms, "God is love." This is saying far more than "God loves." His loving might be occasional or intermittent. His acts might be actuated by love today, only to change tomorrow. But no! Love is His nature. He cannot deny Himself. He cannot act contrary to Himself. Just as He "is Light," pure and absolute, so He "is Love," unmixed and unalloyed.

2. LOVE IS IMPARTIAL. Since loving, with GOD, is an expression of His nature, it is independent of any consideration outside of Himself, such as the attractiveness or deservedness of its object. (This is not to say that there are no qualities in the divine nature other than love; He is always holy, and He is always just, but never to the nullifying of His love.) Hence, He is "no respecter of persons." His gifts of love are not bestowed because of personal attraction nor withheld because of ill desert. So our Lord appeals for a life equally "without partiality," basing His appeal upon the Father's impartial treatment of all and the fact that we are members of His family: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on

the just and on the unjust" (Mat 5:44-45).

3. LOVE IS IMPASSIONED. The Gospel hinges upon one little word, "so." GOD not merely loved: "God so loved the world." And John's appeal in his Epistle turns upon the same word: "If God so loved us."

It was a love that so welled up that it could not contain itself; rather, "according to the riches of His grace . . . He hath abounded (overflowed) toward us." Our salvation is the overflow of divine love. We were dead in trespasses and sins, children of disobedience and children of wrath. That we ever ceased to be such we owe to one thing: "But God . . . for His great love wherewith He loved us" (Eph 2:1-4). How shall we ever tell the wonders of such love to usward!

"Could we with ink the ocean fill,
Were every blade of grass a quill;
Were the whole world of parchment made,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of GOD above
Would drain the ocean dry,
Nor would the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky."

II

Love in CHRIST

CHRIST is GOD, and GOD is Love. JESUS came to manifest the Father. John says of Him: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18). JESUS says of Himself: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). Then all that can be said of GOD as Love must be equally true of the Son in the days of His flesh. In Him:

1. LOVE IS SACRIFICIAL. If "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," then the Son, in turn, must give as the case requires, coming "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." What a costly thing is it to love! GOD the Father paid the price of loving us. GOD the Son paid the price of His love for us. Having given His life for us, He now has the gift of eternal life to give to us.

2. LOVE IS KIND. Divine love has this characteristic: GOD is "kind" (Luk 6:35). And when that love, realized in human living, is depicted in First Corinthians thirteen, the description begins: "Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind." It was our Lord's love that fulfilled this picture in life. How wonderful His love! How gentle under provocation; how long-suffering in the face of evil; how kind to the weak and weary and erring; how compassionate to the sinful, the sorrowing and the suffering. When will we, His followers, realize that our growth in Christ-likeness waits upon a kindness of life, out of a kindness of spirit, that reflects His love in the heart?

3. LOVE IS UNFAILING. The description of divine love in human life concludes with the summarizing statement: "Charity never faileth." This was our Lord's love, from first to last. Truly His love, rooted in the divine nature, which is Love, fed by continual communion with His Father, sustained at all times by the indwelling Spirit energizing Him - such love as His never failed. With men and demons doing their worst, under the treachery of betrayal, the trial of cruel mockery, the torture of the cross, Love kept on loving. What a spectacle! The unveiling of GOD who is Love unfailing.

If men did not believe in His deity otherwise, in contemplating the disparity between their love and His, they must say, "Truly this was the Son of God." And we are the followers of such as He! Nay, we are partakers of His nature - which is Love.

III Love in and through Us At this point the Apostle lays strong claim upon the Christian for a Life of Love. It is in this respect, above all else, that he "ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." Moreover, no one but the child of GOD is qualified so to walk. And further, such a love-life is the world's supreme need.

1. LOVE IS THE EVIDENCE OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE. Our Lord's new commandment that His disciples "love one another" is by no means an arbitrary requirement. It is the natural expression of our new relationship. As the "children of God" - always the viewpoint of this Epistle - we have a common Father and are sharers alike of His life and nature. The tangible evidence of this invisible family bond is love - for who would not love his own brother? "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1Jn 3:14). If the love is not there, the life is not there. The absence of love is evidence that we are still "abiding in death." The presence of its opposite, hatred, is evidence that we are capable of murder and to be classed as such (1Jn 3:15). Moreover, love's evidence should be sacrificial, as was His, in a laying down of life for the brethren (1Jn 3:16), extending to the practical and the substantial, an actual meeting of our brother's need (1Jn 3:17), a loving "not in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1Jn 3:18).

2. LOVE IS THE RESPONSE TO HIS LOVE. Under commandment to love one another as He loved us, is not such a standard our despair? It is not to be attained by striving after it as an external goal. Not by imitation, but by appropriation. His love is not merely, nor mostly, a standard to live by, but a reservoir to draw upon. "Herein is love," says the Apostle, "not that we loved God, but that He loved us" (1Jn 4:10). Then he proceeds to trace the benefits of that redeeming love for the believer to the Abiding Life, to the fact that "God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1Jn 4:15).

This, then, is the secret of love's experience, a fountain opened in the heart: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1Jn 4:16).

What a treasure we have in such an inexhaustible supply. GOD is love and He has found a way of pouring Himself into our hearts by His HOLY SPIRIT given unto us (Rom 5:5). The genesis of love, then, is this: "We love because He first loved us" (1Jn 4:19).

3. LOVE IS THE TEST OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP. The Apostle cannot leave the matter of Love without laying heavily upon our hearts its utmost seriousness. Do we feel ourselves free to love or hate according to whim? Listen! The test is absolute and unequivocal: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen" (1Jn 4:20)?

If our love is partial it is not GOD's love. If it makes distinctions, loving some and hating others, it has never drunk at the fountain fed by the divine nature, which is love, irrespective of the object. Left thus to his own native resources, the love that does not go out to "his brother whom he hath seen" cannot rise to the height of loving "God whom he hath not seen." Yet the command is clear, and insistent, "That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1Jn 4:21). And we are without

excuse since, for the keeping of this command, He has made His own love, impartial, uniformly kind and unfailing, available to us.

"We Ought Also to Love" As the Apostle bore down upon the disciple of CHRIST with the obligation to "also walk even as He walked," so likewise in the matter of love. See 1Jn 3:16; 1Jn 4:11 - the same wording in the Greek: "we ought also." The Gospel is not merely that "God so loved," but that His love so transforms that His children also love as He loved. Without that "also" in us, the world is slow to be impressed. A Buddhist, seeking the truth, complained, "I want to believe in CHRIST, but I have never seen Him in those who profess to follow Him." In China a dying man, when told the story of JESUS' love, cried with joy, "Ah! I always thought there was a GOD like that, somewhere." By their reflection of the love of GOD His children should daily evidence their Father to those who know them. The little girl who said, when asked her thought of GOD, "I think He is more like JESUS CHRIST than anyone I know," should have had a dozen friends who "also" reminded her of GOD because of their walking as He walked, loving as He loved.

How His love, that led Him to lay down His life for us, ought to constrain us, in these days of dire need, to lay down our lives also, as the only means whereby that need will be met. "Behold, what manner of love." Behold, until it burns its sacrificial cross into the moral and spiritual fibre of our being.

"Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all."

04.09. LIVING IN THE SPIRIT

LIVING IN THE SPIRIT

CHAPTER NINE "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (1Jn 4:13) As in a great musical production there are certain dominant strains that convey to the listener's ear the master's motif, yet they in turn are supported by an accompaniment that equally expresses the master's theme, so in our Epistle. Light and Love are its dominant notes, expressive of our experience of GOD, yet back of them is always the supporting thought of Life, without which Light and Love could not be. The theme of the Apostle, as we have seen, is the Abiding Life, the life that is ours this side of Pentecost, the life in the Spirit. The Epistle begins by referring to the Life as manifested in CHRIST the Son (1Jn 1:1-2) and proceeds to trace that Life in its correspondent manifestation in us who, by believing upon Him, become sons and receive His Spirit. Just as, technically speaking, energy expresses itself as light and heat, so in the things of the Spirit. The life will show itself as light, rather than darkness; as love, rather than hatred. And as light and heat are impossible apart from energy, so the life is the basis, the key to all Christian experience.

Moreover, Light and Love are not the only expressions of Life. It has its own essential, inalienable attributes, characteristics that must come into their own if Christian experience is to be fully rounded out and Christian service be truly Christian in quality and achievement.

I Life at Its Source

John records the teaching of JESUS: "God is Spirit" (John 4:24), that is, Life in the absolute, in its essence, pure and unconditioned by anything outside itself.

1. IT IS ETERNAL. And when we speak of "Eternal Life" we are referring not merely to duration but to quality. Life in GOD does not end because it is unending; it has nothing in it that could cease to be. When JESUS says: "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish," He is stating the fact that salvation is the impartation of the divine nature, which is life; and that life is necessarily eternal-GOD has no other kind or quality of life to give. The enemy of life, death, has no power over it; there is nothing in it to "perish."

2. IT IS TRUE, to the exclusion of all error and untruth. JESUS gives to the third person of the Trinity the name, "Spirit of Truth." Wholly truth, in His very being, so foreign to the spirit of the world, that it cannot receive Him, does not see Him and does not know Him; yet to believers receiving Him, He ministers truth, leading and guiding them into it (John 14:17; John 16:13). So John sets the "Spirit of Truth" over against the "spirit of error" (1Jn 4:6).

3. IT IS HOLY. Holiness is an essential attribute of Life in GOD. It is, by nature, separate from everything unclean. Nothing that contaminates could by any possibility touch it or fasten itself upon it. Its very essence makes it a thing apart. It is with this in view that the Apostle makes the clear-cut separation between sin and sinlessness, tracing the one to its source, "of the devil," and the other

to the fact that we have been begotten with the sinless life and nature of GOD.

II Life as Experienced in Us The Life that is in GOD, and was manifest in the Word made flesh, now entrusts itself to us, seeking our hearts as its habitat. It goes without saying that the business of those receiving the Life is to see that, so far as possible, it is in us as it is in Him. In order that Light and Love may do their purifying, beautifying and transforming work, they must be sustained by a vital, vigorous Bow of Life. In fact, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the secret of all true Christian experience is a constant appropriating of Life from the Source. As experienced in us:

1. LIFE IS A BEGETTING. We do not grow into life. We do not struggle for it. We cannot buy it. We possess it as any child-by being born. We are begotten of GOD, born of the Spirit. As JESUS taught Nicodemus, this New Birth is the one and only doorway into the Kingdom.

Throughout the Epistle, some eight times, the form of address constantly used is "Little children." It is a reminder to all, young and old alike, of our New Birth.

We are the "born ones" of GOD; as the Scotch put it, His "bairns." This means, and it is the invariable viewpoint of this Epistle, that we are possessed of GOD's life and nature, members of His family. In consequence the appeal of this Epistle for Christian living is the most tender to be found anywhere - it is merely our filial duty, as the children of our Father.

2. LIFE IS AN ANOINTING. As believers we have an anointing from the Holy One (1Jn 2:20), which becomes an inward, personal teaching (1Jn 2:27), serving to fortify us against the wiles and seductions of false doctrine. In other words, the Spirit who imparted to us the life of GOD also endowed us with the mind of GOD. The result is a spirit of discernment that detects the "antichrists" that characterize this "last time" (1Jn 2:18), people who turn aside from the truth, deny the Deity of CHRIST and pervert the plain way of life (1Jn 2:19-21).

How gracious of our GOD, in view of the false systems of our day, to provide such an anointing as a surety against false beliefs with all their plausible seductions. "The sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." In the light of this teaching it may well be doubted whether those who are led away by the errors of one Russell, Mrs. Eddy, etc., ever were born again, else they would have the anointing that discerns the error. John reasons: "If they had been of us, they would have remained with us."

3. LIFE IS AN ASSURING. One of the most significant words in this entire Epistle is "know." It occurs thirty-seven times. The Gospel was written that we might "have life"; the Epistle, that we might "know that we have life" (John 20:31; 1Jn 5:13). Life in the Spirit is conducive to a knowledge that is more positive and immediate than mere reassuring. It goes deeper than the head; it is of the heart. This knowledge is a consciousness of truth and reality, wrought as a conviction in the soul. Just as I have an inherent consciousness, which is far more than knowledge gleaned from a birth record, that I am my father's son, so is the assurance ministered by the Spirit to those who live a life of abiding in Him. To go through these "knows" of the Apostle of Assurance will bring rich returns in the coin of heavenly confidence.

- Not only do we know Him; "we know that we know Him."

- Not only have we passed from death unto life; "we know that we have passed from death unto life."
- Not only are we of the truth; "we know that we are of the truth."
- Not only does He abide in us; "we know that He abideth in us."
- Not only do we dwell (abide) in Him; "we know that we dwell in Him."
- Not only do we have eternal life; "we know that we have eternal life."
- Not only does GOD hear prayer; "we know that He hears us."
- Not only are we of GOD; "we know that we are of God."

III Life as Expressed through Us The responsibility for letting the Life find expression through us, His children, is clear and conclusive. John reasons it thus: "Because as He is, we also are in this world." Note the "also" - it is the Apostle's favorite phrase for linking our living with our Lord's in inescapable responsibility.

He came in the flesh, that the Life might be manifested through Him. Now He has given us His Spirit that we also, possessed of the same Life, may show forth its essential character. It should be equally clear, as the very ABC of Christian living, that the possibility of acquitting ourselves for such a high responsibility lies in freely drawing upon the Life at its Source, letting it have its unhindered way in us, then passing it on to our fellows. But how shall we give such Life its rightful expression through us?

1. LIFE IS A FELLOWSHIP FAMILYWARD. In this Epistle we find ourselves in the bosom of a family - the family of GOD. We are brothers each to the other. It is in this intimate association of the twice-born children of GOD that Christian living finds its foremost sphere of duty - people of whatever natural diversity, yea even antipathy, demonstrating their kinship in CHRIST, living in "fellowship one with another," loving one another with the very love of GOD, all the outbreathing of the indwelling Spirit. No apologetic for the Christian faith is more greatly needed today than that of a new reality in the bond of life and love among GOD's people. For this the world waits to be convinced.

2. LIFE IS A WITNESS WORLDWARD. In 1Jn 5:1-21, ten times in five verses occurs the Greek word for "witness" (albeit in its different uses as the Authorized Version provides).

"It is the Spirit that beareth witness." He is the great witnesser, bearing witness through the Word concerning the Son and the way of life through Him. This witness, when we have believed it, makes our own salvation sure to us. But this witness does not terminate upon us; rather, through us who have received it is it to be given to the world. Nor is our witness less of life than of lips. The truth of it is to be seen as much as heard. Thus the whole teaching of the Epistle, its appeal that we walk as He walked and love as He loved, is crystallized in the practical demand that the Christian live a testimonial life before the world, commending His salvation by its evident power to transform and satisfy. This furnishes one more angle of appeal, added to all that has gone before, calling the child of GOD to a life of separation. If the love of the world still grips his heart, leaving him unchanged both inwardly and outwardly, how can he convince that world of the worth of his

faith?

3. LIFE IS A BOLDNESS GODWARD. Twice the Apostle turns to the Godward expression of our life in prayer. Both times he employs this word, "confidence" or "boldness toward God" (1Jn 3:21; 1Jn 5:14). Both times, also, there is an "if" conditioning our success in prayer. The ability to approach GOD with boldness depends upon the life that is back of the praying. It must be a life that leaves us with an uncondemning heart, conscious that its uppermost desire is to "keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." When we were younger in the Christian life, in our eagerness to please Him we set about to catalog His commandments with a view to keeping them, as the key to our confidence toward Him. But in so doing we were overlooking the fact that, to save us from all bondage to legalism, in the next verse He proceeds to give the epitome of His commandments:

"And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment" (1Jn 3:23).

Believing on the Name, than which there is none other, we have life from GOD and become members of the family of GOD. Loving one another (and "love is the fulfilling of the law") we live as members of the family. How simple it sounds! And it is. Such a life abides in Him, is well pleasing to Him, has boldness toward Him. When we maintain the line of communication, unbroken at any point, we can approach GOD with the confidence of children coming to their Father; and as we wait there in His presence with supreme desire that all self-willing should be set aside for His supremely perfect will, "we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1Jn 5:15). Nor does this privileged prayer-life terminate upon ourselves; it is quickly turned into the channel of intercession for others, chief of all for the members of the family of faith (1Jn 5:16; cf. Eph 6:18-19). The Christlike Life This is the only life that tells, for it is the only life that GOD can use. All that savors of the flesh, all sin and unbelief, all that partakes of darkness, all hatred or lack of love, all conformity to the Christ-refusing world - these He cannot use. But, blessed be GOD, He has given us His Spirit for this very purpose, that He might free us from bondage to all such and bring us out into the liberty of the sons of GOD, even to a life of conformity to His own Son. This is the life that tells. Not merely is it better to live for Him than to work for Him; it is the only way, without which we cannot work for Him. There is no substitute. It is His own life in us that He uses. This incident comes to us from the mission field: A man was about to be recalled because of apparent inability to meet certain conditions of language, etc. But his fellow-workers protested, saying, "Please do not recall him, for his life makes up for all our talking." Were we able fully to abide in Him that He might perfectly abide in us; could our lives reveal only CHRIST and others see "no man, save Jesus only" - such a life on the part of GOD's people would deliver a spiritual shock that would startle this old world out of its age-long unbelief.

04.10. THE VICTORY - THREEFOLD AND THREE.TENSE

THE VICTORY - THREEFOLD AND THREE.TENSE

CHAPTER TEN "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1Jn 5:4) The experience of Light, Love and Life, as depicted by the Apostle, beautiful in its simplicity and wholly satisfying, is not altogether easy of attainment. It has its enemies. Hence the words, "victory" and "overcome" (1Jn 2:13-14; 1Jn 4:4; 1Jn 5:4-5). The Abiding Life is a life of victory. And the victory is well within our reach, since the resources are of His own providing. Nay, they are Himself: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1Jn 4:4).

I The Threefold Enemy A study of the above citations reveals a threefold enemy: the wicked one; the world; the self-life, that in us to which the former two direct the appeal of their blandishments. Scripture uniformly lists the three: "the world, the flesh, the devil."

There is no difficulty in correlating this threefold enemy with the threefold Gospel. They are actively and aggressively opposed to allegiance to GOD the Father; to faith in, confession of, devotion to, GOD the Son; to life in, and surrender to, the HOLY SPIRIT. They are the threefold enemy of the threefold experience of Life, Light and Love. And yet, sad to say, many confessed followers of CHRIST, children of grace, destined for glory, not only "fall" for their subtleties but glibly declare that they "can see no harm in them."

1. THE WICKED ONE. Himself fallen into a state of open rebellion against GOD, he is not content that any man should own allegiance to GOD. Jealous of fealty to Him he came to our first parents with a threefold temptation (Gen 3:6) . We read of nothing evil in itself that he asked them to do. His purpose was to sever the life-cord between GOD and man, diverting man's allegiance from GOD to himself. This he accomplished, as history eloquently attests. And today he is doing all possible to prevent a reunion. When, however, such a union is set up through the saving grace of GOD, he does all in his power to disrupt it, making his appeal through the world without and to the flesh within.

2. THE WORLD. The Greek word means world order or system. It is anything and everything that leaves GOD out. It is a system of thinking and living that does not count GOD essential. It proposes to satisfy man, intellectually, morally, spiritually, socially, economically, apart from GOD. In creed and conduct it is anti-christian; it has its own way of believing and living. So the Apostle, when once he has mentioned the matter of overcoming the wicked one, links with him the world system he has set up and warns GOD's children against it: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1Jn 2:15-17).

Note that the threefold temptation used in Eden is here ascribed to the world. But the Apostle continues, passing from conduct to creed (1Jn 2:18 ff). The world is "antichrist" in its attitude of denying the Deity of CHRIST and the Fatherhood of GOD, solely through Him. "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1Jn 2:22-23).

Soon John returns to the same subject, warning against the world's anti-christian creed of unbelief and the spirits actuating it: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of GOD: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1Jn 4:1-3).

If believers, through the years and particularly in our day, had taken seriously these warnings, continuing to abide in Him and in the anointing of His Spirit (1Jn 2:24-27), the world could not have dictated the denials of essential Christian truth which now stalk, unblushing and unrebuked, through the pulpits and counsels of the Church. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1Jn 5:4). Faith in whom? JESUS as the Son of GOD (1Jn 5:5). It is a great conflict; the promise is: "To him that overcometh."

3. THE FLESH. What movings the self-life, with its unworthy passions and purposes, has within us. How often we have felt them, been shamed by them, realized our own impotence before them. The flesh in us is the enemy of the Spirit in us, the one "lusting" against the other. The sin of pampering the self-life is that we thereby defeat the gracious purposes of the Spirit in us checkmating His every move to transform us into His likeness. Thus life continues on a fleshly basis, unbeautified, unsanctified. But more. It is the flesh to which the world and the wicked one make their appeal.

Thus we become their easy dupes. We have paved the way for worldly creed and worldly conduct to creep into our lives, much to the satisfaction of Satan. Why does any Christian ever deny the Blood? or the Resurrection? Only through the pride and conceit of the flesh. And who are pleased by such denials? Only Satan and his world-system. The antidote, so persistently urged by the Apostle, is the Abiding Life. As one has well said, "Detachment from the world results from attachment to CHRIST." As we abide in Him, the Spirit quickens His life and nature in us, we have His mind and walk in His ways.

Therefore, John urgently pleads, "Abide!" "Abide!"

II The Three Tense Victory The very soul of our Epistle is the victory of the Christian life - the victory of a genuine Christian experience.

- It is victory through our Lord JESUS CHRIST.
- It is victory through the HOLY SPIRIT, in the reality of the Abiding Life.
- It is victory through the Father's guardian, keeping power, exercised toward His children.
- It is victory over every foe, within and without.

- It is victory over all fear.
- It is victory because CHRIST died, and because He lives.
- It is victory because CHRIST came, and because He is coming again.
- It is victory because GOD is Light, and Love, and Life, and because we know Him.
- It is victory for the past, for the present, and for the future, covering the whole gamut of human need and experience.

1. VICTORY FOR THE PAST. It rests in the person, worth and saving work of our Lord JESUS CHRIST: "Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin" (1Jn 3:5).

- It is in the fact that "our sins are forgiven us for His name's sake" (1Jn 2:12).

- It is in the fact that "we have passed from death unto life" - and "we know" it (1Jn 3:14).

- It is the fact that eternal life has become ours in perpetuity, with the HOLY SPIRIT witnessing, personally, within us, what GOD's Word has witnessed to us: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1Jn 5:10-12).

2. VICTORY FOR THE FUTURE. It rests in the fact that CHRIST is going to "appear a second time," for our complete, perfect and final salvation. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1Jn 3:2-3). In that coming for His own we will be brought into His immediate presence - wondrous privilege for one-time sinners, "without God and without hope in the world" - since "we shall see Him as He is." The sight will be transforming, beyond all that we have here experienced: "We shall be like Him." That likeness is to extend even to our body which, in His coming, He will transform "that it may be conformed to the body of His glory." It will bring to full accomplishment His predestinating purpose in us, namely, that we should be "conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." What a prospect! No wonder that such a "hope" has the practical effect of personal purity, even at this present time. To fail to entertain this hope is to lose part of our God-given victory.

3. VICTORY FOR THE PRESENT. We consider this last because it is the chief concern of the Epistle. The past and future aspects of victory are viewed as making the present possible and real. It rests in the fact of the HOLY SPIRIT's abiding presence in the believer, with the correspondent presence of CHRIST the Victor above. It is the Abiding Life, lived out in a continuously satisfying experience of His sustaining power, that power brought to bear upon every phase of life's present problems.

It is victory over sin. Not in saying we have no sin - as though we had this victory in ourselves, independent of Him; not that, but rather in so living and walking that we continually appropriate the victory of Calvary. It is the continuous cleansing of the Blood (1Jn 1:7), claimed through our

conscious and confessed need of it (1Jn 1:8-10). But the provision goes further than this. CHRIST not only died; He lives, and is now our "Advocate with the Father." (The same Greek word, translated "Comforter," as is applied to the HOLY SPIRIT here with us).

He is our Lawyer, pleading our case. And His plea is Himself - the fact that He is JESUS CHRIST "the righteous" and that we are in Him (1Jn 2:1-2). Through His advocacy any temporary lapse is turned to victory without being suffered to settle in blight upon the soul or becloud its spiritual horizon. He is our propitiation and our righteousness; in Him and through Him we are as though we had never sinned.

It is victory that is continuously ministered and assured by His presence indwelling us.

Says the Apostle:

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1Jn 4:4). This is the keynote of the Epistle.

It is the key of victorious living. As we abide in Him and He in us we need not fall into sin;

- darkness does not enshroud us - we walk in the light; disobedience does not beguile us - we keep His commandments; worldliness does not bewitch us - we desire to do His will; false doctrine does not mislead us - we know the true teaching; hatred does not seize upon us - we love one another with His love; our love does not run to mere words - we are willing to pay the price of genuine love expressed in deeds of kindness and helpfulness;

- we are not the easy prey of the wicked one's wiles - we "keep ourselves," as GOD's children, that he touch us not.

III The Threefold Means of Victory It becomes evident that the secret of victory is simply the Abiding Life. As we abide we put ourselves in the way of appropriating every provision He has made for a life of victory. Were we able perfectly to abide in Him, our life would approximate His life. Could our life be wholly and solely the expression of His life in us, we would not sin.

These considerations point to the fact that the practical realization of a truly Christian life waits upon our practice of the presence of GOD - anything that makes the bond of union between us and Him vital, that renders Him a transforming force in daily experience.

GOD has appointed certain specific means that minister spiritual health, that make for reality in the Abiding Life - means so essential as to preclude the possibility of success if ignored or neglected.

These means are threefold, as mentioned by our Apostle: the Word of GOD, abiding in us; an emboldened prayer-life; a keeping of His Word in a worthy, obedient walk.

1. THE WORD OF GOD. This is the means mentioned in the first section (1Jn 2:14). It is His means for ministering Light to us: "The entrance of Thy Word giveth light." And what a means it is to this end. GOD has promised that it shall not return unto Him void, empty, fruitless (Isa 55:10-11). It is declared to be "living and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb 4:12). Does anyone desire a life freed from the thralldom of sin, the simple means are at hand in a faithful following of the Psalmist's example:

"Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Psa 119:11). Do we weary of bearing the impress of the world in our plastic, fleshly nature? Here is GOD's way out: "But we all" - the common privilege of Christians as compared with the one experience of Moses - "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2Co 3:18).

Moses let GOD talk to him, and his face shone. With the Bible in hand, the mirror for seeing His face, whensoever we will we may have a like experience of its transforming power, making us over into the likeness of His glory. Saints in all the ages, having recourse to His Word, have proved its strangely quickening, sustaining, glorifying power. To root out sin and self, to make us over into the likeness of our Lord, it must be given its day-by-day play upon the believer's heart. Its neglect is suicidal and fatal to the spiritual life.

2. THE PRAYER-LIFE. This is the means mentioned in the second or Love section (1Jn 3:21-22; 1Jn 5:14-15). Prayer is not merely, nor chiefly, getting things from GOD - although it is that. Prayer is GOD's provision for drawing out the love of His children toward Himself. He bids them come boldly. As they thus come, the heart-life is laid bare before Him. He has opportunity to search it, lift it to a higher level, make it altogether pleasing to Himself, then turn it into channels of self-sacrificing love to fellow-men. No Christian loves deeply, worthily, unselfishly, who is neglecting the prayer-life. Prayer, while conditioned upon the Abiding Life, has a gloriously quickening effect upon that life. As our Lord prayed, in the mount, He was transformed; out from His whole being, suffusing the veil of flesh, shone the life divine. Something of that same takes place in the soul and shines out through the face, whenever we have truly prayed. It slays the self-life; it quickens the spirit-life; it gives the love of GOD free rein over the heart-life. We need a new evaluation of prayer for its incomparable work within our own being, for the contribution it makes to the Abiding Life, in the constant, transforming communion of Father and child.

3. THE LIFE OF OBEDIENCE. This is the practical means pervading the entire Epistle, just as the theme of Life pervades all its pages.

We are so to live that we:

- "keep His commandments,"
- "keep His Word,"
- "do those things that are pleasing in His sight."

It is the Life lived out. No man has truth beyond what He is able and willing to prove in daily living. The life that abides in Him is the life that lives, not only in communion with Him but in conformity to Him. So the focal point of Christian doctrine is the appeal for a life that makes practical proof of it: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom 12:1-2).

If we would know the reality of the Abiding Life, let us draw a circle, defining the bounds of Christian living, into which we deliberately step, there to find fellowship with our Lord JESUS CHRIST, delighting ourselves in the things that He and we have in common, letting Him search out

the things in us that are foreign to our fellowship, that they may be put away, rejoicing in all that the circle includes "In Him," renouncing without reserve all that the circle excludes as not in Him.

"Keep Yourselves from Idols" With these words our Epistle concludes.

What a climax! How succinctly they state the sine qua non of success in spiritual things. An idol is anything that claims a supreme place in our lives, anything that displaces GOD, anything that seeks to be a substitute for GOD. The covetous man is an idolater (Eph 5:5) ; he is letting money, possessions, things take the place of GOD. The ambitious business man, the devotee of pleasure, the one whose life centers wholly in some dear one - all such are in the danger zone of idolatry. The Abiding Life is the very opposite. It keeps CHRIST central. It makes Him its center, sphere, and circumference. It says with the Psalmist: "I have set the Lord always before me." It lets Him fill and satisfy the soul, saying, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee."

Discipleship must ever subject itself to the Lord's searching of its aims and purposes. As He turned to His first followers, saying, "What seek ye?" (John 1:38), so would He search us today.

What Seek Ye?

What seek ye? Earth's glory, or favor, or pleasure, The things which attract by their glitter and show, The worlding's power, his ease or his treasure, Which th' god of this world can most fully bestow? The many are seeking the things which will perish, And few care for those which will not pass away. My friend, let me earnestly ask you the question - What is your ambition, what seek ye today?

What seek ye? The Saviour is beckoning onward, He offers a kingdom, a crown, and a throne; But th' way to attain them lies often through sorrow, While th' cross and th' path to be trod are His own - Are you willing to follow wherever He leadeth? Do you seek but the things which His favor can give, If so, you will find at the end of the journey That by dying to self, you most truly do live.

What seek ye? To dwell with the King for His pleasure, To follow His precepts, to do but His will; To seek His approval, His smile, and His favor, And then to wait on Him obedient and still?

If so, you may not gain the world's commendation, But His peace and His blessing are richer, my friend;

E'en now in this life you may taste His abundance, Then yonder the glory that knoweth no end.

Two paths are before you, which one will you follow? The one which leads upward to treasures on high, Or the one which looks pleasant, alluring, attractive, But leads to the things which must perish and die?

Two paths lie before you, and you have the choosing - Oh, pause and consider, choose wisely, I pray! The things of eternity claim your attention;

All others are fleeting - what seek ye to-day?

- A. E. R.

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