

WORDS OF TRUTH

FOR THE

SAINTS OF GOD.



*Sixth Series.*

# WORDS OF TRUTH

FOR THE

SAINTS OF GOD.

---

SIXTH SERIES.

---

“ These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so.” Acts xvii. 11.

---

LONDON :

I. K. CAMPBELL, HIGH HOLBORN  
TRACT DÉPOT, 26, BELMONT ROAD, JERSEY.

---

1853.

---

JERSEY :—GOSSET, PRINTER,  
QUEEN-STREET

---

## CONTENTS.

---

	Page.
Jehoshaphat—a word on world-border- ing.....	1
Sin in the flesh—a word on perfection.	57
Christ's sympathy—a word on temp- tation.....	107
All in Christ, and Christ all—a word on spoilings and beguilings.....	121
Jonathan—a word on working with God.....	153
Lot's choice—a word on present ad- vantage.....	169
The Waters of Strife—a word on un- advised speaking.....	185
Extracts.....	212
Omniscience—a word on God's search- ings.....	217
Extracts.....	245
Faith, not discussion — a word on knowing.....	249

	Page.
Fathers, young men, and babes in Christ	
—a word on “abiding in Him”...	265
Thine eye—is it single?—a word on	
serving.....	281
Words on serving.....	296
Uzziah, strengthened, and strong—a	
word of admonition .....	305
Christ, inside the Veil, outside the Camp	
—a word on “Where am I?” .....	313
Christ, not creeds—a word on “What	
have I?” .....	329
A word on faithfulness and catholicity	341
God’s love, gratuitous and motive—a	
word on “Why do I this?” .....	345
“Surely I come quickly.” ( <i>Poetry</i> )...	344
The well on the way. ( <i>Poetry</i> ).....	367
Doxology .....	368

THAT the Lord may use these pages, to the glory of His own name, in the comfort, edification, and guidance of His people, is the prayer of the compiler of them.

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

## Jehoshaphat—A Word on World-bordering.

---

2 CHRONICLES xvii.-xx.

---

“Come out from among them, and be ye separate.”

---

IN tracing the inspired record of the houses of Israel and Judah, from the period of their separation, under Rehoboam, we can, without difficulty, recognize the marked distinction between them. The line of kings from Jeroboam to Hosea presents only a dark and sorrowful catalogue of evil-doers in the sight of the Lord; we look in vain for an exception. Even Jehu, who manifested so much zeal and energy in the abolition of idolatry, proved, in the sequel, that his heart was far from being right with God. In fact, a dark cloud of idolatry seems to

further, that he comes under the Spirit's benediction. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours"—yes, and rest from their conflicts, snares, and temptations, also.

---



## Sin in the Flesh:—a Word on Perfection.

COL. iii. 1, 5; 1 JOHN iii. 2, 3.

---

“Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

IN saying that sin will remain in us until we either put off the body, or are changed, (for we “wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body,” Rom. viii. 23,) it is not at all meant that we should walk according to that evil principle; on the contrary, we ought to walk *in the Spirit* (so as not to “fulfil the lusts of the flesh” Gal. v. 16), although ‘the flesh’ still exists.

Nor is this a mere question about words. So soon as we assume that we *can* be perfect, and there be no longer sin in us, a multitude of

things, which the Word of God calls sin, cease to be so in *our* estimation; the contrast between our own condition and that of Jesus Christ becomes less evident; we attenuate sin; true sanctification suffers in proportion; and the distinction between sin and sins is wholly lost sight of. It is not difference on a point of knowledge or speculation; the question involved is, 'What is sin?' a question, evidently, fundamental, as also, practically, of the last importance.

But it may be well to anticipate here a possible difficulty. 'What is *the flesh*?' asks the reader, 'what is there more in man than body, soul, and spirit? and the Apostle tells Christians, to whom he is writing (1 Thess. v. 23): "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord

Jesus Christ.”’ And we reply, that Adam, before the fall, had body, soul, and spirit; but that, after the fall, there was in him, in addition, a will in rebellion against God—sin (that which the Word of God calls ‘the flesh,’) a something which “lusteth (or struggleth) against the Spirit,” in the man in whom the Spirit of God dwells, and which “cannot be subject to the law of God.” (Rom. viii. 7.) It is certain that there are few words more frequently employed in the Word of God than ‘the flesh,’ and no subject more often and carefully treated, bound up as it is with the whole doctrine of the ‘new man.’

The introduction of sin has completely altered the nature of our relationship with God. I could never more return to the condition of Adam before the fall; I now partake of the divine nature (2 Pet. i.

4), by promises infinitely superior to anything enjoyed by Adam. God has not restored the first Adam, He has united us to the *Second*. Our glory consists not in ignorance of evil,\* but in the enjoyment of the re-

\* “ What Satan gave as a promise to man, God pronounced to be true, but man had it by disobedience. He knew evil in guilt, he knew it in disobedience, he knew it in the admitted power of sin over his soul, he knew it as a creature over whom it had power, he knew it by and with a bad conscience. God knows good and evil, but He knows it by the infinite and intrinsic possession of good, and Himself being good, and therefore knows evil as that which is infinitely repudiated by Him; and in this, therefore, His holiness is infinitely seen. . . . This knowledge of good and evil may be darkened in its judgment, because a false rule or guide may be introduced.—God may give up to a reprobate mind, or Satan introduce a law of darkness, having power to deceive or blind, which is not *God’s*, and which may be made *its* estimate of right; but *the knowledge of good and evil is inherent in fallen human nature*. Man unfallen was innocent, he knew not

sults of a complete victory over it. The law (though, in its essence, the rule of every pure being before God) could no longer characterize our condition, for we are very far from being pure, according to its requirements. *Grace* does not exhibit the creature in its perfection; it is the introduction of the nature, goodness, and power of the Creator into the midst of the evil, over which His perfections are victorious. Grace, therefore, recognises the evil over which it triumphs.

‘Sanctification’\* is based upon our union with Christ, risen and glori-

evil, but only beneficent good. Fallen man knows evil, with a conscience subject to judgment and hating God.”

\* It may be needful to observe here that the word sanctification is rarely used in Scripture in the sense in which we commonly use it, that is to say, its progressive sense. It more particularly designates an act of separation, a setting apart for God.

fied. A new life has been communicated, which, through the Holy Ghost, sees and occupies itself with Him (Phil. iii.), and which knows that, "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John iii. 2.) This life estimates everything according to the perfection of our state hereafter; it recognises that we have not as yet obtained the redemption of our body, and judges the 'old man,' root, trunk, and branches. Meanwhile, in walking according to this new life, the Christian "purifies himself as He is pure." \*

Assured of the love of God, actuated by the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, with joy and gladness of heart, he follows after the apprehension of that, for

\* Observe, it is not said here that he aims at growth in Christ, but that he "*purifies himself*" (not that he is pure) after the resemblance of Christ glorified.

which, also, he is apprehended of Him.\* By the power of the Holy Ghost he is changed into the same image, from glory to glory. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) By faith he is already partaker of a perfection, which, in its fulness, will be his when Jesus returns. "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working, whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

If then God gives us strength to walk in His ways, that strength

\* The progress of practical sanctification must not be confounded with justification, because practical sanctification is wrought in a saved soul that has eternal life. It is an entirely new thing, of which there is no trace before we have found Christ. Have you peace with God? the pardon of your sins? if not, the question is of the justification of a sinner.

is given through a knowledge, which, at the same time, makes us understand that we cannot, here below, attain to that even which we know. Thus (instead of an end which we can attain), to encourage us, He sets before us that, which hereafter shall, assuredly, be accomplished in us, but which preserves us ever in humility, ever in the sense that we *are not* all that we *would be*. But this very thing keeps us ever advancing towards our great end. The opposite principle, with a show of requiring only that which is right and suitable, is entirely at variance with the mind of God, and akin to *self-righteousness*; instead of holding fast, and being strong in, *His grace*, it says, 'I have attained.'

A full pardon, through grace, is ours at the very outset of our course, and, as its termination, a glory is set before us, the power of which is in-



us by the communication of the life of Christ, but the very nature and excellence of this glory make it evident to us that it is not a thing attainable here below. We "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 2.) We are "saved by hope." (Rom. viii. 24.) In the confidence of the certainty of God's grace, we press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. There shall we find ourselves in the presence of Him we have *known*, as the friend of our weakness, and the glory of our strength.

A word in passing on the separate state. There is an immense difference between my condition whilst in this body, and that of the soul, after this life, when the body has been put off; as there is, likewise, between the latter state and that in which the redemption of our body shall be completed in resurrection. After

death, the believer is "unclothed," but not "clothed upon." (2 Cor. v.) "Absent from the body," he is "present with the Lord." Though not perfected in the glory, he is, nevertheless, delivered from a body which had not as yet its portion in the resurrection (enjoyed, through the Holy Ghost, in the soul). This body, which caused him to groan whilst on earth (not, it is true, without consolation), and which makes all groan who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, has ceased to be a cause of groaning; that which held him bound (in fact, not in heart) to a creation still subject to the bondage of corruption, no longer binds; the link is severed. If the goal of his hope is not reached, in dying he has at least laid aside a burden, a soiled garment, that he may, at once and unhinderedly, enjoy the presence of the Lord, its pure air and genial warmth penetrating his soul now

freed from all obstruction. But death is not our Saviour. Death finds the believer already saved by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is risen with Him: this is already accomplished as to the soul, which, through the Holy Ghost, experiences the blessed result, and triumphs in a hope that maketh not ashamed. The putting off of the body adds nothing to our title in the presence of God, for we are there, by faith, what Jesus is there. We are merely stripped of a body which had not partaken of redemption, in order to be ushered into the presence of Jesus, awaiting that which remains, to wit, our being clothed with a body fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.

We wait for perfection (there only to be found), when, mortality being swallowed up of life, we shall be made like unto the Second Adam—

the accepted and glorified man, according to the purpose of God.

The Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, is "the seal" (not of fruits which He himself produces, but) of our redemption in Christ Jesus, the "earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His (God's) glory."

Man's Christianity works in order to obtain eternal life, not on the ground of eternal life being already ours, the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Again; to deny the existence of evil, in the sense in which we have been speaking, is to denaturalize *grace* in its essence, riches, counsels, and all its fulness. When the heart has got before it low views, in the belief that we have attained, our Christianity becomes debased and proud. It is the truth which sanctifies. All other sanctifi-

cation, notwithstanding appearances, is not according to God.

If nothing is properly sin, except a voluntary violation of the law of God,\* it follows, that the lusts, through which Paul was convinced of sin,† (Rom. vii.) were not such,

\* This very commonly received definition, derives apparent authority from a false translation of 1 John iii. 5. Upon it, to a very great extent, the formal judgment of the church as to what sin is, has been founded. That which the Apostle states is, not (as our translation has it) "sin is the *transgression of the law*," but 'sin is *lawlessness*;' or, the proposition being reciprocal, 'lawlessness (or insubordination) is *sin*.' Disobedience is sin. This may be proved in breaking the law, in a given instance; but there is a much higher characteristic of sin than the breaking of a commandment; viz., the spirit of disobedience.

† The Law was given to man in the flesh (already a sinner); and the New Testament teaches us, very clearly, that God did not give it in the thought that man *could keep*

and so with faults and sins of negligence. So that, when Paul says, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do," he was quite wrong in looking upon such things as sin, and still more so, in being thus distressed about them. (What can be less vo-

*it.* The carnal mind pretends to do so; but the Word tells us, that the Law of God was given to convince man of sin by the discovery that he did not keep it; so that sin might become by the commandment exceeding sinful. The Law entered, says the Apostle, that *the offence might abound*. Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; for without the Law sin was dead. (Rom. vii. 8.) Remark here, that sin produces concupiscence or lust. When the Law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet,' then Paul knew sin. 'The strength of sin is the Law,' says the same Apostle elsewhere. (1 Cor. xv. 56.) God's purpose, then, in giving the Law, was to convince man of the sin which was in him. There was no thought that man could or would keep it.

luntary than doing that which we ‘*would not*’ ?) This definition absolutely denies the existence of sin in the flesh—sin which dwells in us, even when it is subdued by the Spirit.\* It is a definition which attenuates the idea of sin, to make us satisfied with ourselves, instead of adoring the grace and goodness of our God. Assuredly, lust is sin ; my failures in the discharge of the duties of love, proceed from the sin which

\* If it be urged that we are under ‘the law of love,’ and it is thereby meant, that we are not now bound to fulfil the law given to Adam, or by Moses, but are under one which tolerates certain errors and deviations, (things that would have been condemned as sins,) the gospel becomes, not salvation by *grace*, but only a less rigorous law. The veil is rent—what is now our standard of sanctification ? The light of God’s holiness makes us judge as *sin* everything which was not in Christ while on earth, and which Christ risen cannot sanction. At the same time we see the complete sanctification of our persons by the blood of the Lamb.

is *in me*. These things were not in Christ. He was without sin; He ever and perfectly waited on, and did the will of God. He never acted, as I at times do, with precipitation. This zeal after the flesh (even when I am doing good with all my heart) will not be imputed to me, (not because it is not sinful, but) by reason of Christ's expiation of sin. These things result from a nature which is in me, and which was not in Christ. There is a principle at work in me, to bring forth evil fruit, which principle there was not in Him. I shall not be judged according to it, for Jesus has borne its guilt and put it away; but it is precisely on that very account that I have to judge it.

Ignorance, error, and the like, are sometimes spoken of by us as distinct from sin.\* It is written:

\* "And the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein



"If thine eye be single, thy *whole* body shall be *full* of light" (Matt. vi. 23); if, then, I am in error or darkness, the eye has been, in some respect, not single. There is but the alternative: "Thine eye is evil." A false judgment proceeds from wandering affections.

There is the confounding of *sin* with *sins*, that is to say, the confounding that which we do in following our evil nature, with that nature itself,\* and thus the denial of the very

he erred and *wist it not*, and it shall be forgiven him." (Lev. v. 18, 19.) There is no folly like that of making the blindness of our hearts to be God's estimate of sin; but let the evil and defilement be what it may, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin.

\* In order to elude the force of the declaration, "If we say that we *have no sin*, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John i. 8), it is sometimes commented on thus: 'If we say, that we *have not sinned*,' &c. But this conveys quite a different idea, and exposes the fundamental error of

existence of sin in one who has 'put on Christ.' We ought to walk 'after the Spirit,' and not 'after the flesh;' but, on the other hand, sin is in our nature. The injunctions not to 'walk after the flesh,' not to 'make provision for the flesh,' shew that it is a thing in itself evil;\* still the flesh is neither temptation, nor Satan; but something in man which is not at all a sin actually committed.

Do we find anything about 'the flesh' ceasing to exist? "The flesh lusteth," we are told, "against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the

a doctrine which confounds *sins* committed with the *sin* which dwelleth in us, in order to deny the latter.

\* When I abhor the evil, and the 'new man' rejects, with indignation, that which Satan presents, it is a temptation, not a sin. But lust in me is always sin. It will not be imputed to me, but that is solely and absolutely because of the *blood of Christ*. The new man judges it as sin.

flesh." Paul had need of a "thorn in the flesh" (something sent by God to arrest the workings of sin, and to prevent its hindering the apostle's labours), lest he should be puffed up through the abundance of revelations. (2 Cor. xii.) So that, it is plain, a man's being caught up to the third heaven had in no wise changed the nature and tendency of the flesh in its opposition and unthankfulness to God. The flesh is ever the same, and might have grown proud even of this exalted knowledge of God. The divine remedy did not consist in a change of the nature, but in some means of keeping under that nature, still evil. Again, Peter's was a humbling experience; though "filled with the Spirit," (Acts iv. 8,) he ceased to eat with the Gentiles (Gal. ii.), and walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel. And Paul, far from not regarding these things as sins,

withstood him to the face and reproved him before them all.

The question opened in the book of Job is this: Is a man full of grace, is a "perfect" man, wholly without sin? might such an one present himself before God, as having it not? or, on the contrary, is *sin* in him? and if through grace, his walk has indeed been after a manner worthy of his vocation, should he not still, nay, only the rather, have the sense of, and search thoroughly into his state before God? Instead of becoming self-satisfied by reason of the grace accorded, ought he not to judge himself? Forgetting the things which are behind, (his own past spiritual progress, save as in reference ever, and alone, to God,) and reaching forth unto those things which are before, in a humility, which, with the fulness of confidence in God, mistrusts itself, he should not merely watch, but *judge* himself,

having before God, the recognition on his soul of the *nature* that is there, although it may not *act*, which is, in no wise, necessary to our recognition of its existence.

Job is a man full of grace. "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." (Chap. i. 8.) He recounts his experience; and we at once perceive that his mind is taken up (not with the grace of God, or with the grace which is in God, but) with that which has been wrought in himself. He looks upon the manna placed in his hand; he keeps of it until the morning, and it breeds worms and stinks. (Ex. xvi. 19, 20.) The flesh lays claim to the effects of grace, and Job's conscience and heart become, in consequence, less impressed with the abounding goodness and perfect holiness of God. Occupied with his own goodness, that

of God is, necessarily, lost sight of in proportion. Contemplating his own holiness, that of God has by so much less hold on his conscience. But God, in love, sends him successive trials, in order to show him what is in his heart, to bring out thence the workings of sin, and lay them on his conscience. And thus he is called back to the contemplation of the goodness and perfection of God alone.

We learn from chapter xxix. Job's feelings as to his own holiness and grace. "When the ear heard me," he says, "then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was a robe and a diadem," &c. In truth, Job was a man full of grace; but, alas! he perceived it,

and his heart needed to be better instructed as to what he was before God.

Trials come. Job remains as exemplary in adversity, as he had before been in prosperity. (The root of sin was not yet touched.) He becomes even more remarkable for his patience than for his goodness, for Scripture bears this testimony of him: "Ye have heard of the patience of Job." (James v. 11.) But at length, God permits his friend to visit him, and proffer consolation, and Job, so noted for his patience, curses the day of his birth. What afflictions we can endure in secret! but no sooner do our friends become witnesses of them, than our pride is stirred. Man's compassion excites impatience.

What is the after result of these trials, and of the lessons reaped by Job through them? Instead of repeating, that the eye that saw him

gave witness to him, no sooner does he discern the Lord, than he exclaims ; “ Now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

Such is the history of the ‘ perfect man,’ according to the Bible.

Is this a rejoicing in iniquity? the endeavour to draw a dark and unfavourable picture of some of the most eminent saints? With all these saints, we rejoice in God, rather than in man, having learnt with them, that were we to justify ourselves, our own mouths would condemn us. In dwelling on the effect produced in ourselves, and not on the source in God, we manifest, unconsciously, the spirit of the Pharisee. The Pharisee (Luke xvii.) began by giving thanks—“ I thank thee, O God ;” that which characterises a *pharisaic* spirit, is not the omitting to thank God for our blessings: its essence is this, in place of saying, ‘ I



thank thee for what *Thou art*,' it says, 'I thank thee for what *I am*.' The Pharisee thinks of the grace given, and is lifted up, in place of thinking of the grace which gives, and which forgives.

It is worthy of notice here, that, after Pentecost, we do not find a single instance of a man's being spoken of as 'perfect.' There is an important reason for this. The gift of the Holy Spirit has rendered us capable of discerning and judging the 'old man,' through the full knowledge we have of the relation of the 'new man' to Jesus Christ. Under the former economy, one who, touching the commandments and ordinances of the law, walked blamelessly, might be said to be 'perfect.' The distinction between the 'old man' and the 'new,' was not then taught, as we know and are able to discern it.\*

\* With Paul, we now can say by the Spirit, "I live; yet not I, but *Christ* liveth in me"

The word 'perfect' is used with reference to each of the three great revelations of God—the Almighty (to Abraham), Jehovah (to Israel), and Father (to the Christian).

1st. God said to Abraham, "I am *the Almighty* God: walk before me, and be thou perfect;" (Gen. xvii. 1;) which means, that Abraham was to walk before God, ever confiding in His *Almighty* power. Abraham did not; he failed in respect of this; and lied, (Gen. xx. 2,) precisely on that account. It was no question of sin in the fallen nature of Abraham; it had to do with his acting in confidence in the almighty power of

(Gal. ii. 20); and in another place, "It is no more I that do it, but *sin* that dwelleth in me." (Rom. vii. 20.) The being made free, spoken of in the 8th of Romans, has rendered us capable of judging the old man, as a nature condemned by God, because we assuredly know that there is another nature, in which we live, and *by which we can thus judge it.*

God. As to fact, he still had sin, and fell.

2nd. The Israelites were instructed: "Thou shalt be perfect with *the Lord* (Jehovah) thy God." (Deut. xviii. 13.) This was in respect of their not imitating the abominations of the Canaanites in their idolatries, and not at all a question of sin, or the absence of it, in the heart of this or that Israelite. In the same book, (chap. xxix. 4,) Moses tells them, "Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." It referred solely to faithfulness to God in the rejection of every species of idolatry.

3rd In the sermon on the Mount, we read, "Be ye perfect, even\* as

\* Observe the difference of expression: it is not said, "Be ye perfect *before me*," or "*with thy God*," (as to Abraham and the Israelites,) but "*as your Father*."

*your Father* which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.) The Lord Jesus Himself explains it by what goes before. This perfection consists in acting in love, and not according to the law of retaliation ("an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"); it is to act toward men on the principle of the Divine conduct toward us, according to the grace of our heavenly Father. It does not say, 'Present to God such a character of perfection, that you may be accepted of, or be made well pleasing to Him;' but, 'Ye are the children of your heavenly Father;' show forth, therefore, *His* character toward the world: *for* He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. He acts in *grace*, and not according to law; you saved sinners, you are the *proof*, be the *witnesses* of it; the publicans love those who love them—your heavenly Father

loves His enemies, acts by this rule; 'be ye perfect,' &c. There is no allusion to the root of sin in our nature; it is no question whether or not sin is in the flesh, but of the principle which ought to regulate the conduct of '*children of God*,' in contrast with law, or with natural justice.

There are, however, several passages, which, from being looked at apart from their context, or misunderstood as to their true sense or bearing, have, as experience proves, been the occasion of difficulty to sincere Christians. A few of them are here referred to, in the endeavour to establish their true meaning.

I. "*I am crucified with Christ*." (Gal. ii. 20.) It is so far from true that the Apostle (who, without question, was eminently faithful) is speaking only of himself, or of his own state of sanctification here, that

he elsewhere affirms that *all* Christians are crucified with him. In this same epistle, he asserts, that "*they who are Christ's* have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. v. 24.) It is no question of 'the reception of Christ by certain souls for their sanctification,'\* but that which is true of *all* Christians. This is plainly taught in the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, (from the first to the 11th verse,) where he says: "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death," &c. Again, "Our old man

\* A specious form assumed by error, is this; 'we ought not to *seek sanctification* by human effort, but, by receiving Christ as our sanctification, the germ of sin is destroyed, and we are perfectly holy, and without sin or evil concupiscence.' We shall never, indeed, by any strength of man, attain to sanctification, but, in looking to Christ, we find an abundant spring of life and holiness.

has been crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;" and again, "He that is dead is free from sin." The apostle deduces hence this clear and simple conclusion, (not, 'you have therefore no more evil concupiscence;' not, 'you are therefore dead to all sinful inclination,' but,) "let not sin, therefore, *reign* in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof"—a poor, miserable, and unintelligible conclusion, to those who assert that sin no longer exists in one who is crucified with Christ. If sin no longer exist, weak is the inference, 'Let it not, therefore, *reign*,' and to say, 'Let it not reign,' is incompatible with the thought that it no longer exists. The conclusion drawn by the Holy Ghost here, is continually, that of the Word of God in similar passages elsewhere. Paul, for instance, writes to the Co-

lossians: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" and tells them: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," &c. (Col. iii.) And would we know *how* the Christian is dead, we have only to read the 11th, 12th, and 20th verses of the preceding chapter. To be dead, is really true of *all* Christians, according to the mind of God. The same remarks apply to Rom. viii. 10-12.

II. "*Being now made free from sin.*" (Rom. vi. 18, 22.) The apostle tells those to whom he writes, that he speaks to them "after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of their flesh." The term "made free" is used by him in contradistinction to a state of *slavery*, and he adds, by way of marking the contrast, that they have become servants to God. It is a simple illustration of slaves and freedmen, introduced by the apostle, to make himself



better understood. Moreover, the condition spoken of is that of *all* Christians, without exception.

III. "*As He* (Christ) *is, so are we in this world.*" (1 John iv. 17.) We are told in the preceding chapter: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure;"—what hope? That of being "like Him—for," it is added, "we shall see Him as He is." So that to be, whilst "in this world," (and not merely when He comes,) "as He is," is to be as Jesus is now in glory, and not as He was (that which is nowhere said in the Word). But it is certain, that, in our present state, we are not, in ourselves, as He is. An attentive examination of the whole passage will show what it is the Holy Ghost designs to teach. "In this was *manifested* the love of God toward us," we are told (v. 9), "because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we

might live through Him :” and further (v. 17), “Herein is love with us *perfected*, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world.” Love perfected with us, does not make us say, ‘so that we may be this in ourselves,’ but ‘that we may have boldness in the day of judgment;’ and what gives this boldness? God has manifested His love in sending His Son into the world, &c. He has completed (or perfected) this love, in setting us before Himself in Christ. We are not (He is) personally in the glory; but we are perfectly *as He is*, before God. Accepted in the Beloved; loved, as He is loved; righteous, as He is righteous; in principle and in hope, we are made partakers of His glory. Our union with Him is a real thing; whoso touches us, touches Him. He can say, (speaking of us,) as He did to Saul of Tarsus, “Why

persecutest thou *Me?*” God, in Christ, manifested His love to man. Man, in Christ, is presented to God in the perfectness of Christ’s acceptance, and has the enjoyment of this, through the Holy Ghost, in the new nature communicated, and by which we participate in it. This nature manifests itself in a walk according to its own principles. But the old man is not changed, though judged in thought and way.

IV: “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment; he that feareth *is not made perfect in love.*” (1 John iv. 18.) This refers to that thorough confidence in the love of God, that sets the heart at liberty in His presence, and gives peace and joy in communion with Him. It has not any thing to do with the absence of sin in the flesh. His love is shed abroad in our hearts—“not that we loved Him, but that He loved

us." God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us. Made partakers of the divine nature, and filled with the Holy Ghost, we are filled with love, (the consciousness of His love,) and, consequently, we love after a divine manner. But it does not follow that the flesh is changed. The soul, filled with the Holy Ghost, thinks of the love which is in God, and not of the love we have for God.

V. "*Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*" (1 John iii. 9.) The apostle, here and in similar passages of his epistle, predicates that which is true of *all* Christians (not of certain Christians who *have* attained 'perfection,' so that they no longer sin, while other Christians have *not*). It is those who are 'born of God.' As a distinctive mark between them and the children of the devil, he brings for-

ward the character of that nature which they have received from Christ, and, consequently, that of their life and conduct. He that committeth sin is of the devil. (v. 8.) So that according to the idea refuted, every one who is not 'perfect' is of the devil. It may be replied that there are many scholars in one and the same class, who, individually, have made very different progress. But this is said of the entire class, and does not refer to the greater or less progress of particular scholars.

VI. "*Let us go on unto perfection.*" (Heb. vi. 1.)—We find, on examining the passage, that this has no reference to the 'state of sanctification,' but to advancing in *knowledge*. The apostle is contrasting "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" (as a believing Jew might have understood them before Pentecost), and the knowledge, which the "Holy Ghost sent down from

heaven " gives of the fulness of the glory of the Son of Man, exalted above all. The signification of the word 'perfect' in several other passages is similar, and has no reference whatever to the presence or absence of sin.

VII. " Let us, therefore, *as many as be perfect*, be thus minded." (Phil. iii. 15.) Paul adds (*v.* 12, 13), " not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. . . I count not myself to have apprehended." Jesus Christ had apprehended him for the resurrection from the dead. Having learned the purpose of Jesus, he pressed towards the mark, and, in so doing, acknowledged the imperfection of his actual condition.

VIII. "*Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master.*" (Luke vi. 40.) — This refers to the principles of the believer's conduct — the complete reception of the principles of his Master. See the whole passage.

There is here no allusion to the *nature* of the disciple, but to the light and principles which ought to guide him. We can admit of no example, but the perfect walk of Jesus Christ Himself. But Christ, in His nature, was without sin, and we were shapen in iniquity; and, although I put off the old man, and put on the new, the work of God does not consist in restoring the first Adam here below, but in communicating the life of the *Second*, to whom I shall be made conformable, when I see Him as He is; and never till then.

IX. “There is *no concord between Christ and Belial*.” (2 Cor. vi. 15.) This is referred to here on the ground of its being sometimes made to affirm, that Christ and Belial cannot dwell in the same temple. The saint’s body *is not* the temple of Belial; it *is* the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19), although

the root of *sin* still remain in us. Christ and Belial do subsist together. They were together in the world, of which Belial himself was 'the prince,' when Jesus was on the earth. To say that there is '*no concord*' between them is a totally different thing.

Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. Do we find Paul turning back to rest upon his own feelings? His conscience bears him good witness, ("I know nothing by myself,") "yet am I not hereby justified," he says, "but He that judgeth me is the Lord." (1 Cor. v. 4.) In vain we search the whole Bible for a witness given by the Holy Ghost to our souls of our complete 'sanctification.' We clearly see in Scripture that we are "children of God," "heirs of God," objects of His perfect love; that, in communion with Him, we have the enjoyment of His love, that we glory



in Him. But as to entire 'sanctification,' we find it not at all; it is a notion which can in no way be made to accord with the true 'perfection'—that 'perfection' which is ours, already enjoyed by us in hope, but which will be completed only in the resurrection. It is an error connected with a host of other errors, and destructive of some of the most precious truths and consolations of the gospel.

A knowledge of God's perfect love through the Holy Ghost produces, necessarily, in us a reciprocity of love (feeble, doubtless, but real and pure). We manifest the divine nature. God dwells in us, and we in Him. The love with which He loves us is shed abroad in our hearts, and the consciousness we have of this shews itself in love towards Him; the brightness of His countenance beams on ours, and we reflect the mild and powerful rays. But as it is through

the gift of the Holy Ghost that we know the love of God, so, by the same Spirit, the love of our hearts responds, without effort, to His love, so known. If I am told that God demands this love, that He requires it as indispensable, you place me under law, and do away with the very principle of justification; *grace* is set aside, the grand gospel principle that God justifies the ungodly. (Rom. iv. 5.) In confounding this love, where it exists, with perfect holiness and the extinction of sin, I evidence a deep ignorance of my own heart.

The soul set at liberty, and having tasted of this love, filled, absorbed with it, may suppose (the capacity of the heart being limited), that nothing else does or ought to exist in it. But sin exists ever in our nature, and more, it germinates at times, precisely because we stop at the effect of love instead of being occupied with the

source. No sooner do we turn in upon self and the effect grace has produced in us, than communion with the spring is interrupted, and the effects of grace become, through the deceitfulness of the heart, the incentive to sin, especially to falling into pride.

Vain are our efforts to derive fresh strength from the effects of grace; the conscience is never thus brought into exercise (not even in the most elevated spiritual state), which it always is where the soul has *God* before it; and, as liveliness of conscience in His presence is practically our safeguard, the moment I turn in upon self, to contemplate the grace that is *in me*, I am on the high-road to a fall. I am away from the source of my spiritual strength.

We must not confound conduct void of offence, with the absence of all sin, that is to say with the extirpation of 'the germ of sin' in our

nature. Doubtless, the Christian ought to maintain a thoroughly blameless conduct; he cannot justify his having, even for a moment, walked 'after the flesh.' As to fact, "in many things we offend all;" (Jas. iii. 2); but "God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able." (1 Cor. x. 13.) I can never excuse myself by saying, 'It is the flesh which is still in me that caused me to fall,' that flesh ought to have been mortified. I must confess to my own want of watchfulness and prayer. Possibly, I had not sufficiently got to the bottom of my heart, and this has been permitted, as with Job, for my instruction, to work in me a deepened apprehension of the exceeding riches of God's grace, who loves me, and can bring good out of evil, though He never justifies it. I am without excuse. The blood of Jesus Christ expiates the

sin ; but I have failed. If I go on to plead : ‘I am but a child—I am yet so weak in the faith ;’ this alters not the case ; for, had there been in me the fear and distrust of *self* which befit weakness, I should not have fallen. Sin (the principle of self-will) was at work.

Alas ! how much of levity of heart there is in us all ; the unholy levity of the world is not that of which we speak. What lightness, even in our best intercourse one with another ! lightness of thought and lightness of speech, even about good things ! We must remember, that, if the flesh is in us, the Holy Ghost is in us, too. It is our privilege, and might be our experience, to know the flesh, only in the presence of God—only to know it, as we learn it in communion with Him ; and what it really is, is never so well known, or so hated, as when so learnt. We shall be conscious of the workings of the flesh,

but ought it ever to be allowed so to work in a saint as to get into his conscience, or to show itself before others? The way it should be detected is by abiding in the presence of God, and then we should not have the pain of learning its nature by its own workings, but through the Holy Ghost in judging it. When we detect the flesh because we are in communion with God, it never either troubles our conscience before God, or dishonours our Master before men. And God is able to keep us from falling, both inwardly and outwardly. One who loves holiness knows if he gets into unholy thoughts even for a minute—a saint must feel that an unholy thought is a fall, as truly a fall as an open transgression, though not so manifest to others. We should bear in mind, that even these inward falls are not necessary; if the flesh were always by us judged, and thoroughly judged, in the pre-

sence of God, we should find that He would thus keep us. When we are in communion with Him, when living as in His presence, are not sin and temptation powerless? Nor need these happy seasons be short; the more simplicity of heart and faith, the longer they will last.

This is not said to discourage. Let us not mistrust God, or feel less certainty that we can go to Him (as though He did not love us), because our attainments are low. It is not the Holy Ghost who would lead us away from God, even though we may be conscious of much failure and sin; it is Satan. It is always the work of the enemy, when distrust of God's love is the result of a sense of failure; though the consciousness of sin may be of the Holy Ghost. God shews us our failure to lead us on; but Satan seeks to spoil His work, by throwing in distrust. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the

Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," (1 John ii. 1,) and this, that communion should not be interrupted.

Heaven in prospect,—our being made like Jesus in glory,—our being with Him,—the joy of His presence,—the absence of all evil, no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither any more pain; in a word, the presence, glory and heavenly rest of our God, what incentives these to advance indefinitely in the career of holiness and piety! whilst we are made to feel, by that which imparts to us fresh vigour, that we are still far from the goal, which, through grace, we shall assuredly attain. How different this from the endeavour to make the whole revelation of the grace of God serve to set up afresh a species of Judaism! Paul, who, perhaps, stood foremost in the ranks of the soldiers of faith, has said; "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men



most miserable." (1 Cor. xv. 19.) It was because he had received the first-fruits of the Spirit, that he groaned within himself (Rom. viii. 23); that he ran, not as uncertainly, that he fought, not as one that beateth the air, that he kept under his body and brought it into subjection. (1 Cor. ix. 26, 27.) This is not the rest that remaineth to the people of God. (Heb. iv. 9.) Are there no internal conflicts? or admitting that we have not any longer to struggle with an enemy indomitable and harassing us with all his might, is not continued watchfulness needed, for holding in one who, with malice and enmity unchanged, is ready at any moment to break out and do us hurt?

To love God, because He ought to be loved, and so to reflect His image in purity, is that which the *law* demanded.

*Grace* presents the love of God towards us, when we were undeserv-

ing of that love. It places us, in Christ, upon a new and unchangeable ground of eternal joy. It presents God Himself under an aspect unknown to Adam, and impossible under the law; for the law of necessity requires perfect love *in us*; it cannot, it should not, spare the sinner.

By the regenerating power of the life of Christ, we are renewed after the image of God; but we are renewed on the principle of an *eternal gratitude*, which *alone* puts God in *His* right place with regard to the creature; and which puts the creature, fallen and made alive anew, in *its* place in relation to God.

---

\*.\* The preceding paper has been, in the main, compiled from a *brochure*, originally published at Lausanne. The English translation is entitled, "*A Dialogue on Christian Perfection.*"

## Christ's Sympathy:—a Word on Temptation.

---

HEBREWS ii. 18; iv. 15.

---

DOES the renewed soul want sympathy of Christ in its sinful feelings? It has learnt to hate them itself, to say, "Not I." It wants the sympathy of Christ's strength with its new man to judge them, to put them down. It does not desire sympathy in the sin; that is not what we mean (or want) by sympathy; we want strength against that. It is in the new man that we are one with Christ; it is by Christ risen we are quickened. His sympathy is with us in our new man—and what is that in us? Hating sin, condemning sin, saying, "Not I," &c., and bearing trials of opposition from

without, which press upon us as holy persons, and in *proportion as we are holy persons*. The sufferings of Christ in us are the sufferings of a holy, loving nature in the midst of evil: our giving way to sin in us, are not the sufferings of Christ in us; our remedy for this is the atonement of Christ, in what He suffered *for us*: the entire absence of sin in Him who represents us, our comfort. With the knowledge of its forgiveness, we seek to walk in the strength of that new life, in the conflicts of which we have His full sympathy. We should want sympathy in the sorrow of actual transgression, if He was to sympathize with us as to sin. And we have this sympathy; but how? where? In His having borne the penalty—"bruised for our iniquities, wounded for our transgressions." It is precisely in the discovery that He did bear our transgres-

sions, and so has justified us—in knowing that He hath “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”—that we have comfort under all sense of sin—not by His having been conscious of the evil disposition; or He could not, as “knowing no sin,” be *made* sin *for us*—and this, in its full, unlimited sense, according to our whole need, as believing in Him. It is not partial subdued sin,—a mind kept always dead,—a consciousness of what a regenerate man is conscious of. This would not do for me; for I am and have been much more. This would be no real, adequate sympathy for me, or for any sinner. He must be atoned for in all his sins. He is atoned for in them by Jesus, made sin for him; and here is the sympathy of Christ as to this. That is, here it is he gets comfort, either originally (as by the work typified in the day of atonement), or by the

Spirit's witness (as in the type of the red heifer). Christ has entirely put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. We have access to God by the blood upon the mercy seat; knowledge of all our transgressions being laid upon Christ, in the scape-goat; and the continual witness, in the kept ashes of the red heifer, sprinkled by the running water, that sin is put away by the sacrifice. To these the apostle refers in Hebrews ix., and refers as purging the conscience; and this is what we want as to sin,—not sympathy,\* save this great, immense, invaluable sympathy, that Christ has put it away, having borne our transgressions.

But we do want actual sympathy in a godly life; for we are living

\* I cannot want sympathy as to sin, till I am conscious of it. If I have sympathy in this, by similar trial, then was Christ conscious of it too; and that would destroy every ground of hope.

under effects and trials of evil and sin in the world, though belonging to a higher scene spiritually. I suffer pain for Christ; reproach and shame enough to break my heart; it is no sin to feel this, but quite the contrary. I suffer contradiction, desertion, want of sympathy, and of likemindedness. For my love, I have hatred, misrepresentation, my words daily mistaken, snares laid for me, efforts to entrap me, and dishonour the name of God in my person. Supposing even that I do not fall into them, they are utter pain to me. Then there is the insensibility of those around me to the love of God, the evil estate of the church of God's planting, the little fruit of grace in those who receive the Lord, the insensibility to the hopes He sets before us, the blindness to His testimony on many important points, the prevailing of Satan's power over so many. The more I am like God, the more grace I have, the more

holy I am, the greater sense I have of His love; the greater love I have to men and the church, the more and greater will be my sufferings; and if drawn into the activity of love, the more endurance of the contradiction of sinners against myself. But these are not sin in me, but just the contrary. Christ was quite perfect in spirit and thought; and therefore He perfectly felt the evil. Had there been any one evil in His own nature, He could not have felt as He did the perfect evil of all that was around Him; nor therefore have had perfect sympathy with the trials of the godly; for when we read of being "tempted like as we are," the Apostle is speaking for the comfort of saints in trial—calling them to consider Him who endured the contradiction, lest they be weary, and faint in their minds. This is the sympathy the saints want, not sympathy in sin. Christ met *that* in



atonement and sacrifice; and now, in the judging power of His Spirit, revealing in that the power of His sacrifice.

And now, as to the word, temptation. To be tempted is another thing from having a lust to sin, the carnal mind. Temptation is used in Scripture, not for internal sin at all, nor in connection with it, save where it is the actual giving way to the temptation by reason of the sin, "drawn away of our own lusts, and enticed." "Tempted" there is the giving way to the trial. But temptation otherwise is just the trial of what is in the person so tried, and this may be very various. God in this sense may be tempted. We know from His very nature, and by the Word, that He cannot be tempted of evil: yet, "they tempted God in the desert." They tempted, and were destroyed of the destroyer. God was put to trial as to what He was,

and this was just their sin. In Him it need not be said, absolute, essential perfection was found. Neither can God tempt any man in the way of evil or lust. Yet God did tempt Abraham; He put Abraham to trial, and proved the grace which He had given him, saying, thereon, "Now I know." Exhibition of grace was the result of the trial—of the temptation here. So we pray, "Lead us not into temptation,"—clearly, not into lust or evil, but into a place of trial of what is in us: we knowing our weakness, and therefore adding, "but deliver us from evil," or the evil one. But the Spirit of God did lead Christ into temptation, (Matt. iv., Luke iv.,) not surely into any exercise of an evil nature, but into Satan's trial of what He was. The first Adam, confessedly innocent and having no sin, yet was tempted, and so tempted, that he fell into sin; so that clearly here, temptation does

not imply existing evil, or a sinful nature; for there may be temptation, so as to fall into sin, where there was no evil nature at all. He was tried, and fell; weakness and fallibility being there, though not sin. We are tempted—what is in us is tried; and, in our case, evil continually is found—the old sinful nature is found; there may be cases where, through divine grace, we get the victory, “are more than conquerors,” glorying in tribulations, happy as enduring. The sinful nature is distinct from the temptation, though discovered by it. So Christ was tempted, tried in all points, according to the likeness of His brethren; but the result was, there was nothing found in Him but perfectness. Adam was tried, and fell. We are tried, and often evil is found in us, and we are led away, and enticed. Christ was tried, and neither fell nor was led away, nor was evil found in Him. If sin

were needful to temptation, then would sin be justified in every temptation we were in. Temptation coming from an enemy without, and sin being needful to this, it is justified, if we are so tempted. This is exactly what it is not. "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man"—a human temptation; and *God* is faithful, who "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Thus, though we often do give way, it is shewn to be *sin* when we do, and unjustifiable; and this, as to its source, is what is meant by condemning sin in the flesh. Christ having placed himself in our circumstances, which, as to trial, He fully did; and having never, in any sort or sense, given way, has proved that what does give way,—the lusts that entice us, and make us yield to the

temptation *is sin*; and so has condemned sin, not in *His* flesh, but in *the* flesh, being Himself without sin, and passing through all the temptations, and made a sacrifice for sin. He has proved it all to be sin in us; He has condemned sin in the flesh, though He gives us peace concerning, and in spite of it, because He is a sacrifice for sin. Thus His being tempted in all points, apart from sin, is precisely the way in which He condemned it; not in its acts, but in its source. More correctly, *God* condemned sin in the flesh, by the exhibition of a tempted man, in every point without it. It was not actual sin that He thus condemned (that had been done, and would be done in due time), but "sin in the flesh." The law could not do this, it only called it out into knowledge, and even action. But God has effectually done it, sending His own Son, free from every spot, stain, or

motion of it—from it in His nature ; so that it is all condemned as mere sin in me, not in its effects, but “ in the flesh.” The absence of it from Him is the very means of my condemning it as such. The thing wanted was to shew this as judged, condemned sin, by God. The law could not do this ; it found it everywhere ; it was weak through the flesh ; it connected itself with men as they were, leaving it ; and though, therefore, it might prove they had it, it only therefore condemned them. But God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, has condemned (in propitiation withal) this in the flesh ; and the life which we have of Him, strengthened in His might by His Spirit in the inner man, judges and condemns it in us, as not according to the power of the inner life in Christ. This is the force of this passage ; it hangs upon the absence of sin from

Christ's nature ; the sinlessness of His nature, and consequent *perfectness* through temptation, proves that what yields in us *is sin*. It is **that** in us which was not in Christ, and yields to the trials of Satan, which He, not having it, never did : it is sin, it is condemned.

And this, as to the fact, is the express doctrine of Scripture. He was in all points tempted like as we are, according to the likeness (He took), except or apart from sin ; that which is connected, or continually so in us, with temptation, was not so in Him. He was tempted apart from sin,—we are tempted in connection with that which has been condemned as sin, not being in Him.

The “yet without sin,” is the same word as in the passage, “He shall appear the second time *without sin*.” As free as He then will be from it, so free was He in the temptations He went through. Thus, we have the

express testimony of Scripture on the point. Every trial, every sorrow, every circumstance, in which the enemy of our souls could try Him, He was tempted with. In His nature He was sinless. He sympathizes with us in every trial of ours as new creatures. He judges — God has judged—and strengthens us against the suggestions of our old man ; with this He can have no sympathy, but all is forgiven, we being received because He has willingly died for us as to it all, which was the sympathy we wanted for it, and which He could not have given, if He had been in any way or sort sinful Himself. He could not have been *made* sin.



## All in Christ & Christ all—a word on spoilings & beguilings.

—  
COL. ii.  
—

THE Lord can bring good to His people out of any evil.

These Christians at Colosse were in danger of not “holding the Head,” that is, of slipping away from the consciousness of being in Christ, through getting beguiled into subjection to ordinances. To meet this, the Apostle urges them back, showing them how the believer has everything in Christ, and not anything out of Christ. In result, we get much precious teaching as to the fulness of the *Head* for the *body*, as well as solemn warning against a practical separation from

forced to take refuge there in the end.

This is an extreme case ; we shall find the same thing true in various degrees. Abraham could give up (that sacrifice always belongs to faith) ; but there are trials to the believer, because of unbelief—because he is a believer, but in a wrong place. Lot was a “righteous man ;” but, when he did not walk in the path of faith, he had vexation of soul and trouble—a righteous soul, but where a righteous soul ought not to be. Observe his incapacity simply to follow the Lord. Observe all his uncertainty. So will it be with us, if we are walking in the path of unbelief, there will be trouble which is not our proper portion, but which comes upon us because we are in a wrong, worldly place, the trial that belongs to unbelief. We may be seeking the compassion of the Church of God, when we are only suffering, like Lot,

the fruit of our own unbelief—the simple path of faith having been departed from, because we had not learned to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Giving up is our proper position, simple sacrifice, in the knowledge and present consciousness that “all things are ours.” But the promise is “a hundred-fold more in this present world,” and that is not vexation of spirit.

---

I walk as one who knows that he is treading  
    A stranger soil ;  
As one round whom a serpent world is  
    spreading  
    Its subtle coil.

I walk as one who feels that he is breathing  
    Ungential air ;  
For whom, as wiles, the tempter still is  
    wreathing  
    The bright and fair.

My steps, I know, are on the plains of danger  
     For sin is near ;  
 But looking up, I pass along a stranger  
     In haste and fear.

This earth has lost its power to drag me  
     downwards,  
     Its spell is gone ;  
 My course is now right upward and right  
     onward  
     To yonder throne.

Hour after hour of time's dark night is steal-  
     ing  
     In gloom away ;  
 Speed thy fair dawn of light, and joy, and  
     healing,  
     Thou star of day.

For Thee, its God, its King, the long rejected,  
     Earth groans and cries ;  
 For Thee, the long beloved, the long ex-  
     pected,  
     Thy bride still sighs.

# The Waters of Strife—a Word on Unadvised Speaking.

---

NUMBERS XX.

---

“They angered Him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes : because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.”—PSALM cvi. 32, 33.

---

It is an exceedingly establishing thing for our souls, fully to perceive that God is dealing with us on the ground of His own relationship towards us, and that He never deals with us on any other. This is as true in discipline and present correction, as in anything else—correction from our Heavenly Father, because He is our Father.

“I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes,” is among the covenant deal-

ings of Ps. lxxxix. 32. God cannot pass over the sins of His saints, as over those of the world. He brings them under present discipline. Sin in a saint of God is much more fearful than in an unbeliever, since the glory of God suffers so much more at our hands. That which might appear a trifling thing in another, is not so in us. We need to apply the balance of the sanctuary, so as to discern what is according to God and what is not.

Further, it is most full of comfort to see that God is able to record in His Word the failures of His saints, and that He does not hesitate to record them. He is showing us in them, and through them, as things written for our admonition, that, notwithstanding this failure, His faithfulness never fails. But it requires a deepened tone of spirituality to perceive that God thus visits the sins of His people, and yet that their

blessing, through His grace, shall not fail as to the end—"Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." He cannot suffer His truth to fail; He cannot deny Himself. (2 Tim. ii. 13.)

Another very remarkable thing, is, that the sins recorded of the saints are not unfrequently those which we should have supposed them least likely to fall into. For instance, Peter's fall, most largely recorded. Again, David's foul sin. And when we come to Moses, there is failure too in him. We find that that which is recorded here, is mentioned in many other parts of the word. "He spake unadvisedly with his lips." Moses himself records it over and over again, to show that even an unadvised word (that which

might be regarded as a light thing) is not passed over unnoticed.

Now, I believe that where we sin much, is in this very respect, in speaking unadvisedly with our lips. As St. James says, "In many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." (James iii. 2.) When I find an unadvised speech of Moses, in a chafed moment, thus recorded, I see the deep necessity there is for having a bridled tongue. It is here that Satan gets such advantage over us—yes, where God's saints have constant need of correction is for unadvised talk. The amount of sorrow brought upon souls is hardly to be estimated ; perhaps it is not too much to say, that almost all the mischief that arises amongst saints, is from speaking unadvisedly with the lips.

God is able to record those things in which His saints have grieved Him,



but this does not hinder His truth, this does not hinder the one being in the glory with the Lord, concerning whom such failure is recorded. *Then* he will be able to look back and trace all the way in which God has led him, and see how all has been overruled for good.

I would just notice by the way, that which is remarkably testified of the Lord Jesus as standing where Moses failed. When He was here, all the sitting down in the seat of the scornful of those who sought to entangle Him in His talk, all the contradiction of sinners against Himself, all their cavils, never drew out an unadvised word from His lips. On the contrary, when He was attacked on every hand—by Pharisees, by Sadducees, by Herodians—after He had met them all, His wisdom shone conspicuously forth in silencing them with the simple question : “What think ye of Christ? whose

son is He?—if David call Him Lord, how is He his son?” (Matt. xxiii. 41–45.) And Jesus is our example ; as Peter tells us, “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.” (1 Pet. ii. 20–23.)

But let us turn to the narrative before us :—“Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month : and the people abode in Kadesh : and Miriam died there, and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people chode with Moses, and spake,

saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord ! and why have ye brought up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there ? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us into this evil place ? It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of pomegranates ; neither is there any water to drink." (*v.* 1-5.) It is no uncommon thing for those who have known redemption through the blood of the Lamb, and the passage of the Red Sea—perfect deliverance from Egypt, to murmur thus, because of not having the vines and figs and pomegranates.

But what can Moses and Aaron do ? They have not any resources in themselves, they can only cast it before the Lord. "And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,

and they fell upon their faces.”—  
(v. 6.)

But what I desire to press upon our consideration here, is this, that it is frequently, when we have been near the Lord, when we have in humility laid the matter before Him, just on returning back amidst the circumstances, something unforeseen occurring, that failure is at once manifested.

“And the glory of the Lord appeared unto them.” How blessed this for Moses! And our portion is peculiarly that now; whatever the perplexity, whatever the trial—whatever the circumstances may be, the moment we get before the Lord, the glory of the Lord appears. It is this God places before us, for the comfort and stay of our souls.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, *Take the rod*, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye

unto the rock before their eyes ; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock : so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink." (*v.* 7-8.)

At the bidding of the Lord, the rod had been cast down, and it had become a serpent. At the bidding of the Lord, Moses' rod stretched out over the Red Sea, the Red Sea had been made dry land, and Israel had passed over on dry ground, and the waters had been divided ; the rod stretched out again, and the Lord had overthrown the Egyptians in the midst of the Sea. The moment he is told to take "the rod," Moses ought to rest simply in the Lord. But, beloved, have we not found it very hard, when we have had a difficulty and taken it before the Lord, to leave it entirely with Him, to wait for His comment ?

We are instructed, through that

which we are considering, that the Lord expects we should attend most minutely to His word. “Speak ye *unto the rock* before their eyes,” is the direction; we find that when they have gathered the congregation together before the rock, Moses speaks *unto the people*, and he speaks unadvisedly with his lips—here is failure. It is a little thing, but the Lord must notice it. And so with things in us which are as blemishes, as spots and wrinkles; if the Lord Jesus has “loved the Church and given Himself for it,” in order that He might “present it to Himself a glorious Church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish,” when there are these spots and wrinkles, they displease the Lord. In Revelation ii. and iii., the Lord Jesus Christ is seen walking in the midst of the churches with the eyes of fire (not

in the world), to the end that "all the churches may know that I am He who searcheth the reins and hearts." In His discipline He may be dealing with that in us which we know nothing about, but which He sees. Just as in His intercession for Peter—"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not" (Luke xxii. 31-34), was before Peter ever thought at all of denying Him. "He searches the reins and the hearts;" and we need to give heed to Him. It is a very solemn thing for us to despise the chastening of the Lord. He chastens us because we are beloved, because we are His.

It was this sin caused Moses to lose Canaan, and the high honour of leading Israel over Jordan into the land. We too are losers by sin, though it may be, that, through the grace of Him with whom we have to do—His restoring grace, the

soul is brought upon higher and firmer ground. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Could Peter ever forget the lesson of restoring grace? he was placed on higher ground—higher, stronger ground, as to the establishment of his soul, than that on which he stood before his fall. Our very sins and failures are overruled for our good.

There is one very remarkable feature of God's dealings presented to us in this picture. He ever delights to honour His saints in the eyes of others,—but then they must not seek their own honour. He will honour His servants, but the moment we step out of the *servant's* place, to take, as we judge it, a higher one, He humbles us. The Lord Jesus Christ, the One faithful servant of Jehovah, was always hiding Himself, that God might appear, and God was always honouring Him in the



eyes of others, "approving Him by wonders, miracles, and signs." When we honour God, He honours us. "Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." (1 Sam. ii. 30.) God says to Moses, "Take the rod, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes: and it shall give forth his water, and *thou* shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so *thou* shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink."—*Thou shalt do it.* This was a high honouring of Moses in the sight of all Israel. But when Moses takes the rod, and he says, "Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of this rock?" That is, he does not *sanctify the Lord* in the eyes of the congregation; it is "*we*," not "*the Lord*." No sooner do we assume to be anything, than we get out of the servant's place.

But further, we have some little

insight given us here into the deceitfulness of sin. "Moses took," we are told, "the rod from before the Lord, *as He commanded him*," (v. 2)—he obeys up to a certain point, but there he stops; it is an act of partial obedience, and partial obedience must always be allied to self-will. "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," &c.; their obedience was exceedingly partial; they took those parts of the law which gave them honour in the sight of others, doing it to be seen of men, but passed by that which would have involved self-denial. And it is too frequently so with us in our service, we are found self-seekers, pleasers of men. He takes the rod *as the Lord has commanded him*.—"And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he *said unto them*,"—there is disobedience! God has never commanded

him to do *that* : He has commanded him to speak unto the rock ;—"Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of this rock?" (v. 10.)—What words ! O Moses, Moses ! O sad picture of the flesh ! Moses the man of God speaks unadvisedly with his lips ! "The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. xii. 3), but the meekest man on the earth is here the one to say, "Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of this rock?" putting himself in the place of God ; the one of whom it is testified, "it went ill with Moses for their sakes, because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips." They chafe his spirit, they grieve him—the meekest of men, by their murmurings, and he says, "Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* ?" That odious word "*we* !" most odious word in the mouth of a saint ! Every-

thing that we have and all that we are, we have and are by the Lord's grace, and all must be used to His glory.

Moses has forgotten the rod. What is Moses? Nothing ;—he has no power to fetch water from the rock, and he has forgotten the present power of God, that which alone can enable him to do it, he has forgotten God, he is thinking about himself. Here we see again the sin of our hearts, in the using of the very grace which God has given us, for the purpose of self-exaltation, to say "we." But this is a sin which would not be noticed by the world ; because the world only talks of "I" and "me." Not so faith. Paul says, "by the grace of God, I am what I am : and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain ; but I laboured more abundantly than they all : yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor.

xv. 10), ashamed to be forced, as it were, into this mention of himself. The flesh would seek to use the very grace of God, the light of God, the truth of God, the power of God, to exalt ourselves. That may seem a little thing which is recorded of Moses here, but when we come to take it to pieces, to analyse it, we feel it to be most odious before God. So it is with us, if the light which God has given us, the truth and knowledge we have, are made stepping-stones to self-exaltation.

“And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice.” He has been told to speak to the rock, but he *smites* it twice, as though divine power has need of being seconded by human energy.—But still “the water came out.” God’s faithfulness is not touched by the failure of His servant. So is it with us ; one may preach the gospel of strife and contention (Paul could

rejoice even in this, since Christ was preached, (Phil. i. 18)—and yet not hinder God's sovereignty in owning His own ordinance. Moses fails, but God does not deny Moses to be His servant, neither does He deny the power of the rod. "Moses took the rod, and smote the rock twice, and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank and their beasts also." (v. 11.) God may be using an individual's ministry for blessing to the souls of others, when He is about to discipline that very person, so used of Him. He abideth faithful—He will not (blessed be His name!) deny His own truth, though mixed up with much of weakness, of foolishness, and even of self, in those who preach it.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall

not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and He was sanctified in them."

We have the failure of Moses mentioned in several other parts of the Word, some of which we will now consider.

*Chap. xxvii. 12-14.*—"And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and *see* the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. *For ye rebelled against my commandment* in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, *to sanctify* me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin." Moses loses Canaan, through speaking unadvisedly with his lips; but, beloved,

does that alter God's intention of blessing him everlastingly? or is it not rather the occasion of proving that "His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting toward them that fear Him." However necessary it may be to chasten Moses and to hold him up as an instance of a rebellious saint, this cannot cause God to "alter the thing that has gone out of His lips." We afterwards see Moses on the mount of glory, with the Lord, in the transfiguration. (Mat. xvii. 3, Mark ix. 4, Luke ix. 30.) When there, he could, doubtless, look back, and see the path by which the goodness of the Lord had led him, and the links of the chain which we cannot see, and how that God had made all things "work together for good." It is an exceedingly establishing thing for us to see that, "whom He loveth (He loves unto the end) He chasteneth." It is His saints whom He chastens; He hates sin, and He will



shew, in His dealings with His children about it, what a fearful thing it is. We must not expect, because we stand in Christ's perfect righteousness and because we are heirs of glory, that He does not mark our sins; this, on the contrary, is the very reason that He does, in order that we may be made to see, that "it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God the Lord."

Deut. iii. 23-28.—"I besought the Lord at that time, saying, O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand; for what God is there in heaven, or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might? I pray thee *let me go over and see the good land*, that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon; but the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and *would not hear me*; and the Lord said unto me, *Let it suffice thee; speak*

*no more unto me of this matter.* Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: *for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.* But charge Joshua and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which *thou shalt see.*" The Lord denies the prayer of His saint. The Lord may deny the prayers of His saints, or He may answer them in a way we little expect. It was thus in respect of Paul's thorn in the flesh,—“for this cause,” he tells us, “I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me;” the prayer was not answered in the manner the apostle looked for it to be—“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.) The thorn

was needed ! God may let, and sometimes does let, the consequences of the sin of a saint hang over him all the time he is here. The saint Moses prays, but the Lord denies the prayer of His saint. They have just come to the very border of the land, and Moses says, "Let me go over and see the good land." But the Lord tells him, "Let it suffice thee ; speak no more unto me of this matter." What graciousness there is in this "Let it suffice thee ;" we see here all God's restoring mercy ; it seems, so to speak, as if He hardly could deny Moses, as if, were he to be importunate, He could not refuse him. It was wiser, it was better, it was more for the glory of God, that Moses' prayer should not be answered ; but there is something exquisitely tender in the reply of the Lord—"Let it suffice thee," just as in that to Paul—"My grace is sufficient for thee."

Deut. xxxii. 48–52.—“And the Lord spake unto Moses that self-same day, saying, Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho ; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession : and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people ; as Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people : *because ye trespassed against me* among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin ; *because ye sanctified me not* in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee ; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.” We see here the way in which the Lord is able to tell of the sins of the saints—to record the failures of the saints. Let

man narrate the life of his fellow man, he seeks to hide his failures, and why? Because he wishes to exalt the man. Let the Holy Ghost write the life of a saint, He records the sins and failures of that saint, and why? Because He exalts the grace of God. It is a blessed thing too, beloved, when we can use even our failures to exalt the grace of God. The Lord says of Moses, "Ye rebelled," "ye transgressed," and yet we find, after all this, Moses speaking face to face with God in confidence, and in intimate intercourse. He tells Moses the reason why he cannot go over the Jordan; the desire to see the good land that is beyond is pleasing in His eyes, and He gives him a Pisgah-view of it. God is able to tell us how wisely He disciplines us. Nothing shall hinder the purpose of His grace concerning us: He is determined that nothing shall alter the

thing that has gone out of His lips ; “ whom He justified them He also glorified ; ” but then, it is between justification and glorification that there comes in all this discipline.

Deut. xxxiv.—“ And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah unto the utmost sea, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed : I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, *according*

*to the word of the Lord.* And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor : but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died : his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

It is the Lord who buries Moses, and after a time He brings him out (as we have seen) in the glory of the Lord Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. We find there, not Joshua—the one who led Israel into the land, but Moses—the one to whom this was denied.

Beloved, let us remember that it was a little thing—an unadvised word that occasioned to Moses the loss of Canaan. And let us remember, moreover, that the governance of the tongue is more pressed upon us in the New Testament than almost anything else. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou

shalt be condemned." (Mat. xii. 37.) Seeking to exalt ourselves is rebellion against God.

The Lord grant that we may see that we are exposed to a searching judgment to which the world is not exposed, because we are His saints ; and that He may have to shut His ear to our prayer. He is "the only wise God," and He may be more wise in denying, than in granting. May we be found walking before Him unto all well-pleasing.

---

When a man steps out of his own nothingness, he steps into it.

Zeal against the errors of others is no security against the wiles of the devil—Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.

He that rides on a stumbler had need have his eye on the road before,



and his bridle well in hand. And such is even the believer's heart.

Wherever you go, endeavour to carry with you a sense of God's presence, His holiness, and His love ; it will preserve you from a thousand snares.

Have a word with God, before you enter into conversation with men. (James i. 5.)

Satan tempts saints to unholy wrath (Luke ix. 55), and they do not know, and little think, where they had their *coal* to so heat them from, till Christ tells them, "ye know not what spirit ye are of."

It is as great presumption to send our passions upon God's errands, as it is to palliate them with God's name. Zeal, dropt in charity, is good ; without it, good for nothing ; for it devours all it comes near. They must first judge themselves, that presume to censure others ; and such will not be apt to overshoot the mark.

Use a little of the bridle in the quantity of speech. Incline a little rather to sparing than to using them lavishly, for "in many words there wants not sin." That flux of the tongue, that prattling and babbling disease, is very common; and hence so many impertinences, yea so many of those worse ills, in their discourses, whispering about, and inquiring, and censuring this and that.

An unwholesome stomach turns the best meat it receives into that bad humour that abounds in it. Do not they thus, who observe what the word says, that they may be the better enabled to discover the failings of others, and speak maliciously and uncharitably of them, and vent themselves, as is too common? "This word met well with such a one's fault, and this with another's." Is not this to feed these diseases of malice, "envy," and "evil speaking," with this "pure milk," and make *them*

grow, instead of growing by it ourselves in grace and in holiness ?

Divine truths are like a well-drawn picture, which looks particularly upon every one amongst the great multitude that look upon it.

---

Gracious God, thy children keep ;  
Jesus guide thy silly sheep ;  
Fix, O fix, our fickle souls ;  
Lord, direct us ; we are fools.

Bid us in thy care confide ;  
Keep us near thy wounded side ;  
From thee never let us stir,  
For thou know'st how soon we err.

Lay us low before thy feet,  
Safe from pride and self-conceit ;  
Be the language of our souls,  
Lord, direct us ; we are fools.

Dang'rous doctrines from without,  
Lies and errors round about ;  
From within a treach'rous heart,  
Prone to take the tempter's part ;

By thy word we fain would steer,  
Fain thy Spirit's dictates hear ;  
Save us from the rocks and shelves ;  
Save us chiefly from ourselves.

Never, never may we dare,  
What we are not, say we are ;  
Make us well our vileness know ;  
Keep us very, very low.

May we all our wills resign,  
Quite absorb'd and lost in thine ;  
Let us walk by thy right rules ;  
Lord, direct us ; we are fools.

## Omniscience.—A Word on God's Searchings.

---

PSALM CXXXIX.

---

It is a solemn thought for the soul to be under the searching of Omniscience itself. Yet this is the foundation of solid peace to him who believes the gospel of the grace of God. The searching of Omniscience, moreover, gives real value to the present priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it will be found also the only ground of practical holiness. In this respect there is an essential difference between him that is spiritual, and a man even of deep thought and high intellect. He that is quickened by the Spirit is frequently able to interpret things strange and paradoxical to others.

yet how needful to add, "yet am I not hereby justified; but He that judgeth me is the Lord." But when the Lord applies Himself to His priestly discerning judgment, as the One who searcheth the reins and trieth the heart, we may be led to one discovery after another of some crookedness of motive, sufficient of itself to disturb our peace, but used by the Lord to lead us into "the way everlasting." And is not this way Christ Himself, the only way, the true way, the living way, the way everlasting?

How prone are we to depart from this way, therefore is He pleased to search out our own ways, that He may lead us therein—to show us that Christ must be practically to us that which He declares Himself to be in His word, "The first and the last," our "Alpha and Omega." Happy is it, if we are under that process which, however humbling to our-

selves, and humiliating in the eyes of others, leads us still to justify God in using it, and to say, "Search me, O God."

All is well that leads us "in the way everlasting," that beats us out of our own ways and brings us there, that makes us in result, value Christ for the way, as well as at the outset, and the end—Christ learnt as our portion to live upon, as well as known for the pardon of our sins.

The Lord grant to all His people the blessed secret of self-judgment. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." But if we do not, and are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, "that we may not be condemned with the world."

---

When the flesh is not put down as nothing, the Holy Ghost acts in controversy, not in energy.

Faith, though it has a large stock to draw from in God, has no purse or scrip in man wherein to carry about the expenses of the journey. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

The Lord will neither hasten, nor delay, nor change, His movements, because of our thoughts; neither will He teach concerning His movements those who will argue and think out truth, instead of *praying* it out.

In the bible, in the church, in the dispensations of the whole of God's providence, there are things to be joined, but God must join them; there are difficulties to be reconciled, but *we* cannot solve the problem.

See that the wound which sin hath made in thy soul be perfectly cured by the *blood of Christ*, not skinned over with duties, tears, enlargements, &c. Apply what thou wilt besides the *blood of Christ*, it will poison the sore.



If any one, instead of looking for the Holy Ghost's guidance, dabbles with his own mind in Scripture, he will see either something in the book, which is not there ; or the contents of the book *out of their proper order*, and *relative importance*.

It is safer to be humble with one talent, than proud with ten.

Depend upon it, if there is not the slaying of the lion and the bear in secret, there will be no killing of Goliath in public. (1 Sam. xvii. 36.)

A man is really, what he is before God, and no more.

When Christ was praying, Peter was sleeping ; when Christ was submitting, Peter was fighting ; when Christ was suffering like a lamb, Peter was cursing and swearing. This is just the flesh—in energy when we ought to be still : sleeping when we ought to be working.

It is better to trust God in doing His will, than the consequences

which doing His will may produce, however blessed.

It is a very sad thing to say, but we like our own flesh generally, a great deal better than we do the flesh in others.

Growth in grace manifests itself by a simplicity—that is, a greater naturalness, of character. There will be more usefulness, and less noise ; more tenderness of conscience, and less scrupulosity.

Self-will is so ardent and active, that it will break a world in pieces, to make a stool to sit upon.

He that never changed any of his opinions, never corrected any of his mistakes ; and he who was never wise enough to find out any mistakes in himself, will not be charitable enough to excuse what he reckons mistakes in others.

# Faith, not discussion.—A Word on knowing.

---

JOHN vii.

---

“Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and  
hast revealed them unto babes.”

---

OF the three great feasts of the Jews (Deut. xvi. 16,) in which, year by year, all the males had to go up to Jerusalem, two\* have had their antitypes. The third has not.

The feast of *tabernacles* was celebrated after the harvest and the vintage.† In it the children of Israel dwelt in booths, in witness that, once strangers, they were stran-

\* “Christ our *passover* is sacrificed for us,” (1 Cor. v. 7), “When the day of *pentecost* was fully come,” (Acts. ii. 1).

† “The harvest and the vintage refer respectively to the Lord’s gathering in His own, and to the treading of His enemies in the wine press of the wrath of God.” (Rev. xiv.)

gers no longer.\* But then there was in connection with this feast an *eighth* day, shewing that along with the accomplishment of God's purposes in respect to the earth, there would be the introduction of a new period, the commencement of a new week.†

Jesus was in Galilee. (v. 1.)—  
 “Now the Jew's feast of tabernacles was at hand ; His brethren therefore said unto Him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest : for there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly : if thou do these things *show thyself to the world.*” They wanted Him to give a manifestation of Himself adequate

\* For this the Jews must be in their own land.

† This marks the connection of those who are raised with the Lord Jesus in the joy of the feast.

to His claims. This was not the time for Christ to show Himself to the world. He *will do so* ; “ every eye shall see Him ; ” His glory shall be exhibited to the terror of the ungodly. But He is not showing Himself *now* to the world ; and this, to a world lying in wickedness, is mercy—real long suffering. His brethren had no understanding of this (“ for neither did his brethren believe on Him.”)

Mark His answer.—“ *My time* is not *yet* come ; but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you : but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast : I go not up yet unto the feast ; for my time is not yet full come.” When He is manifested in power it will not be a question of *testimony* merely against evil, He will say, “ Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them,

bring hither and slay before me," He takes no such place of vindicating Himself now. Cost what it will, we are to accomplish the will of God while evil is in power; there is no bringing in of power to hinder the evil. (Mark ix. 13, Rev. iii. 10.)

Having said this, "He abode still in Galilee," He had gone there on His first rejection; and, though we find Him going up to Jerusalem to keep the feasts, &c., He abode there. "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Naphtalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up" (Mark iv. 15, 16). For judgment was He come into the world, that they which see not might see, and that which see might be made blind;—"Ye say ye see," He told the Pharisees, "therefore your sin re-

maineth." He was "Jesus of Galilee." The poor despised Galileans had the light when the Jews had not.

His brethren having gone up, He also goes up (v. 10,) "not openly, but as it were in secret."

And now we find what is going on in hearts. There is much murmuring among the people concerning Him; some say, 'He is a good man,' others, 'Nay; but He deceiveth the people.' The Lord might bring blessing out of it, but they are *reasoning* and *discussing*, and this is just the proof that they have nothing to say to it as yet. In another place He asks His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" they tell Him, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some, Elias, and others, one of the prophets. It was all *discussion*. But when Peter, replies, (to the question, "But whom say *ye* that I am,") "Thou art the Christ,

the Son of the living God," He tells him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona : for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." There was *personal recognition of Himself* and where there is that, there is no *discussion*. Discussing Him as subject-matter in their own minds, they had not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Where people's minds are at work discussing the right and the wrong, there is not the mind of the new-born babe ; they are not receiving, but judging. "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" asked Nathanael (Nazareth was a despised city, and he thought no good thing could come out of it) but, when that which was blessed was presented to Him, the Israelite without guile received it.

Further, we get instruction here (v. 14-17,) as to receiving the doc-



trine of God.—About the middle of the feast Jesus goes up into the temple and teaches. The Jews marvel,—“How knoweth this man letters? having never learned.” He tells them, “My doctrine is not *mine*, but His that sent me.” They thought he had received it from man, therefore He says, *it is not mine*. No matter what we have learned, if we have not learned it from God, it is nothing; there is no faith; if learned from man, it is *mine*. Then He adds, “If any man *will do His will*, he shall *know of the doctrine*, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” Where there is faith, there is the unfeigned desire to do the will of God. Observe, He says, ‘If any man *will* (*i. e.* wills to) do,’ not, ‘If he have done.’ If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light,—God will show what His will is. If it be not, what is the good (speaking with reverence) of knowing His

will ? there is not the intention of doing it. Where the heart is right in the sight of God, He gives the capacity for knowing His will. The heart ought to be, in a certain sense, wary ; there is a Christian simplicity and there is a simplicity not Christian ; but there may be this wariness, and yet sincerity of desire to do God's will when known. This is ever the practical test of Christian truthfulness. There may be great ignorance and infirmity, but, if the eye be single, if there be the real intention in the heart of doing God's will, he *shall know*, &c. Very often we do not get light, because we are not prepared to walk in the light when known.

He next refers to proofs, for there are certain moral proofs quite evident to hearts opened by grace.—Never in a single thing sought He His own glory.

Then He turns to them about what

they *have known*.—"Did not Moses give you the law? and yet none of you keepeth the law." The *desire* to *do* the will of God if known, is not merely in question, there is not *the doing* His will *in things known*. He turns, so to speak, the tables upon themselves. You are speaking of my being unlettered, and you are walking in sin,—“Why go ye about to kill me?” There will always be hatred in the heart to the truth where there is not the will to go along with it. As bad a thing as can happen to a man, is for him to be contented without it; when we find him saying, ‘I am happy now, I was exercised about it once, but I am happy now.’

Verses 25-27, there is again *discussion*. “Is not this He whom they seek to kill? but he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the *rulers* know indeed that this is the very Christ?” [What is the meaning

of this ? he is teaching publicly and no man owns him ; *have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees* believed on him ;] here is their great motive, not God's truth—"Howbeit we know this man, whence he is ; but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is." Nor did they.

The Lord turns now.—“Ye both know me,” He cries, “and ye know whence I am : and I am not come of myself, but He that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know Him : for I am from Him, and He hath sent me.” (v. 28, 29.)

This disturbs conscience. They seek to take Him. Their only thought is to get rid of the testimony that is troubling them. But no man lays hands on Him, because His hour is not yet come. Meanwhile many of the people believe on Him, and say, “When Christ cometh will He do more miracles than those which this man doeth ?”

Then there comes out a further great truth. The Pharisees and chief priests, enraged at hearing of the effect produced on the people, having sent officers to take Him, He tells the people, “ It is no good getting into a carnal *discussion* : While you *have* the light, *walk* in the light, lest darkness come upon you ; you are seeking me now in ill-will, in enmity, in malice,”—*Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent me.*—I am going to my Father, and ye shall see me no more—*Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me*—you may seek me now, and find me, but the day of grace will soon be over, and then, *I go unto Him that sent me*—I come from God, and I am going to God—*Where I am, thither ye cannot come.* There could not be a more terrible judgment, spoken in all calmness as it was.

Then said the Jews among them-

selves, "Whither will He go, that we shall not find him? will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles and teach the Gentiles? what manner of saying is this that He said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me, and where I am thither ye cannot come?"—Not a thought of God! they can think about the Gentiles, but not about God or His Christ.

But as the converse of this result of unbelief, we get Jesus in "the *last* day, that *great* day of the feast," standing and crying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that *believeth on me*, as the Scripture hath said (what? not, as in chap. iv., "whoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him *shall never thirst*." He speaks of another consequence of His going away, of what should take place while He was away, of the power of identification with the *eighth* day; it is not that the thirsty

one shall be satisfied, that, if he comes to Him and drinks, his thirst shall be quenched, but) *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*—(But this spake He 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).” v. 37-39. The Holy Ghost should be received in such sort by the believer as to dwell in, and flow from, him. Israel drank in the wilderness of that spiritual rock that followed them. There was a river to drink from, at which their thirst was quenched. In anticipation of the feast of tabernacles we have the Holy Ghost to give us the joy, the power, the glory, and fulness of this communion with God.

Now the Holy Ghost never flowed in this way in an old testament prophet, nor yet even in John the Baptist

He worked on a person's mind and gave prophecies ; but when the prophets searched, what did they discern ? that "not unto themselves, but *unto us*, they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, *with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.*" (1 Pet. i. 10-12.) If Paul speaks, he speaks of that which he *has* ; he speaks of future things, indeed, but he speaks of things that belong to himself. See what is said Rom. viii. 26, 27 : — When God searches my heart what does He find ? not perplexity, but "the mind of the Spirit." The Holy Ghost come down from Christ the head of the body, takes His place in the body, and brings down the love of God into the detail and circumstances of the Christian life, into the sorrows of the way, whilst, as come down from Christ glorified, He identifies the members with Him



in all the coming blessing and glory.

And mark another thing. The Lord is not here speaking of the quickening power of the Spirit (a most blessed truth in its place,) but of that which they *that believe on Him* should receive, as it is expressed in Ephesians, “after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His Glory.” That is our position.

But whilst it is so blessed, where does it cast all the people who have not believed? Back again into *discussion*.—Many of the people, when they hear this, say, ‘Of a truth, this is the prophet,’ others say, ‘This is the Christ,’ but some, ‘Shall Christ come out of Galilee? hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David and out of the

town of Bethlehem where David dwelt ?” They are *reasoning* out of Scripture, but all such reasoning may go on about the outside, and, if we get not into connection with the living power, it is nothing. Having a link with Him who is the great theme and key of Scripture, I can come in peace and joy to enquire. I am sure God is true ; I may be very ignorant, but that does not separate me from these rivers of living water.

There was a division among the people because of Him.” (v. 43.) Whilst Christ is to the believer the source of *living waters*, unbelief is *discussing* about Him.

“ Every man went unto his own home—Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.” (He had not where to lay His head.) The time was not yet come to accomplish the feast of tabernacles.

Fathers, young men, & babes, in  
Christ—A Word on “abiding  
in Him.”

---

I JOHN ii.

---

There is especial power in this epistle for the strengthening and establishment of our souls, as also for security against the haughty assumptions of antichristian seduction. The word has provided for all our need. The mere doctrine of salvation will not do, it has been spoiled; “Already,” says the Apostle, “are there many antichrists.” “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.”—“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 shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us ;) . . . . . This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, &c." (chap. i. 1-7.)

God reveals Himself. Man is apt to fancy he gets up to God, and finding such knowledge too high for him, he loses himself in the light, he knows not where. The Holy Ghost brings us here to that which might be "heard" and "seen," "and looked upon," and "handled" of the Word of life. When saying, "Hereby perceive we the love (of God," as our translators have it,) it is added, "because He laid down His life for us ;—and we ought to lay down our lives for the

brethren" (chap. iii. 6.) Again ; " In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.—Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God : 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." (chap. iv.

9-16.) The soul is brought from the mysterious apprehension of man's thoughts about "the Deity" and "dwelling in God" to the propitiation; thus connecting the highest flights, (so that no seducer could pretend to lead higher,) all this elevation of doctrine about our dwelling in God and God in us, with the simple, precious truth, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life," and with the plainest and most simple walk of the saint in brotherly love and practical godliness. The word speaks of his dwelling in God and God in him, and then comes back to the plainest doctrine for simple christians, "He is the propitiation for our sins." Here the most advanced and the most simple meet together; nay, the most advanced will be the most simple, and will constantly turn

back to the blood. He who is taught of God is taught to humble himself ; his soul never loses the sense of his nothingness. The mystic may exalt himself ; but the man brought by Christ to God is necessarily humble.

It is "*God manifest in the flesh*," not God mystical. Thus, the soul is guarded from error and seduction. We are told not merely of life, but of life manifested. We get fellowship with the Father, but it is through Christ. There is the plainest moral evidence, such as cannot be escaped from by any, where life is ; if it is not Christ, it is darkness ; if it is Christ, it must be judged by Christ as He was down here. These things are written that our joy may be full. I cannot have more ; I have eternal life, I have joy, I have light, and all this in Christ ; I may know more about it, (that is another thing,) but if my knowledge brings me anything

more than the Father and the Son, it is error.

But then the life of Christ shines out. "He that saith he abideth in Him; ought himself so to walk, even as He walked... again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth (the veil is rent, and we are to abide in the light.) He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now, &c." Talk not of attainments, brethren, and not of love; it is a mistake, where love is not, Christ is not; all His walk was love.

In v. 12 the Apostle gets into detail.—"I write unto you," he says, "children (*little* children, as it is in our translation, I omit the word because we have to distinguish between this and the "*little children*" addressed, v. 13, 18, in contrast with



*fathers* and *young men*. This is addressed to the whole of those to whom the Apostle is writing, as also are *v.* 1, 28 ; he includes all) because your sins are forgiven you for His name sake."

The "*fathers*" (the name designates the greatest maturity in grace) are addressed specifically, *v.* 13 ; but he has not anything more to say to them than, "Ye have known Him that is from the beginning." And this is no passing thought ; for, when he repeats his address, *v.* 14, he can say nothing higher. Let who will come and tell you wonderful things, you cannot get beyond or higher than this, you know *Him* that is from the beginning. It is instructive to mark the silence of the Holy Spirit as to adjectives. When speaking of Jesus, He does not add an epithet. That name is enough ; it carries with it a power which keeps the mind in reverence in the

presence of God. We cannot get out an expression of our feelings there, though we may and do among brethren; we can add nothing to that name; God knows all it conveys; His eye surveys all its loveliness, and, alone, can span its vastness. And mark, it is not said, 'You know all doctrine,' (important as it is, that we should be clear as to doctrine;) but 'You have known *Him*.' We cannot have a truth really in faith, except as it is connected with Christ to our souls. He is the one object of the saint's faith.

The "*young men*" have "overcome the wicked one." Here there is energy of faith. It is impossible to be in any energy that is of the Spirit and not be brought into conflict with Satan; and, if there is this energy, there will also be the overcoming. But this supposes the death of the flesh. There is a vast deal of energy without the subduing of self, and all

that is not energy with Satan. It is there we fail, and let Satan in. There is a certain turning-point with the soul, when it has come to a knowledge of itself—that there is not anything good in the flesh, that not anything of self can overcome evil, that by strength shall no man prevail, we learn to say, “when I am weak, then I am strong.” When the soul has learned to distrust self, there is no haste in what it does ; it has to do with God. One true-hearted christian will see evil, and seek to remedy or overcome it with all vigour and energy, while another, more deeply taught of God, takes the trouble to humble himself, and goes to God about it, before he begins to work against it. God will accomplish all His will, and the true-hearted saint going to work in a good deal of his own energy is sometimes blessed in his work, and afterwards gets humbled, it may be with chas-

tening, and blessed in separating between the flesh and the Spirit.

The "*little children*" have their sins forgiven them, and they "have known the Father." The babes in Christ are looked at with the fathers and young men as sharing in this. It is wonderful to see how grace knits together the old and the young christian; the old takes to the young, his heart yearns over the little one with the utmost parental anxiety. "Ye need not that any man teach you," the Apostle says, *v.* 27, yet is he teaching them the while as though all depended on it. And so will it always be. Where there is much grace, it is shown in the strong honouring the weak. The most instructed saint, instead of despising the weak, will cherish and teach them, and own their blessed portion. Look at Paul's anxiety about the saints in Thessalonica;—"wherefore," he tells them, "when

we could no longer forbear (having been hindered himself going) we thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timotheus, &c."

In addressing the different states a second time, the "fathers" and "young men" are written to *v. 14 17*, and the "little children", *v. 18*; and then, *v. 28*, resuming the general thread of the subject, he takes up the whole, and says to them, "*abide in Him.*"

John's heart rested in this, I know Christ. He knew the ways of Jesus, He had seen Him with his eyes. We, dear brethren, have not thus seen Christ, but we shall be able to say, 'I know Him,' when walking with Him. If Christ were here, what would be His thoughts? would not His heart be yearning over those who are living in the visible world, instead of the invisible? in a little while not a trace will be left of that which now occupies their time and

thoughts. Is not half the time even of christians occupied with things of no value ? What will be the effect of abiding in Him ? we shall be living as He lived, walking as He walked, manifesting the life of Christ amidst earthly things. But I must have the vessel broken down, for Christ to come out—self set aside ; or I may be killing the high priest's servant in my zeal. It is by bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal body. If "young men" i.e., if there is energy in the Spirit, beware of the opposite energy. The address to young men in the second place, v. 15, is not about knowing the Father nor yet simply about overcoming ; if there is the overcoming of Satan, and the denying of the flesh, there must be also the resisting the things which Satan presents to set the flesh agoing ; "Love not the world," he

writes, 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, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, &c.” The Lord Jesus says to the Father, (John xvii.,) “O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, &c.” So here the Apostle sets in contrast before them the world and all that is in it, and the Father. The love of the world is kept out of the heart by the love of the Father—the love of the world is a large word! But it is not merely that the thing is condemned; as christians, our life is not from that source, nor can it have fellowship with its spirit. In our every day circumstances, are not the affections distracted from things not seen by the things that are seen. That which is in question here, is not the working with our hands the things

which are good, God can bless and preserve the soul in that ; but the eye affects the heart, and what mean the varied forms of attraction for the senses on every hand ? are they not just so many things to draw away the heart from the Father ?—"The world passeth away, and the lust thereof : but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

"It is the last time" (*v.* 18)—solemn, precious word ! And yet it seems strange comfort, when the world is bad, to be told, that it will be worse." Paul writes, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work, &c." (2 Thess. ii. 9.) Good and evil are going on together; God carrying on His own work, spite of all opposition. Is it not wonderful to see evil apparently getting the upper hand, and God not interfering to prevent it? only interfering in grace to draw men out of the world ; and even they keep not their first love ? What



a picture do those constantly present who were gathered in true love to Jesus, in the course of five or six years ! it is rare to find the same love. And thus it was even in Paul's time ; he clings to Timothy as to a plank in a wreck. (Phil. ii. 19, 22.) How it makes the heart sink to see all seeking their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's. But John says, " It is the last time—for now is the time of antichrists." This word comes in like dew from heaven. It is the last time ! Jesus is soon coming ! the heart pants for the morning without clouds ! One looks with astonishment at the patience of God's grace ! This sustains in conflict ; and the heart pants, not to cease from service, but after God ; not to rest from conflict, but for the resurrection morn. Thus, God has turned the difficulties of the time into blessing. Satan may seek to hurt us, to mar the work of God, but he

cannot master Him who has met all evil, and overcome it, in the head of evil, who hath gotten Himself the victory.

“Ye have an unction from the Holy One” (not from the *wise* One or from the God of *knowledge*) to keep you. The enemies may be subtle, but the Spirit who dwells in you draws you to “continue in the Son and in the Father.” Of course, it is assumed that we have Christ (v. 28.)

“Now, that ye may have confidence,—and not be ashamed before Him at His coming, *abide in Him.*”

## Thine eye, is it single?—A word on serving.

---

“ If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”

---

IF a child has been habitually heedless of its father, and taken no pains to get acquainted with his thoughts and wishes, one can readily foresee, that that child, in presence of a difficulty, would be in no position to understand what would please its father. There are things God leaves in *generalities* for the testing of *individual* condition of soul. Suppose, instead of the child just referred to, the question to be one of a wife in relation to her husband ; would not a wife, with the feelings and mind of a wife, be able, in all probability, without a moment's hesitancy, to know what her husband would desire ; and that, even, though he had never ex-

pressed a will on the subject ? Now you cannot escape this testing, and God, moreover, will not let His children escape it. “ If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”

As for an easy and comfortable way of knowing God’s will, as one might have a receipt for this or that, there is no such thing, of knowing it, I mean, without reference to our own state of soul.

Again : we are frequently of vastly too great importance in our own eyes, and deceive ourselves in supposing that there is a “ will of God ” at all, in such or such a case. He may have nothing to say to us about it. The evil is in our having set ourselves at work. God’s will may be that we should quietly take a less prominent place.

Again : we are searching at times after “ the will of God,” desiring to know how to act in circumstances,

when, *that we should not be found in them at all*, is His only will ; and when, were conscience in exercise, its first effect would be to make us get out of them. Our own will has placed us there ; and yet we would enjoy the comfort of having God's guidance in a self-chosen path. This is a very common case.

We may rest assured that, if near enough to God, we shall not be at a loss to know His will.

In a long and active life, it may happen that God, in His love, does not always, just at the moment, shew us His will, and this, in order to make us realise our dependance, when there is the disposition to do our own will ; nevertheless, “ if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” Hence it is certain, when the whole body is not full of light, the eye is not single. You will say, ‘ A poor consolation that,’ I reply, ‘ A rich one to those

whose sole desire it is to have the eye single, and to walk with God—not, so to speak, to avoid the trouble of learning His will in an objective way, but whose desire it is *to walk with God*. “If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.” (John xi. 9, 10.) Still the same principle, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John viii. 12.) We cannot get from under this moral law of Christianity. “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the *knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*; that ye might walk *worthy of the Lord* unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the know-

ledge of God." (Col. i. 9, 10.) The connection of these things, the one with the other, is of immense importance to the soul: we must know the Lord intimately, in order to "walk worthy" of Him; and so shall we grow in the knowledge of His will, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ." (Phil. i. 9, 10.) Finally, it is written, "He that is spiritual judgeth *all things* yet he himself is judged of no man." (1 Cor. ii. 15.)

It is, then, the "will of God"—a blessed will, that we should not be able to discern His will otherwise than according to our own spiritual state. In general, when we suppose we are judging as to circumstances, God is judging our condition. That

which we have to do, is to keep near Him. He would not be good to us, were He to permit us to find out His will otherwise. It might be convenient, in the way of having a director of consciences, but we should thus be exempted from the discovery and correction of our moral condition. So that, if we are seeking to know the "will of God," apart from that, we are *seeking* wrongly. And this is of daily occurrence.

One Christian is in doubt, in perplexity; to another, more spiritual than he, the thing is clear as the day, he is astonished—where can there be any difficulty? there is none to him, and it ends in the discovery, that the difficulty lies altogether in the condition of soul of the former.

As to *circumstances*, I believe that a person may be led by them. Scripture has settled that. But this is what it calls being "held in by



bit and bridle." (Ps. xxxii. 9.) "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go : I will guide thee with mine eye," such is the promise to, such the privilege of, him who has faith. Near enough to God, to comprehend through one look of His, God, who is faithful, has promised to direct him thus. He warns us against being "as the horse or the mule," which have no understanding of the will, the thoughts, the desires of their master. They must be "kept in by bit and bridle." Without a doubt, that even is better than stumbling, or falling, or jostling against Him who has us in charge, but it is a sorry condition to be in. And there we see what it is to be *directed by circumstances*. It is merciful on the part of God to do it ; but it is very sad on *ours* to require it.

Here, however, we need to distinguish between forming a judgment

as to what it is right for us *to do in* certain circumstances, and our being *directed by* them. He who allows himself to be *directed by them* is ever acting blindly as to the “will of God.” There is absolutely nothing of that which is moral in it—that which influences is from without. But it is very possible that I may have no judgment arrived at before-hand as to what I should do : I know not what circumstances may transpire, and, consequently, my mind is not made up. Yet so soon as the circumstances are there, I judge, with a full and divine conviction, what is the path of the “will of God,” and of the intent and power of the Spirit. This requires spirituality. It is not a being guided *by* circumstances, but being guided by God *in* circumstances, through being near enough to Him to judge at once what is right to be done when the circumstances are there.

With regard to impressions, God may suggest them, and, as to fact, it is certain that He does suggest a thing to the mind ; but then the suitability of that which is so suggested and its moral character will be clear as the sun at noon-day. When we are in prayer, God may free our hearts from certain influences, the which being removed, other and spiritual influences are allowed to have all their own place in the soul ; or He makes us feel the importance of a duty which has been entirely, it may be, lost sight of through the preoccupation caused by some engrossing object.

This may occur between two individuals.

A person may not have sufficient spiritual discernment to find out what is right, whilst he may assent to the truth at once, when it is pointed out to him by another. Everybody is not an engineer, but

simple waggoner knows a good road when once it is made. Thus those impressions which are from God do not always remain simply impressions. But they are usually clear when of God. I have no doubt, however, that He often makes them on our minds when we are walking with Him and listening to His voice.

When you speak of obstacles raised by Satan ; it is not said that God Himself has not permitted these obstacles to a right desire, obstacles occasioned through the abounding evil of circumstances around us.

A person acting without the knowledge of God's mind, is a case that ought to have no existence. The only rule that could be given, is, never to *act* when we do not know the will of the Lord. Acting in ignorance of it, we are at the mercy of *circumstances* ; God making all turn, nevertheless, to the good of His children. But why act when

we do not know God's will? is there at all times such an exceedingly pressing necessity for action. If I do a thing with the full certainty that I am doing the will of God, it is clear that an obstacle then is nothing more than a test of my faith, and ought not to stop me. We get stopped, perhaps, through lack of faith; because, if not walking sufficiently near God, in the sense of our own nothingness, we shall lack faith to *accomplish* that which we have faith enough to *discern*.

When we are doing our own will, or are careless as to our walk, God, in His mercy, may warn us through an obstacle, which arrests us, if we give heed to it, while "the simple pass on and are punished." (Prov. xxvii, 12.) Where there is a good deal of activity and occupation in the work, God may allow Satan to raise up obstacles, in order that we may be kept in dependance on the

Lord ; but He never allows Satan to act otherwise than on the flesh. If we leave the door open, if we get away from God, Satan may harm us ; otherwise it is but a trial of faith, to warn us against some danger or snare—something which would have the tendency to exalt us in our own eyes. It is a means for our correction. That is to say, God allows Satan to afflict the spirit and make the flesh suffer outwardly, that the inner man may be preserved from evil. If it is something else than this, then it is probably our “*buts*” and our “*ifs*” that are stopping us, or the results of our carelessness which has given an open door to Satan to trouble with doubts and seeming difficulties between God and ourselves, through our not seeing more clearly.—“He that is begotten of God keepeth himself and that wicked one toucheth him not.” (1 John v. 18.)

In a word, the question is wholly *moral*.

If a question presents itself, which, on first looking at, we are unable to determine, we shall very often find, that there would be no such question at all, were our position not a false one, had we been antecedently in a good state of soul, had a genuine spirituality kept and preserved us. All we have to do in such a case is to humble ourselves about the whole matter. Then let us examine if Scripture does not furnish us with some principle suited for our direction; and there, it is evident, spirituality is the essential thing, is all.

‘Do that which Jesus would have done in such or such a circumstance,’ has been given as a rule—an excellent one, *where and when it is applicable*. But are we often in the circumstances in which the Lord would have been found? It is frequently useful to ask oneself,

*Whence* have I such a wish ? or the thought of doing this or that ? I have found that that in itself settles more than half the perplexing cases in which Christians find themselves involved. Two thirds of the remainder result from our rashness or from former sins.

If a thought is from God, and not of the flesh, we have only to look to God as to the manner and means of putting it in practice, and we shall soon get guidance.

There are cases where one has need of being guided not altogethor apart from motives, as, for instance, where I hesitate as to a visit, or the like. A life of more fervent charity, or charity in more intelligent exercise, or called out in drawing near God, will make plain the motives of charity on the one hand or the other ; and we may frequently discover that *ours* was only egotism.

Do you say, But what if the ques-



tion be one neither of charity nor of obedience? Then, I answer, you owe me a reason for *acting*; for, if it is only your own will, you cannot make the wisdom of God bend to your will. Here, again, we have the source of a numerous class of difficulties which God will never solve.

In such cases, He will teach us, by His grace, obedience, and make us see how much time we have lost through our own activity. "The meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way."

Let us remember that the wisdom of God leads us in the path of the will of God. If our own wills are at work, God cannot accomodate Himself to that. This is the essential thing to discover. It is the secret of the life of Christ. I know not of any other principle on which God could act, though He pardons and makes all turn to our good.

He guides the new man which has no other will than Christ, He mortifies the old, and, in this way, purges us that we may bear fruit.

“Lo, I come to do Thy will, O my God, I delight to do it.”

It is the place of a door-keeper to wait at the door, but in doing that, he is doing his master's will.

Rest assured that God does more *in* us than we *for Him* ; and what we do is only for Him, just in so far as it is Himself that works it in us.

---

True service begins with Christ, who is the Head, and when Christ is forgotten, then the service is defective ; it has lost connection with the spring and fountain of all service, because it is from the Head that *all* the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, increaseth. The body is of Christ, and He loves it as He loves Himself, and every one

who would serve it, will best learn to do so, by knowing His heart and purposes towards it. In a word, it is Christ serves, though it may be through us. We are but "joints and bands." If we are not *derivative* and *communicative from Christ*, we are useless. To be useful, my eye and heart must be on Christ, and not on the issue of my service ; though, if true to Him, the end will vindicate me too, however disheartening the interval. He who judges of his service by present appearances, will judge by the blossom, and not by the fruit ; and, after all, the service is not for the sake of the Church, but for the sake of Christ ; and if He be served in the Church, though the Church own it not, yet, Christ being served, He will own it. Now, the constant effort of Satan is to disconnect, in our minds, Christ from our service ; and this, much more than any of us, perhaps, have fully disco-

vered. Whether in reading, or praying, or speaking, how seldom, if we judge ourselves, do we find that we act simply as towards Christ and Him alone ! How often may sentimentality and natural feelings affect us in our service, instead of simple love to Him !

“ *The work of faith.* ”—Our Lord’s was this. He did not see the effects directly. If our motive for working is the effects we shall produce, this is not a work of faith. The Lord may encourage by the way, but the work is to flow from the power of communion with Himself; the love of Christ constraining. We should labour and not faint, therefore we have need of patience. The more we understand the character of Christ’s disappointments, the more holy will our labours be. We look for that which will satisfy us here, when we ought to be looking for it *there*. Not only ourselves but our

work is in the sight of God. The work must be carried on as if God were there, there being no allowance of anything He would not approve. It is not enough that the end we have in view be right, our way of working must be right also.

It is a miserable thing for a Christian to be acting *for a testimony*. God may make that which I do turn for a testimony. Whilst all the frankincense (Lev. ii. 2) was burned on the altar to the Lord, those around smelled the sweet savour. But a testimony is not my object. Those who set up for a testimony will soon make a shew of themselves.

Ananiás and Sapphira wanted to get the character of devotedness (such as the Church had) without the cost of it. Love of money really governed, modified by love of Church reputation.

Are we to say, 'I will not act on what I do know, till Thou tellest

me all my course on to glory ?' The Lord continually exercises His children, giving light enough to make a thing a matter of plain Christian obedience, and not shewing all the happy, and blessed, and full consequences, till faith acts on that : it is just a holy and excellent trial of faith. He says, in principle, ' I am the door.' The mind may say, ' Where to ?' The Lord answers, ' *I* am the door :' and wherever the soul finds Christ or the will of Christ, it, if walking in faith, trusts that, and the blessing follows. It soon goes in and out, and finds pasture. Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went. It is better to trust God in doing His will, than the consequences which doing His will may produce however blessed.. Nor shall he that followeth Him walk in darkness, though he may only know that in the very next footsteps Christ has gone before him.

The road from London to York is the road to York ; and the road from London to Dover is the road to Dover ; and *they are in opposite directions*. Any one that knows the country, knows that ; and also knows that no measure of persuasion of my own mind that I am on the road to York, will get me *there*, if I am tracing my way on to Dover. God may, and will, bear with ignorance, perhaps, if, in ignorance, I accredit persuasion of my soul after prayer in the place of the instruction His standard, the Bible, affords : but still His standard has a voice of its own, and it is a *fixed* standard ; and so far as I am not conformed to it, I am in the wrong, and a loser. And moreover, every one that judges me by it can see that I am wrong and a loser, though I may not do so myself.

The Lord keep us from resting upon a religious reputation. Of all the terrible things that can befall a

saint of God one of the worst is trusting in a religious reputation, especially for one engaged in ministering. How often have we seen a person labouring devotedly, diligently, blessed in his labours, gathering souls in truth to Christ, but gathering a circle round himself. Becoming satisfied with the circle he has made, resting in the fruits produced, and not in Him who is alone the power of life, his usefulness is gone, and he himself stops short of the end.

If raging billows rise in countries around us, and the preaching of the Gospel is forbidden, still all is in His hand, who hath the key of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth." I might desire that the Gospel should be preached in a certain land, and the hindrances might seem to be too many and too great, but it is my comfort to know that Christ has the *key*, and all the divine power of God



at His disposal. None could shut out His testimony ; all the powers of earth—the Pharisees, the lawyers, the chief priests, the governors, the Pilates, and the Herods could not hinder one poor sheep from hearing the voice of the Good Shepherd. So now. This is our confidence. With all the liberty with which we are blessed in this highly favoured country, I could not count upon a single year more, but for the simple promise:—“I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it” ; and I could go fearlessly into any country, whatever the outward circumstances, if I saw that the Lord had set before me an open door. Of course we must wait His time, to have the door opened ; Paul was forbidden to speak in Asia, at one time, and then we find Him there for three years afterwards, the Lord owing his labours, so that all Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital, heard the word of God. We

must be content to lean in faith on the arm of Him who holds the key, *and in our patience* possess our souls ; for there will always be circumstances to exercise our faith, and God will allow them to arise, to prove to us that we cannot do without Him, for then it is that we find that we have no strength, and that God answers our weakness according to *His own strength*. If Christ has opened a door, *no* man, devil, or wicked spirit can shut it.

Whenever God works, *the first* point with Him is to secure *manifestly* His own glory in what He does. When unrenewed man works, or when renewed man works like an unrenewed man, God's glory is left out of the question.

Uzziah strengthened, and strong—  
a word of admonition.

---

2 CHRON. xxvi.

---

Uzziah, we learn from this chapter, “sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding of the visions of God : and *as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.*” He went forth and warred, and “the Lord helped him.” “He strengthened himself exceedingly.” He built towers in Jerusalem and fortified them, and towers in the desert, and digged many wells. He had husbandmen also, and vine dressers in the mountains, and in Carmel. Moreover he had an host of fighting men that went out to war by bands—“the whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred ; and

under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones. And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. We need not dwell upon the description of the numerous army of King Uzziah. We will turn to God's instruction for ourselves about it. "And his name spread far abroad; *for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.—But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction.*" Of all the words we find put together, there are few more remarkable than these.

One would have thought that the very object to be gained by Uzziah

was *to be strong*. Alas ! the strength we naturally covet is independence of God. Saints are found mourning over their *weakness*, and what do they mean ? Is it not that they have no resources in themselves ? We forget that all real strength is derived from the fulness that is in Jesus, otherwise we should ever be able to say, with Paul, "When I am weak, then I am strong." We need to be deprived of every resource in ourselves, that we may know our strength to be in Him. When Uzziah felt himself to be strong, God left him.

There is great danger of our putting multiplied means in the place of the Lord Himself ; we may go the whole round of means, and forget that they are not the supply.

What has been the history of the Church ? Marvellously helped till she was strong, when she was strong her heart became lifted up. The saints at Corinth, who had multiplied

resources, men, and wisdom, and the like, and whose temptation it was to think that by the exercise of this wisdom they could refute the heathen, were told by the Apostle, 'No—it is only by the bringing in of the "wisdom of God," that which is "foolishness with man," and of the "strength of God," that which is "weakness with man." The Spirit of God shows us, in the Acts, the Church, few in numbers, marvelously helped. But how soon did the Church begin to look to itself, to its own resources and greatness, instead of to the Lord. And has this no voice for ourselves? Our blessing is in taking the place of weakness, so that God may, for His own name's sake, help.

There is danger in our saying, or supposing that we have attained to something. It is a mark of failure, when a christian (or a number of christians) looks to his own honour

and credit, instead of the honour of the Lord. The great thing is to be regardful of His name. A single eye will be occupied with Christ.

It is a very strong word, in reference to a saint that we have here—"his heart was lifted up to his destruction." But there is as strong a word in the New Testament—"he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." If any, even a saint of God, "sow to the flesh," he will reap but a sorrowful harvest of corruption, all his time having been mispent. We need to give heed to the *searching* words of Scripture, not turning away the point of them from ourselves, under the supposition that they cannot apply to us. This thought has been the source of much mischief in the Church. That soul will prosper which trembles at God's word, and is willing to face the most searching parts of it. The saint of God can

“sow to the flesh,” can “walk according to the flesh,” can “war after the flesh,” but the miserable end will be, that he will “of the flesh reap corruption.” When Uzziah was strong, (his strength being in his own resources,) his heart became “lifted up,” and more like Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon’s heart, (Dan. iv. 30,) than that of God’s anointed king of Judah. A heart that is “lifted up” is in a dangerous state, and almost always on the eve of a fall.

Though Uzziah was God’s anointed king, he was not God’s anointed priest, yet would he have nothing restrained from him, and we find him “transgressing against the Lord his God,” and going into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense, which it appertained not unto him, but unto the priests only, the sons of Aaron, who were consecrated to burn incense, to do.



Let us too beware of dealing with the Lord in unholy familiarity ; a humble spirit is always a confident spirit, but a humble spirit can trust only in the blood of Jesus ; it does not rush into God's presence as the man who is "lifted up in heart" does. We can only come there through the incense of the Lord Jesus, not on the credit of our own graces, or devotedness, or in fleshly fervour.

"It shall not be to thine honour from the Lord God," said Azariah the priest, as, with fourscore priests, valiant men, he withstood the king. "Then Uzziah was wroth, and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his fore-head before the priests in the house of the Lord."

Beloved, this history of King Uzziah is written for our admonition. "Lifting-up" of heart is always self-seeking, not God-seeking. We have (blessed be God !) liberty to enter

into the holiest, for we are priests unto God, by the blood of Jesus, but it is ever through the incense of our great High Priest.

In chap. xxvii. 6, we have no mention of Jotham's great army, he "*became mighty, because he prepared his heart before the Lord his God.*" This is the way for the saint to grow in practical strength. Thus was it with the Thessalonians; their "work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope was" in the sight of God and our Father." Jotham set the Lord always before him, and went on in an even tenour of conduct. In the eyes of man, he might not be as mighty as Uzziah, but the Holy Ghost records his name as that of one "mighty" in the eyes of God.

Christ, inside the veil, outside the  
camp—a word on ‘Where am I?’

---

HEB. X. 9-16.

---

THE power of our path—of our walk in this world, is the understanding, through the Holy Ghost, of our identification with Christ in all our ways, and our being set in the world to manifest Him, not merely to know that we have salvation, and the purging of our consciences through His most precious blood. The testimony of a Christian bears this character, he is treading in the footsteps of Christ. “To me, to live is Christ,” again, “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”—(faith not *in* but “*of* the Son of God,” that

is, the same faith by which Jesus walked up and down in the world, is the faith by which we are called to live.) That puts each of us in the place of responsibility as to our ways, our habits, our feelings, and objects. Are we realising the responsibility of living Christ? That is really what the Church of God is set in the world for—to be the expression of Christ in His absence. A Christian's conscience often satisfies itself with handing to the unconverted man the Bible, so that he may read what Christ was; but this is not the object for which Christ has left us here.—“Ye are the epistle of Christ know and read of all men.” Are we such an epistle as persons can read? It is not a person's coming to me and saying, What is your creed? What views do you hold? and the like; if I am not an expression of the ways and feelings of

Christ, I am a stumbling block, rather than otherwise. The Christian should be the living, breathing expression of Christ—of the principles, features, graces of the character of Christ. Alas ! the whole of Christianity is often made to consist in a set of opinions ; one gets his place and is characterised by what opinions he holds. We are called upon necessarily to live the Christ in whom we believe ; we are one with Him, and are called to shew forth what He is. But the whole power by which I am to act and to shew that, is the understanding that I am one with Him.

There are two great stages of Christ's path, and of the believer's, as identified with Him, presented to us in the epistle to the Hebrews. The first ends (chapter x,) where the soul is set in "the holiest." Up to that, the Holy Ghost is conducting us along step

by step; there He sets us down in this blessed place, "having boldness, to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."

The power of intelligent devotedness, is the understanding of the perfect purging of our consciences. Many do not understand this; they are aiming at getting it, and that is a complete reversing of God's order. I have a purged conscience; I go on, not to obtain it, but because I have it. How do I get it? Not by anything that I have done, by my frames or feelings, as a matter of attainment or experience; the Holy Ghost teaches us that it is by the blood of Jesus.

He shews the glory of the person of Christ, as contrasted with angels and with Moses, that of His priesthood, as contrasted with Aaron's,

that of His sacrifice, as contrasted with the sacrifices under the law. And what is the result? we have a purged conscience. He has set us down *within the veil*. It is not what one Christian has, and what another is struggling after, but the common platform of all, we *all* have a purged conscience. Some suppose that the blood of Christ has put away our sins before conversion, and then, as to what becomes of those after, they are met by the priesthood of Christ; but this is not what He says, it is by the blood of Christ; we are within the holiest with a perfectly purged conscience, with "no more conscience of sins." It is just worthy of the sacrifice of Christ to put me in possession of this and nothing short of it; *all* my sins, not some of them, blotted out. There, where the High Priest could go in once every year, and only then, the simplest believer is set down.

When one comes to deal closely with souls, one discovers what doubts, clouds, fears, and anxieties have possession of and distress them. If the blood of Christ does anything for us, it sets us there without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . let us draw near, &c." There is no difference here between apostles and others ; the apostle Paul and the thief on the cross, in other words, all alike, have a common place within the veil.

The priesthood of Christ comes in to maintain me practically where the blood of Christ has set me. As in the expression in the epistle of John, "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, [Jesus Christ is at God's right hand on all principles of righteousness,] and He is the propitiation [the mercy-seat] for



our sins." We are never told in the New Testament, that we are to *ask* for the pardon of sins, there is not such an expression as this, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Nor is this distinction unimportant. It is a much easier thing for a child to ask for pardon for some fault, than to confess it. We may be asking for pardon for any special sin, and we have no Scripture warrant to know that it is put away; but when we confess it, it is a matter of *faith* to know that it is put away. I am speaking now of a believer; were it the question of an unconverted person, the blood of Christ meets that. God is "faithful and just, (not gracious and merciful merely,) to forgive us our sins, &c." The moment I have judged myself about it, I am entitled to know that it is gone.

What a very wondrous place to set the believer in at the very outset of his course of discipleship !—washed from his sins, his conscience purged, set down in the unclouded sense of the light of God's own countenance ! But what to do ? to rest there ? No,—that is the foundation on which the superstructure of practical devotedness is based. Legalism and antinomianism are alike met. What does the system of legalism say ? You must work yourself up into this place of acceptance. The gospel says, Christ has put me there. I never could get there ; the law has proved that. When God gave the law, what was He doing ? ‘ You shall do this,’ ‘ You shall not do that,’ brought out what man's heart was ; it was impossible he could do what God was telling him he ought to do, and impossible he should not be what God was telling him not to be ;—  
 “ As many as are of the works of

the law are under the curse." I can never, by works of law, get into the holiest of all. I am put there as the result of what Christ has accomplished for me on the cross. And this is stated at the very outset of the epistle, "When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right-hand of the Majesty on high," (chap. i. 3.) Why does it say "sat down"? To evidence the completion of the work. Aaron never sat down; there was no seat prepared for the priest either in the tabernacle or the temple.

What does the other error lead men to say? 'I have it, I possess it all in Christ,' and there it ends. But no! the Gospel puts me there, to run the blessed race that is set before me in ardent, earnest breathing of soul to become like Christ.

If the first division sets me down *within the holiest*, the second places

me *without the camp*. I find Christ, as it regards my conscience "inside the veil." I find Christ, as it regards my heart, "outside the camp."

It does not become us to take only the comfort which flows from our knowing Christ to be within the veil—the comfort His sacrifice gives us, I must seek practical identification with Him outside the camp. Christ within the veil tranquilises my conscience. Christ outside the camp quickens, energizes my soul to run more devotedly the race set before me. "The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought *into the sanctuary* by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore *unto Him without the camp*, bearing His reproach." (v. 11-13.) No two points are morally more remote than *inside*

*the veil* and *outside the camp*, and yet they are brought together here. Inside the veil was the place where the Shekinah of God's glory dwelt; outside the camp, the place where the sin-offering was burned—no place gives such an idea of distance from God as that. It is blessed to know that the Holy Ghost presents to me, Jesus filling up all that is between these two points. I have nothing to do whatever with the camp. The camp was the place of ostensible profession, (in type, the camp of Israel; in antitype, the city of Jerusalem.) Why did Christ suffer without the gate? In order to shew the setting aside of the mere machinery of Israel's outward profession.

We may be clear as to the work of Christ being done for us, (and God forbid there should be a cloud cast across the blessedness of that,) knowing the conscience to be made per-

fect ; but is tranquility of conscience all I want ? is there no responsibility ? is Christ's voice from within the veil all ? has He no voice outside the camp ? It will be found that, after all, the joy, peace, liberty flowing from our hearing Christ's voice inside the veil, is very much dependent on our listening to His voice outside the camp. Those who know most of suffering with Him, and bearing His reproach, will know most of the blessedness of His place within the veil. Our conduct, our ways, our path through the earth must be tested by Christ.—“ Would Christ be there ? would Christ do this ? ” The Holy Ghost must be grieved if the saint pursues a course contrary to that which Christ would have pursued ; and then the soul must be lean. How can a grieved Spirit testify of Christ—how can He give the soul the comfort, and joy, and peace of His testimony to Him ?

How can I be enjoying Christ, if I am not walking in company with Him? We know that we cannot enjoy the company of a person unless we are where that person is—where then is Christ? “Outside the camp.”—“Let us go forth, therefore, unto *Him* without the camp, bearing *His* reproach.” This is not to go forth to men, or to opinions, to a church, or to a creed, but to Christ Himself. We are not of the world—why? Because Christ is not of the world; the measure of our separation from the world is the measure of Christ’s separation. “For here we have no continuing city;” do our hearts seek one?—some set of circumstances or the like, a something, on which to lean? are we saying, as it were, ‘Oh do leave me something?’ like Lot pleading for Zoar, “Is it not a little one?” do not take it all away, “it is not a little one; and my soul shall live!” Lot’s was a heart

going out after a little of the world still. When the heart is filled with Christ, it can give up the world, there is no difficulty in doing it then. The mere saying, 'Give up this,' or 'give up that,' to one loving the world, will be of no avail; what I have to do, is to seek to minister to that soul more of Christ.

I am outside the camp, I am seeking a city that is to come, I am waiting for Him who is to come. In this position of dislodgment from the world and from its system, I find myself in two positions, one towards God, and the other towards man. The first, "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifices of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." (v. 15.) The second, the lovely development of the spirit of active benevolence of the next verse, "But to do good and to communicate forget not: for



with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (v. 16.)

I am within the veil with Christ,—outside the camp, in the world, "bearing His reproach;" and whilst thus delivered from the profession around me that is not of Him, I am engaged in worship and doing good to all.

In regard to my hope, it is not, as people say, the "holding the doctrine of the Second Advent," but "waiting for God's Son from heaven." This is not a dead, dry doctrine. If we are really waiting for God's Son from Heaven, we shall be sitting loose to the world.

I *have* Christ for my soul's need, and I am only waiting for God's son from heaven, for Christ to come from heaven to take His Church unto Himself, that where He is we may be also, and that may be this night. I am not looking for Anti-christ, for signs, for movements amongst the

nations, but for this one holy, happy thing, I am waiting for God's Son from heaven. Oh do not let us be inconsistent, do not let us contradict that, seeking to grasp Christ with one hand, and hold fast the world with the other. If we know our position "within the veil" we must know our position "outside the camp," reproached, it may be, scorned, hated, suspected of all who are not outside, but in the joy of fellowship with Him. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, "we also, then shall appear with Him in glory."

---

Judaising is the denial of the whole principle of Christianity; it is the bringing back into the world, by ordinances, of that which God has taken out of it by grace.

## Christ, not creeds—a word on 'What have I?'

---

Many of the stays we have had in a former position are necessarily lost for faith. Now there is always danger, when the soul has got away from certain land-marks, because of not having their guidance, of its getting astray. If Satan cannot keep persons shut up through habit, he seeks to get them astray. These land-marks keep a person out of the place of *faith*, but then they do preserve from the rationalism and the like that float about the world.

Take, as an instance, the Roman Catholic system,—it is infidel as to almost every part of the Gospel ; if I believe there must be a purgatory, that is the denial of my being purged from my old sins ; again the repeated

sacrifice of the mass, is the denial of the once-offered and eternally efficacious sacrifice of Christ. It is infidelity, but infidelity in a shape that keeps its credit in great orthodox principles. There is a check upon man's will; but it is not truth secured. Where we find Satan leading souls astray is, that certain facts are owned, but when we come to the application of these facts, it is all wrong. Truth is so far admitted that it looks like disrespect to call this in question, but, after all, it is respect for Christ. Whilst one may be very thankful that the Providence of God has provided certain things, the consequence is, that, when the soul is let loose and gets into the region of faith, where faith is not at work, the soul if not guarded by reverence for Christ, kept stayed upon Him, runs wild.

There is a tendency of the hour to latitudinarianism,- and we must be-

ware of it. The character of the infidelity of the day is not wicked stickling against truth, but indifference with regard to it. God is made to be indifferent to every thing the devil pleases to bring in, and this is called *charity*.

It looks exceedingly disagreeable, hard, and harsh, when that is resisted, when truth is endeavoured to be held in faithfulness. Latitudinarianism is the character of the rebellion of the day—rebellion against Christ. It is well to look Satan in the face, and to call Satan's doings by Satan's name. It is said we are not to judge. But one point makes the soul quiet and steady as to this—can I act, dare I act indifferently to the truth? This settles the mind, where one might be reasoning upon the rightness and wrongness of this or that. I *dare not*, and that most distinctly, as the broadest principle that can possibly be for the Church of God. If we

have got away from the apathy of that which does not act upon conscience, we have got away *for Christ*. We are redeemed into godly, unhesitating faithfulness to Christ. A question of bearing with ignorance, infirmity, and the like, is altogether another thing. God is charity, and God is not, and can never be, indifferent to a single thing that concerns the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How far in the constant intercourse we have with the world, is it found that the spirit of the world is kept out? many and many a thing to which we were dead a while since, we may not be dead to now. It is always by truth that the Lord works. If God has brought in great and blessed truths and refreshed souls by them, there comes to be the bearing of this on every day practice of life, and the soul is brought to prove, when the enjoyment of truth de-

clines, whether it has got the faith that will last. We shall find that faith is not so much put to the test in making great sacrifices, as by patient continuance in well doing. If Abraham had been mindful of that country from whence he came out, he might have had opportunity to have returned. (Heb. xi. 15.) So Paul, "I have suffered the loss of all things, and *do* count them but dung, that I may win Christ." (Phil. iii 8). Now truth will not do that for a man, unless he has Christ as an object, he will soon not be able to say, "This one thing I do, &c." (v. 13.)

What is needed is reference to Him who alone is power. There are evil days coming, and the stays and props men have been leaning on God takes away for *faith* before they are taken away for them *in fact*. If official truths were taken away, would not ten thousand errors spring up, and perhaps only error be maintained.

I do not doubt dark days are coming, what the church has to do, is to carry the light within it. We have been accustomed to lean upon official truth, it is going down in the world, and God is making His people feel that we must have that to lean upon that requires faith, and that, when we have lost our props, we must have that kind of faith that is not held up by props.

Is there individual, earnest purpose of heart to hold the truth because it is God's truth, when we have lost that which is man's ?

Should we fear when the Lord is sifting? not a bit. "I will sift them," says the Lord of Israel, "among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." (Amos ix. 9.)

It can never cease to be true that Christ has a body down here. There may be failure, but faith can never



give up the fact that in God's mind, and in Christ's affections, there is a body, and a body to be owned. Herein is faith. David prays, "Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God *of* Israel, even a God *to* Israel." We can bring down from the Lord the grace that is needed for the Church as it is.

As to the bearing and connection of prophecy on practice in the Church—we have to distinguish between a moral perception of the state of things around us and prophecy. We may not see a single thing that we can fix upon us the accomplishment of prophecy, but we do see principles at work, the end of which will be the accomplishment of prophecy. Prophecy is the revelation of God's facts in establishing His principles. A certain grand act of God establishes a judgment upon man's conduct on

the one hand, and man's conduct on the other. The separation of the tares and wheat is an actual judgment of things definitely, which have been discerned in principle all through ; but that discernment was not the fulfilment of prophecy. Principles are at work and certain occasional judgments, but the spiritual mind will discern the principles at work. It was not prophecy when the Lord said, " How is it that ye can discern the face of the sky and the earth, but do not discern this time ?" (Luke xii. 56.) Persons ought to be able to discern the times, they ought to be able to discern by spiritual perception the principles of evil that will be accomplished in prophecy. I see things at work, and get, in the full development, warning to my soul about what is going on now.

The spiritual man does not take prophecy as a present thing. The

power of blessing is what he has in actual, living communion now with the Lord Jesus Christ. "This thou knowest," says the apostle, "that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me—thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." He could not rejoice in circumstances, but then he must rejoice in the Lord. We give ourselves, when it is not so, the anxiety of the world's condition. Instead of its resting in gloom upon the disciple's spirit, the word is "and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads : for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke xxi. 28.) It is to us a *promise* that the Lord is going to shake, not the earth only, but also heaven ;" (Heb. xii. 26.) but, if we have that which ties us to the earth, it will not be realised as such. "Here we have no continuing city." The trials and

difficulties we meet with in the progress of things towards judgment make us feel that. We cannot count upon the protestantism that gives us quietness and liberty to preach the Gospel. All this is very uncomfortable to one not in the place of faith, to one seeking fleshly ease.

In the address to the angel of Sardis, (Rev. iii. 6,) there is as solemn a word as any, and one that shows us how God maintains His standard when we have given it up, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die : for I have not found thy works *perfect before God*. Remember therefore how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee *as a thief*, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. What

do we find in the epistle to the Thessalonians, where the Church is addressed in its own position of waiting for the Lord ? “ But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape. *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.*” (1 Thes. v. 1-4.) The professing Church is treated as the world. When we turn to the address to the church of Philadelphia, (Rev. iii. 7-13,) He leaves the Church this, “ I know thy works : behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength

and hast kept my word, and has not denied my name.”—There was personal faithfulness to Christ.—“Behold I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie; behold I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.” And what of the coming of Christ here? The very opposite to what is said to Sardis. “Because thou hast kept the word of *my* patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of *my* God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of *my* God, and the name of the city of *my* God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh

down out of heaven from *my* God ; and I will write upon him *my* new name." As they had been identified with the patience of Christ, they would be identified with all the power of that name.

---

## A word on faithfulness and catholicity.

---

If I have been shewn truths that my brethren around me have not seen as yet, where there is nearness to God, real spiritual power, these truths are ministered in grace, but all other truths, common to myself and my brethren, are maintained in their place. Let me get all the truth I may, if I am near God, I

know myself as a poor sinner, less than the least of all saints, like dust in the balance, but Christ has His place. I have a universal link with all saints. But I have a weapon in my hand and power in my heart. If there is not this blessed flow of spiritual power and affections, the truths I hold become a badge, and I become sectarian. But to what is that traceable? To the want of that power that kept every thing in its place, and at the same time gave all their full value to common truths. Our very blessings will otherwise become a snare of sectarianism. There is no use in putting the best two-edged sword that ever was in a man's hand, if it would be wielded inexpertly.

When people set up to make a testimony they make a show of themselves. We have our Scyllas and Charybdes on the one side and on the other. If we take our weak place,



God will show Himself. If we set about bearing a testimony, we shall shew our weakness. It is a narrow path. In the presence of God, I find I am nothing, but God is there, and there are weakness and strength together. With any truth and every truth, if you have not God, it will only be the display of weakness and wretchedness. It is not charity to go with any in the broad path. Keep in the narrow path; have a narrow foot-way and a large heart.

---

When Christ is working in a heart, there will be the tenderest consideration, there will be straight paths made for lame feet.

We want to have the God of peace with us, so as to have humbleness about evil, affections occupied with good.

“ Surely I come quickly.”

---

REV. xxii. 16-20.

---

THE Spirit and the Bride say, Come !  
 Lord Jesus, Come !  
 Take us, O take us hence, to be with Thee  
 For ever.

Bright Morning-star, seen from afar  
 Mid this world's night,  
 Bid Thou the shadows flee,  
 The Lamb, our light,  
 For sun and moon in that eternal home  
 Are needed never.

Lone, outcast Israel's Hope, return  
 O Lord, return !  
 Shine on Thy Zion, bid her see, grace-rais'd,  
 Thy glory.  
 Both David's Root and promis'd Fruit  
 By prophets sung,  
 Thy name shall then be prais'd  
 In ev'ry tongue ;  
 Then, then shall hymn all lands and tribes  
 The same glad story. [that mourn

## God's love, gratuitous and motive —a word on 'Why do I this?'

---

"If a man would give all the substance of his house for love,  
it would utterly be contemned."—Can. viii. 7.

---

The pride of man's foolish heart is ever carrying him away from the grace sent to him in Jesus, which must meet him as a beggar, helpless, and undone, to some requirement that he may satisfy, which will, as he thinks, enable him to meet God on better terms; or he does away with the richness of the grace, and makes it inefficient to meet his real necessities, and then, strives to make up the inefficiency by his own change of conduct. On the other hand, the soul taught of God, is taught its entire helplessness, (not merely to avow it with the lips, but to know it in the experienced weakness and wickedness of the heart,) but it is

taught, also, to turn away from this to the brightness of grace, that has reached it in its wickedness, and met it in the truth of its condition, evil as it was, with the full consolation, the desperate necessity of that condition sought—Jesus made unto it, of God, “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.”

That man is ever attempting to make God as ungenerous as himself, to limit the greatness of His gifts by his own unbelief, and, thus, to dim the glory of His abounding grace, is not only the necessary result, but the proof, of the unchangeable evil of his heart. It is this, simply this, which has driven the Church into the world, lowering the standard of obedience to the habits of its new associates. Vain would be the search of that man, who might try, in the pride of his heart, to bring evidence from the word of truth, that any one other motive but love, was reckoned

on, there, to bring back to God, and guide in His ways, the heart of a self-willed and wayward sinner.

There can be no union with God in thought or act, save in love ; “ He that loveth not knoweth not God ; for God is love.” (1 John iv. 7, 8.) A service of constraint is no service to God. Anything that would impede the flow of the living waters, the fresh streams, of love, peace, and joy, into the weary heart of a God-fearing sinner, is just that which would hinder fruitfulness, and leave it a sterile and thorn-bearing thing still.

Now the scriptural word “ sanctification ” is a fair title assumed by error, and one so apparently authoritative in its claim, that many are led captive by it, who, while they feel and know their slavery, are unable to account for it. “ If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed,” is the happy assurance of our Lord ;

and anything that would limit the love He came to prove, is but keeping fast the fetters that bind to earth, and holding us back from the happy, and, therefore, free, obedience of children. What is "sanctification," (as now used,) but uniting that which God has so graciously, so carefully, separated—salvation and its holy consequences?

If there is one statement of truth more clear than another in Scripture, and more uncompromising in the language in which it is put, it is this, *that redemption is exclusively the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, not that of the Holy Ghost.* That faith is the work of the Holy Spirit, is another question. As a Saviour, and a perfect Saviour, putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, Jesus says, look unto ME and be ye saved. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoso-

ever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 14, 15.) If what is so extensively termed sanctification, (i. e. progressive advancement in holiness) is necessary to salvation, it might well be asked, how much would do? He who knows God, will know also, that he must be as perfect as He is perfect, or neither God or himself could be satisfied. But not only is this robbing the cross of Jesus of its power, and making His blood inefficient, but, as its result, (how completely, in this, as in everything, is wisdom justified of her children,) we have nothing, but an unhappy and unfruitful Church, hardly knowing whether it is saved or not, knowing enough of itself to understand that it comes short of God's glory; and therefore, to get itself into peace, (as looking to "sanctification," and not to Christ,) it must reduce the standard of obedience, bringing down

God's character, that it may, somehow, come up to it, and so be satisfied with itself. Thus the ingenuity of unbelief will torture the simplicity of God's word into something that will impose a burden, when God's love has sought to remove it; and those who are thus self-tasked, or taught by another gospel than that of full and unconditional love, have to run in fetters, with the brightness of the prize for which they contend obscured by intervening clouds of fear and doubt as to God's willingness to bestow it on them. But *thus saith the Lord*. "Whosoever believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John iii. 36.\*) The whole Word, in its testimony to the Lord Jesus, speaks of Him as manifesting

\* See also, 1 John v. 11, 12; John v. 24; xx. 31; Mark xvi. 15, 16; Acts xvi. 31; xiii. 38, 39; Rom. iii. 20, 28; iv. 3-8, 21-25; v. 8-11, 18-20; x. 4-13. 2 Cor. v. 19-21; Heb. x. 5-18.



God as a Saviour ; and it is in the faith of this that the troubled spirit gets peace, not to be found elsewhere. It sees the God it feared, becoming, in His love to the sinner, the sinner's Saviour, and therefore, it has confidence towards God : for who can doubt, if God becomes a Saviour, the perfectness of the salvation ? Its completeness is the soul's security ; and faith in it, as perfect and complete, gives peace, *and instant peace* too. It was thus the Gospel (which is " glad tidings," the expression of God's love to sinners, as sinners,) was received when it was first believed on in the world. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*," was the Spirit's reply to the trembling jailor, (Acts xvi), and he rejoiced in God. "*If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*," was the prompt answer to the Ethiopian ; (Acts viii.)—" I be-

lieve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," the happy expression of his saving faith ;" and he went on his way rejoicing."

That salvation, then, is utterly irrespective of what we have been, or of what we are, or of the measure of sanctity we may attain, is, and must be, the conclusion of the heart that trembles at God's word. The simple fact that, "*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,*" is the proof that *nothing* but unbelief can hinder any sinner's participation in all the rich blessings God has to bestow. What is sin, but estrangement of heart from, and disobedience to, the authority of Him, who proved, by the gift of His Son, to those who were so estranged, and in open rebellion against Him, that, though sin was reigning unto death, His grace could reign triumphantly above all sin ?

In the death of the Lord Jesus Christ we learn what God is to sinners, as sinners. "Without shedding of blood, there is no remission" *of sin*. (Heb. ix. 20.) Death is the wages of sin : Death was the portion of Jesus, therefore, as made sin for us.

It is the blood of Jesus *alone* that cleanseth from all sin (1 John i. 7.)—it is by the blood of Jesus *alone* we have boldness of access into the holiest (Heb. x. 19)—it is by the blood of Jesus *alone*, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot unto God, that our consciences are purged from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. ix.)

Here then is our secure, our only, resting place,—the blood of the Holy Lamb. If the Spirit beareth witness to the sinner, it is to shew the cross as his salvation ; to the saved sinner, indeed, He reveals glory,

far deeper glory, in the face of the Crucified One, as well as the glory of the inheritance ; (John xvi. ; ) but, in imparting peace to the conscience, in delivering from the dread of death and of God's anger, the testimony is one and unvaried—*Jesus delivered* for our offences, and raised again for our justification. He who believes this, is saved. Let him come ever so exalted in the evident favour of God, to that must he recur for his peace and salvation,—“*other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*”

Nor is this merely a pardon given in dependance on future obedience. Alas ! to those who know how their service is hindered by the heavy bondage of a sinful body, how the flesh ever ‘lusteth against the Spirit,’ who know that all their obedience, while so hindered, is, in God's estimate, “unprofitableness,” (surely unprofitableness can be no claim to

heaven,) where would be the joy ? Oh how would man pervert God's liberal and most wondrous grace ! how does he ever try to escape from the full blessing of being saved altogether by grace, in his ignorance of that God, who, having not spared His Son, but delivered Him up for us all, will with Him freely give us all things. (Rom. viii. 32.) What saith the Lord ? "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, &c." (Rom. viii. 1.) One with Him, who hath died unto sin once, and over whom death hath no more dominion, the believer is called on to reckon himself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God ; as, knowing that his old man is crucified with Him ; baptized into His death, and raised with Him again into newness of life ; dead, and therefore freed from sin. (Rom. vi. i-7.) It is in the knowledge of the true position of freedom into which

he is put before God, as one with Jesus, where He is at the right hand of God, that he is enabled to overcome sin in his daily and hourly conflict. Faith in the perfect victory of Jesus over all that was man's enemy, is the alone power by which we can become victors too.

It is the freedom of the happy spirit, abiding in a Father's love, which alone can give power to serve Him who is love; and upon this rests all the instruction of our Lord, delivering by the power of that name "Father," from every bondage, freeing from every other master—man, the world, the flesh, the devil, and all the anxious cares of our fearful and doubting hearts—into the buoyancy, and, therefore, energy, of spirit, by which alone we can serve in newness of life, being careful for nothing, taking no thought for the morrow, with the eye single in its object, the heart

single in its subjection and service, having no master but Christ, no object but His glory, having present fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, led by the Spirit of God, ("where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty,") abiding in Christ, and having, as so abiding, His peace and His joy. (John xvi. 27.)

Jesus came to declare the Father, He spake not of Himself, He was the Father's servant. The Holy Ghost is the servant of the risen Jesus, and speaks only of Him, not of Himself. Whether it be the first entering into the sheep-fold by that Spirit's quickening, or subsequent increasing power over the world, the flesh, and the devil, the witness is the same, "the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 4.) Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the

same image from glory to glory. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) However mighty the work, the object of faith is the same as to the weakest believer—Jesus, and not what He (the Spirit) is doing in the believer's heart.

Oh yes ! the heart must love, ere it will serve Him readily,—it must know His mind and will, ere it can serve Him faithfully ; but it can only love Him, as knowing where His love is seen—in Jesus ; it can only serve Him *truly*, as knowing Him who did serve Him faultlessly and faithfully in this same world. All is the witness of the Spirit ; but Jesus, the exhibitor of the love which wins the heart—Jesus, the faithful servant—is that to which He testifies.

It is a wonderful thing God should bring the heart of a poor, proud, self-seeking man, into delight with that which is utterly opposed to every feeling of flesh. And how tenderly and graciously He does it !



He does not say, 'Give up the world—deny thyself—crucify the flesh—become abased : ' (that would be hard indeed, though it would be righteous ; and we all know those who have fancied He has so said, and they have tried every self-inflicted penance and monkish austerity, but the world was loved still, self was the only object of exaltation through it all.) He speaks in gentleness, and tells us of the greatness of His love in the midst of our alienation and rebellion ; tells us He loves us, though our hearts are worldly and proud, and our practices selfish and base, and wins us by this love. The testimony of Jesus is the story of this love, the proof of God's love to the sinning man, the ungodly, the proud, the worldly man ; the proof that sin was not a sufficient barrier to shut out love, that it has broken that down, and can now flow unchecked into the sinful heart. The

heart where this is credited, and therefore, received, must return an answer of love, and will know, surely know, that God asks nothing from us to prove our love, but what will secure to us increased, and increasing, peace and joy. It is grace the sinner wants, for that alone can be the connecting link between him and God ; and where is the grace, but in Jesus humbled, broken-hearted, and crucified ? This is where God has come down to the sinner, and the sinner's stepping place to get back to God ; the hand of God, stretched out to us in our wretchedness, lifting us up again to Himself, and clasping us to His heart. In truth, there can be no service to God, except by the sweet constraint of love. The obedience of heaven is the obedience of love, for there can be nothing but love there ; there is only one will there—obedience to that will, is the unity and harmony

of heaven. The results of self-will are clear enough around us in the full tide of misery which is flowing over this rebellious world. It is the same power which rules in heaven, reaching, by the Spirit's presence, the heart of a self-willed sinner, that brings it to subjection, and gives (when it has the mastery there) the joy of heaven, freeing it from its many turbulent and unrighteous masters, and giving it but one, and that one love, for God is love.

The more then this love is known, and shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto us, the more constrained will the heart be to this happy service, because it will thus judge; that, "if one died for all, then were all dead, and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again."

And oh! where is it that we get

daily strength, but in tracing the love and the glory that can be only seen in the Father's righteous servant, whose service was both to the Father and to us. Every step so traced, will unravel the depths of that grace which has given the heart its peace, and assured it of everlasting glory. And it is this, it is this, that the Holy Ghost does engrave day by day, deeper and deeper, on the willing heart of the believer, showing him his Lord, Him who was in the beginning, with God, and was God, but who was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us ;"—marking the circumstances of evil which surrounded Him from His birth onwards, and so the untiring love which could not be overcome by those circumstances, but which shone the brighter, and shewed its depths the more, as it was scorned and trampled on, while pressing on in its might through them all, to finish that work, which, alone, could

meet the necessities of the sinner. It is not the cross only ; but the character of the evil, which in its power overwhelmed the Lamb of God, and the unconquered compassion which ever shone forth from Him on the darkness which surrounded and would have quenched it,—the every day's pitying endurance of the “contradiction of sinners against Himself,” even to the moment when the readiness of His heart to bless, was seen in the prompt reply of forgiveness to him who had reviled Him during His bitterest agony on the cross. (Compare Matt. xxvii. 24 with Luke xxiii. 43.) It is this that shows the depth of the love, a love that existed ever, a love that ordained the victim, that gave the victim (and that victim His only Son) to, and for, those, who hated and disregarded both the Giver and the Gift.\*

\* It is not, as some suppose, that the necessity of the sacrifice of Jesus is lessened

He who delights to trace the steps of Jesus in this grief stricken world, will see in every step the holiness, the moral glory, and the love of the unseen God, made manifest to Him in a form that he can apprehend.

Oh yes, it is knowing God in Jesus, in all the exquisite detail of His most dignified, yet condescending, love, a love that could, and that did, descend to the depths of degra-

by the assertion here made, that God loved us as sinners, and the sacrifice was but the proof of that love. No, but while nothing but the complete erasure of every charge, the cleansing from all sin, could bring the sinner back to God, with boldness into the holiest of all, yet it was a previous, exhaustless, and self-existing love, which expressed itself to the sinner it loved, in the very way the sinner needed it; by giving him that which would answer his necessities to the full. God loved the sinner and, *therefore*, found him the sacrifice he needed. And oh ! God so loved the sinner, that He spared not His well-beloved Son to be the sacrifice.

dation and shame, to minister "its sweet consolation to the wretchedness of its object ; that came into a world of sin and sorrow, not to be ministered unto, but to minister ; to be the lowest and the poorest, to be associated with the most needy and despised of men—the leper, the publican, and the Samaritan, giving His back to the smiters, His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ; "learning obedience by the things that He suffered," taking part in our sufferings, that, when perfected in His lesson of love, He might be a sympathising Intercessor for those, whose companion in sorrow He had become. It is this, the weakness of Jesus, the poverty of Jesus, the depths of poverty both of spirit and of circumstance, that shows us how far His love can reach, and what that love would do to bless its object, that shows us God.

Upon the ground of the soul's

present and perfected salvation by the blood of Jesus, the believer stands to meet the practical question of following Him, as made even now by His gratuitous grace, free and ready to serve Him in love, as having but *one* object, that of showing forth His praises in the world that rejected and still rejects Him. There will be no singularity in the confession of the name of Jesus in heaven ; none will be ashamed of Him or of His words there ; He will be fully glorified and admired there. But it is here, in "this present evil world," in the midst of a crooked and perverse people, that the sinner separated by the blood of the Lamb to all blessing, is called on to stand forth and declare how Jesus "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."



# The Well on the Way.

NUM. xxi. 16, 18.

“ And from thence they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water, then Israel sang this song, Spring up O well; sing ye unto it. The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves.”

Spring up ! spring up, O well !  
 Hard-digg'd (divinely given)  
 With staff in hand, out the dry sand,  
 By journeyers on to Canaan's land ;  
 Foretaste of heaven,  
 Spring up ! spring up, O, well !

Amid those distant hills  
 The water-brooks run down ;  
 River and rill the valleys fill,  
 And the glad land, the Lord doth till,  
 With plenty crown.  
 Spring up ! spring up, O well !

Saviour from thralldom past,  
 God of the promis'd land  
 Thy desert love, here, here we prove !  
 Boasting in Thee, we'd onward move,  
 Till there we stand.  
 Spring up ! spring up, O well !

(JUDE 24, 25.)

—  
Unto Him who is able  
To keep us — His called ones,  
Preserv'd in Christ Jesus,  
And saints of the Father—  
To keep us from falling,  
And faultless to set us  
Before His bright glory  
With fulness of joy ;—

To the Lord God who keepeth,  
Midst sin, and in weakness,  
Whose, wisdom alone is,  
THE God and OUR Saviour,  
Be majesty, glory,  
Dominion, and power,  
Both now and for ever.  
Amen and Amen.