

PRESENT TESTIMONY VOLUME 10, 1859

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A collection of articles and writings by G.V. Wigram from Present Testimony Volume 10, 1859, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

41 Chapters

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1 Thessalonians

We find, in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, and especially in the first (for in the second it was already needful to guard that freshness from the perfidious attacks of the enemy), the condition and the hope of the Christian, as such, in this world, in all its freshness. These two epistles are the first that Paul wrote, unless we except that to the Galatians, the date of which is uncertain. Already long occupied with the work, it is only when this work was considerably advanced, that in watching over it he guards it by means of his writings: writings, as we have seen, various in character, according to the state of the Churches, and according to the divine wisdom which, by this means, deposited in the Scriptures that which would be necessary for all ages.

Newly converted, the Christians at Thessalonica suffered much from the persecution of the world; a persecution which the Jews of that place had already stirred up at an earlier day against Paul himself. Happy at the great work there, and rejoicing in the state of his dear children in the faith, a testimony to which was borne everywhere, even by the world, the apostle opens his heart; and the Holy Ghost sets forth, by his mouth, what that Christian condition was upon the earth, which was the source of hi.) joy in the case of the Thessalonians; and what the hope, which threw its light upon the believer's existence, shining around him through his whole life, and illumining his path in the wilderness. In a word, the Christian character is unfolded to our eyes with all its motives and its joys; and that, in connection with the testimony of God, and the hope which is our strength in bearing it.

We all know that the doctrine of the coming of Christ, which universally accompanies that work of the Spirit that attaches our hearts to Him in the first spring of a new life, is specially presented to us in these two epistles. And it is not merely formally taught as a doctrine, it is linked with every spiritual relationship of our souls, it is displayed in all the circumstances of the Christian's life; we are converted in order to wait for Him; the joy of the communion of saints in the fruit of their labors, is realized in His presence; it is at the coming of Christ that holiness has all its value, its true measure being seen in that which is then manifested; it is the consolation when Christians die; it is the unexpected judgment of the world; it is unto the coming of Christ that God preserves His own in holiness, and blameless. We shall see these points set forth in detail, in the different chapters of the first epistle. We only point them out here. In general, we shall find that personal relationships, and the expectation of His appearing, have a remarkable and enlivening freshness in this epistle in every respect, The Lord is present to the heart, is its object; and Christian affections spring up in the soul, causing the fruits of the Spirit to abound.

In these two Epistles only is a Church said to be in God the Father, that is to say, planted in this relationship, having its moral existence, its mode of being, in it. The life of the Church developed itself in the communion that flowed from this relationship. The spirit of adoption characterized it. With the affection of little children the Thessalonians knew the Father. Thus John says, when speaking of the little children in Christ: " I write unto you because ye have known the Father." It is the first introduction into the position of liberty in which Christ has placed us-liberty before God and

in communion with Him. Precious position! to be as children to One who loves as a Father, with all the liberty and tender affection of that relationship, according to divine perfection. For here it is not the adaptation of Christ's human experience to the wants in which He acquired it: precious as that grace is:- is our introduction into the unmingled enjoyment of the light, and of the divine affections displayed in the character of the Father. It is our communion, tender and confiding, but pure, with Him whose love is the source of all blessing.

The apostle, in declaring (as was his custom) that which he felt respecting them, the aspect in which they appeared to his heart and mind, speaks neither of gifts, as to the Corinthians, nor of the grand features of an exaltation that embraced the Lord and all saints, as to the Ephesians, and even to the Colossians with the addition of that which their state required; nor of the brotherly affection and fellowship of love which the Philippians had manifested in their connection with himself; nor of a faith that existed apart from his labors, and in communion with which he hoped to refresh himself, adding to it that which his abundant gifts enabled him to impart to them, as he writes to the Romans, whom he had not yet seen.

Here, it is the life itself of the Christian in its first fresh impressions, in its intrinsic qualities, as it developed itself by the energy of the Holy Ghost on earth, the life of God here below in them, which he remembers in his prayers with so much satisfaction and joy. Three great principles he tells the Corinthians (1 Cor. 13) form the basis, and ever abide as the foundation of this life, Faith, Hope, and Love. Now these three were the powerful and divine motives of the life of the Thessalonians. This life was not merely a habit; it flowed, in its outward activities, from immediate communion with its source. These activities were quickened and maintained by divine life, and by keeping the eye constantly fixed upon the object of faith. There was work, and labor, and endurance. There were the same in Ephesus, as we see it in Rev. 2 But here it was a work of faith, labor undertaken by love, endurance fed by hope. Faith, hope, and love are (we have seen) the springs of Christianity in this world. The work, the labor, the endurance, continued at Ephesus, but ceased to be characterized by these great and mighty principles. The habit continued, but the communion was wanting. They had forsaken their first love.

The First to the Thessalonians is the expression of the living power in which the Church is planted. Ephesians, in Rev. 2 of its first departure from that state.

May our work be a work of faith, drawing its strength, its existence even, from our communion with God our Father! May it be, each moment, the fruit of the realization of that which is invisible, of the life which lives in the certainty, the immutable certainty, of the word May it thus bear the impress of the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ, and be a testimony to it!

May our labor in service be the fruit of love, not performed merely as duty and obligation I although it is that, if we know that it is before us to be done.

May the patience that we must have, in order to go through this wilderness, be, not the necessity we feel because the path is before us, but an endurance sustained by the hope that belongs to our view of Jesus by faith, and that is waiting for Him!

These principles, faith, hope, and love, form our character as Christians: but it cannot and ought not to be formed in us without having objects. Accordingly the Spirit presents them here. They have a twofold character. The heart rests by faith on Jesus, waits for Him, counts upon Him, links

itself with Him in its walk. He has walked here, He represents us in heaven, He watches over us as a Good Shepherd, He loves His own; He nourishes and cherishes them: our faith and our hope keep Him always in view. The conscience is before God, our Father: it is not in the spirit of fear; there is no uncertainty as to our relationship; we are the children of a Father who loves us perfectly; but we are before God. His light has authority and power in the conscience; we walk in the sense that His eye is upon us, in love, but upon us; and light makes everything manifest. It judges all that might weaken the sweet and peaceful realization of the presence of God, and our communion with Jesus, and our confidence in Him, the intimacy of the intercourse between our souls and the Lord. These two principles are of all importance for abiding peace, for the progress of our souls. Without them, the soul flags. The one sustains confidence, the other keeps us in the light with a good conscience.

Without the latter, faith (not to say more) loses its liveliness; without the former, the conscience becomes legal, and we lose spiritual strength, light, and ardor.

The apostle reminds them, also, of the means used by God to produce this condition, i.e. the gospel, the word, brought in power, and in much assurance to the soul by the Holy Ghost. The word had power in their heart, came to it as the word of God; the Spirit Himself revealed Himself in it, giving the consciousness of His presence, and the consequence of this was the full assurance of the truth in all its power, in all its reality. The apostle's life, his whole conduct, confirmed the testimony which he bore--formed a part of it. Accordingly (it is always the case) the fruit of his labors answered in character to him who labored; the Christianity of the Thessalonians resembled that of Paul. It was like the walk of the Lord Himself whom Paul followed so closely. It was "in much affliction," for the enemy could not bear so plain a testimony, and God granted this grace to such a testimony, and "with great joy of the Holy Ghost."

Happy testimony to the power of the Spirit working in the heart! When this is so, everything becomes testimony to others. They see that there is, in Christians, a power of which they are ignorant, motives which they have not experienced, a joy which they may scoff at, but which they do not possess; a conduct which strikes them, and which they admire, although they do not follow it; a patience which shows the impotence of the enemy in striving against a power that endures everything, and that rejoices in spite of all his efforts. What can be done with those who allow themselves to be killed without becoming less joyful; nay, whom it makes more so; who are above all our motives when left to themselves, and who, if oppressed, possess their souls in perfect joy, in spite of all our opposition; and who are unconquered by torments, finding in these only an occasion for bearing a stronger testimony that Christians are beyond our power. At peace, life is all of it a testimony; death, even in torture, is still more so. Such is the Christian, where Christianity exists in its true power, in its normal condition according to God: the word (of the gospel) and the presence of the Spirit, reproduced in the life, in a world estranged from God.

Thus it was with the Thessalonians; and the world, in spite of itself, became an additional witness to the power of the gospel. An ensample to believers in other places, they were the subject of report and conversation to the world, which was never weary of discussing this phenomenon, so new and so strange, of people who had given up all that governed the human heart, all to which it was subject, and worshipped one only living and true God, to whom even the natural conscience bore testimony. The gods of the heathen were the gods of the passions, not of the conscience.

And this gave a living reality, an actuality, to their position and to their religion.

They waited for His Son from heaven. Happy, indeed, are those Christians whose walk and whole existence makes of the world itself a witness for the truth, who are so distinct in their confession, so consistent in their life, that an apostle did not need to speak of that which he had preached, of that which he had been among them. The world spoke of it, for him and for them.

A few words on the testimony itself, which, simple as it may be, is of great importance, and contains principles of great moral depth. It forms the basis of the whole life, and of all the Christian affections also, that are unfolded in the Epistle, which, besides this development, contains only a special revelation of the circumstances and the order of the coming of Christ to call His people to Himself, and of the difference between that event and the day of the Lord to judge the world; although this latter follows on the former.

That which the apostle points out as the testimony borne by the faithful walk of the Thessalonians, contained three principal subjects: - 1st. They had forsaken their idols to serve the living and true God. 2nd. They were waiting for His Son from heaven, whom He had raised from among the dead. 3rd. The Son was a safeguard from the wrath which was to be revealed.

An immense fact-simple, but of vast import-characterizes Christianity. It gives us a positive object; and this object is nothing less than God Himself. Human nature may discover the folly of that which is false. We scorn false gods and graven images; but we cannot get beyond ourselves - we cannot reveal anything to ourselves. One of the most renowned names of antiquity is pleased to tell us, that all would go well if men followed nature (it is manifest that they could not rise above it); and, in fact, he would be in the right, if man were not fallen. But to require man to follow nature, is a proof that he is fallen, that he has degraded himself below the normal state of that nature. He does not follow it in the walk that suits its constitution. All is in disorder. Self-will carries him away, and acts in his passions. Man has forsaken God, and has lost the power and the center of attraction that kept him in his place, and everything in his own nature in its place. Man cannot recover himself. He cannot direct himself; for, apart from God, there is nothing but self-will that guides man. There are many objects that furnish occasion for the acting of the passions and the will; but there is no object which, as a center, gives him a regular, constant, and durable moral position in relationship with that object, so that his character should bear its stamp and value. Man must either have a moral center, capable of forming him as a moral being, by attracting him to itself and filling his affections, so that he shall be the reflex of that object; or he must act in self-will, and then he is the sport of his passions; or, which is the necessary consequence, he is the slave of any object that takes possession of his will. A creature, who is a moral being, cannot subsist without an object. To be self-sufficing is the characteristic of God.

The equilibrium which subsisted in the unconsciousness of good and evil is lost. Man no longer walks as man, having nothing in his mind outside his normal condition, outside that which he possessed; not having a will, or, which comes to the same thing, having a will that desired nothing more than it possessed, but that gratefully enjoyed all that was already appropriated to its nature, and especially the companionship of a being like himself, a help who had his own nature, and who answered to his heart - blessing God for everything.

Now, man wills. While he has lost that which formed the sphere of his enjoyment, there is in him an activity which seeks, which is become unable to rest without aiming at something farther; which has already, as Will, thrown itself into a sphere that it does not fill, in which it lacks intelligence to apprehend all that is there, and power to realize even that which it desires. Man, and all that has been his, no longer suffices man as enjoyment. He still needs an object. This object will either be above or below the man. If it be below, he degrades himself below himself; and it is this, indeed, which has taken place. He no longer lives according even to nature (as he to whom I have alluded says), a state which the apostle has described in the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans, with all the horrors of the plain truth.

If this object be above himself and below God, there is still nothing to govern his nature, nothing that puts him morally in his place. A good being could not take this place, to exclude God from it. If a bad object gains it, he becomes to the man a god, who shuts out the true God, and degrades man in his highest relationship the worst of all degradations. This, too, has taken place. And since these beings are but creatures, they can only govern man by that which exists, and by that which acts upon him. That is to say, they are the gods of his passions. They degrade the idea of the Divinity; they degrade the practical life of humanity into slavery to the passions, which are never satisfied, and which invent evil when they are surfeited with excess in that which is natural to them, and are thus left without resource. Such, in fact, was the condition of man under Paganism.

Man, and, above all, man having knowledge of good and evil, should have God for his object; and as an object that his heart can entertain with pleasure, and on which his affections can be exercised, otherwise he is lost. The gospel-Christianity has given him this. God, who fills all things, who is the Source of all, in whom is centered all blessing, all good; God, who is all love, who has all power, who embraces everything in His knowledge, because everything (except the forsaking of Himself) is but the fruit of His mind and will; God has revealed Himself in Christ to man, in order that his heart, occupied with Him, with perfect confidence in His goodness, may know Him, may enjoy His presence, and reflect His character.

The sin and misery of man have but lent occasion to an infinitely more complete development of what this God is, and of the perfections of His nature, in love, in wisdom, and in power. But we are here considering only the fact, that He has given Himself to man for an object. Nevertheless, although the misery of man has but given room for a much more admirable revelation of God, yet God Himself desired to have an object worthy of Himself to be the subject of His purposes, and in order to unfold all His affections. This object is the glory of His Son - His Son Himself. A being of an inferior nature could not have been this to Him, although God can glorify Himself in His grace towards such a one. The object of the affections, and the affections that are exercised with regard to it, are necessarily correlative. Thus God has displayed His sovereign and immense grace with regard to that which was the most wretched, the most unworthy, the most necessitous; and He has displayed all the majesty of His being, all the excellence of His nature, in connection with an object in whom He could find all His delight, and exhibit all that He is in the glory of His nature. But it is as man - marvelous truth in the eternal counsels of God! - that this object of God the Father's delight, has taken His place in this glorious revelation by which God makes Himself known to His creatures. God has ordained and prepared man for this. Thus the heart that is taught by the Spirit knows God as revealed in the immense grace, in the love that comes down from the throne of God to the ruin and misery of the sinner; he finds himself, in Christ, in the knowledge and in the

enjoyment of the love which God has for the object of His eternal delight, who also is worthy of being so; of the communications by which He testifies that love (John 17:7,8); and, finally, of the glory which is its public demonstration before the universe. This latter part of our ineffable blessedness is the subject of Christ's communications at the end of John's gospel (chaps. 14, 16, and, in particular, 17).

From the moment that a sinner is converted, he is introduced - as to the principle of his life - into this position, into these relationships with God. He is, perhaps, but a child; but the Father whom he knows, the love into which he has entered, the Savior on whom his eyes are opened, are the same whom he will enjoy when he shall know as he is known. He is a Christian: he is turned from idols to God, and to wait for His Son from heaven.

We may observe, that the subject here is not the power which converts, nor the source of life. Of these, other passages speak clearly. Here it is the character of the life in its manifestation. Now, this depends on its objects. Life is exercised and unfolded in connection with its objects, and thus characterizes itself. The source from which it flows makes it capable of enjoying it; but an intrinsic life which has no object on which it depends, is not the life of a creature. Such life as that is the prerogative of God. This shows the folly of those who would have a subjective life, as they say, without its having a positively objective character; for its subjective state depends on the object with which it is occupied. It is the characteristic of God to be the source of His own thoughts without an object; to be, and to be self-sufficing -- because He is perfection, and the center and source of everything - and to create objects unto Himself, if He would have any without Himself. In a word, although receiving a life from God which is capable of enjoying Him, the moral character of man cannot be formed in him without an object that imparts it to him.

Now, God has given Himself to us for an object, and has revealed Himself in Christ. If we occupy ourselves with God in Himself supposing always that He had thus revealed Himself-the subject is too vast. It is an infinite joy; but in that which is simply infinite there is something wanting to a creature, although it is his highest prerogative to enjoy it. It is necessary to him on the one hand (in order that he may be in his place, and that God may have His place in regard to him), and, on the other hand, that which exalts him so admirably. It must be so; and it is the privilege given unto us, and given unto us in a priceless intimacy, for we are children, and we dwell in God, and God in us; but with this in itself, there is a certain weight upon the heart in the sense of God alone. We read of "a far more exceeding and abundant weight of glory." It must be so: His majesty must be maintained when we think of Him as God, His authority over the conscience. The heart-God has so formed it -needs something which will not lower its affections, but which may have the character of companion and friend, at least, to which it has access in that character.

It is this which we have in Christ, our precious Savior. He is an object near to us, He is not ashamed to call us brethren. He has called us friends, all that He has heard from His Father He has made known to us. Is He, then, a means of our eyes being turned away from God? On the contrary, it is in Him that God is manifested, in Him that even the angels see God. It is He who, being in the bosom of the Father, reveals to us His God and Father in this sweet relationship, and as He knows Him Himself. And not only this, but He is in the Father, and the Father in Him, so that he who has seen Him has seen the Father. He reveals God to us, instead of turning us away from Him. In grace, He has already revealed Him, and we wait for the revelation of glory in Him.

Already, also, on the earth, from the moment that He was born, the angels celebrated the good pleasure of God in man, for the object of His eternal delight had become a man. And now He has accomplished the work which makes possible the introduction of others, of sinners, into the enjoyment with Himself of this favor of God - once enemies, "we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son."

It is thus that God has reconciled us to Himself. By faith thus knowing God, we "turn from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." The living and true God is the object of our joyful service. His Son, whom we know, who knows us, who will have us to be where He is, who has identified us with His own glory, and His glory with us, He who is a glorious man forever, and first-born among many brethren, is the object of our expectation. We expect Him from heaven, for our hopes are there, and there the seat of our joy.

We have the infinity of a God of love, the intimacy and the glory of Him who has taken part in all our infirmities, and, without sin, has borne all our sins. What a portion is ours!

But there was another side of the truth. Creatures are responsible; and however great His love and His patience, God cannot allow evil nor contempt of His authority. If He did, all would be confusion and misery. God Himself would lose His place. There is a judgment; there is wrath to come. We were responsible; we have failed. How, then, shall we enjoy God and the Lamb, in the way that I have spoken of?

Here comes in the application of the third truth of which the apostle speaks: "Who delivers us from the wrath to come." The work of Christ has perfectly sheltered us from this wrath; He took our place in responsibility on the cross, and put away sin for us by the sacrifice of Himself.

These, then, are the three great elements of Christian life. We serve the living and the true God, having forsaken our idols, outward or inward. We expect Jesus for glory; for this sight of God makes us feel what this world is, and we know Jesus. As to our sins and our conscience, we are perfectly cleansed; we fear nothing. The life and walk of the Thessalonians was a testimony to these truths.

Having established these great principles, the apostle, with an open and overflowing heart, appeals to his whole walk among them as a proof of his having walked in the same spirit as he was rejoicing in in their own case. It was not that he exhorted others, while availing himself of their affection, for his own advantage. It was not that he encouraged them to endure afflictions, without having courage himself to undergo the same. Ill-treated and insulted at Philippi, he was bold in God to renew his attacks on the kingdom of darkness at Thessalonica, and that with great energy. He had not used flattering words to win them; he had set the truth before them, as being himself the servant of God. He had worked with his own hands, that he might not be burdensome to them. All was before God in the light and by the energy of the Holy Ghost, and in a spirit of devotedness; even as he desired that they should walk as they knew he had walked among them, as holily, justly, and unblameably; as also he had exhorted them, with all affection and tenderness, to walk worthy of God, who had called them unto His own kingdom and glory.

We see, again, in this expression, the close relationship of the Christian, in his individual character, with God. He has his portion in God's own kingdom and glory, and his conduct should become such a position. Here, it is his own position in relationship with God; as before it was his

relationship with God and the Lord Jesus.

The apostle then speaks of the means by which this world of new thoughts was acquired by the Christian. It was that God had spoken, to reveal Himself and His counsels. God had committed the gospel to Paul (2:4), and he acted as being in the presence of God, and responsible to Him.

The Thessalonians also, on their part, had received the word, not as the word of Paul, but as the word of God Himself, addressed to them by the mouth of Paul, It is interesting, and for us also a serious thought, to observe that (with regard to the manifestation of the power of God down here), although the work is of God, the fruit of His servants' labors answers to the character and depth of that labor itself. Thus the bonds of grace are established, and communion; there is mutual understanding; the work manifests the workman. The laborer rejoices in that which his heart had desired for the souls that are the fruit of his labor; and these know how to appreciate the walk and the work of the laborer, acknowledging the power of grace in him who was the means of bringing them into this position; and the one and the others, knowing God, rejoice in the fellowship of His grace.

Paul was very largely with God, in his own soul and in his work. The Thessalonians had, in consequence, received the word in the same power; and they, with him, were thus in communion with God according to that power and that intimacy.

We see here, in passing, the Jews deprived of this relationship with God; the remnant of that people received, and suffering from the enmity of the mass. The elect from among the Gentiles awakened, on their part, the hostility of their fellow-countrymen, by the testimony which they bore against the prince of this world, in their Christian walk, and by their confession of a heavenly Christ—a Christ whom the world had rejected.

The religion of the Jews had become pure jealousy of others. The pretension to the exclusive possession of religious privileges—very precious when they enjoyed it with God as a testimony of His favor—was nothing but a spring of hatred, when God, in the fullness of His sovereign grace, chose to bless others who had a right to nothing. By this exclusive pretension, they denied the rights of God, who had formerly chosen them as a people; they denied His grace, according to which He acted towards sinners, and which would have been the source of better blessings for themselves.

But, meantime, their refusal to come in had transferred the scene of our hopes and our joys from earth to heaven, where we know the Lord, and where He will remain until He comes to assert His claims over the earth. Before He asserts them, He will take us to Himself.

Meanwhile, the word of God is the source of our confidence; the revelation of glory, of truth, and of love. It is mighty in them that believe. The Jews are set aside. By their opposition to grace towards the Gentiles, they had taken the position of enmity against God in grace, and wrath was come upon them to the uttermost.

It was not yet executed; but they had put themselves in this position. It was not only that they had broken the law; they had already killed Choir prophets who were sent to them in grace; they had already slain the Christ, Jesus the Lord. Sovereign grace alone could bring in a remedy. This they resisted; because, according to that grace, God was good to the Gentiles, and granted them, at

the same time as to themselves, better privileges than those which they had forfeited. Wrath, therefore, was finally come upon them as a nation. Christians were now in the enjoyment of better privileges in place of the Jews.

It is not here the moment for explaining the future dealings of God with the remnant. The apostle speaks here of this people, in order to show that the only ones in relation with God were Christians-those who had received the word. It was the reception of the word by faith, and nothing else, which brought souls really into relationship with God. Hereditary privileges were found to be, in their nature, opposition to grace and sovereignty, and thus to the character and rights of God Himself; for God is sovereign, and God is love.

The word reveals grace. It is obeyed by believing it; and, brought into relationship with God, the Christian walks in His communion and in His ways, and waits for the Son, in whom He has revealed Himself to men. This is the fruit of that which the Christian has received through believing-an efficacious principle of life, and a light from God for the way.

The apostle blessed God that it was thus with the Thessalonians; and having made this point clear, he returns to the joy of his communion with them, in the positive blessing which the revelation of God in their hearts, by the word, had brought them. He would gladly have seen them, to enjoy this communion in intercourse with them, face to face; but as long as it was by the word only, that the knowledge of God was obtained-in a word, by faith-as long as the Lord was absent, another result flowed from this fact; namely, that these joys were mingled with conflict-conflict, however, which, although to the eye of man interrupting enjoyment, made it more sweet, more real, preserved its heavenly character, and made the Lord Himself, from whom they could not be separated, the center, the common point, in which hearts were united, with the consciousness that they were in the wilderness, and that they were awaiting a scene and a time in which evil and the enemy's power would no longer be, but where Christ would be all. Joyful hope, holy happiness, powerful link of the heart to Christ! When He shall be all, our joy will be complete, and all saints will possess it. Paul wished to have seen them again, and had so even twice; but Satan hindered it: the time should come when he would fully enjoy both them and his labor among them, by seeing them in full possession of glory at the coming of Christ.

In the apostle himself, when at Thessalonica, Christian life was fully developed in love and in holiness. He had been among them in tenderness, as a mother cherishes her children; ready to impart not only the gospel to them, but even his own life, so dear were they to him. He had been, at the same time, holy and without blame in all his conduct. What energy of life and love springing up by the power of God, regardless of all consequences save the blessing of the elect, and the glory of God! This is true Christian life: the heart, not filled with questionings through unbelief, but strong in faith, counts on God in order to serve God. Thus love is free. Beside oneself for God; prudent and full of consideration only for the good of others. And what bonds this creates! Persecution only hastens the work, by compelling to go elsewhere; when perhaps the laborer would be tempted to enjoy the fruits of his labor in the society of those who had been blessed through him. Compare chap. 2:2. Though absent, the apostle's heart was still bound to them; he remembered his beloved ones; he prayed for them; blessed God for the grace bestowed on them; assuring himself with joy, when he thought of it, of their portion in glory as the elect of God (1:3, 4; 2:13).

The bond remained firm; and the way to present enjoyment of personal communion being obstructed by the devices of Satan (by permission of God), his heart rose higher, and sought the full satisfaction of the want produced in it by love, in the moment when a Christ, present in His power, should have removed all obstacles, and accomplished the purposes of God with respect to the saints; when His love should have borne all its precious fruits in them; and when Paul and his dear children in the faith should enjoy together all that grace and the power of the Spirit should have wrought in them. Unable, for the moment, to satisfy the desires of his heart by seeing them, it was to that hour that Paul looked. And observe, that if he does so, it is because his heart was already filled with it for himself. The power of the Spirit, acting in accordance with the truth, always leads the heart to that hour. It impels the heart to labor in love amid this world; causes thus the opposition to the light of the darkness of this world (whether on the part of man or of the prince of darkness) to be realized; and makes us always feel the need of that day of light, when evil shall no longer be present to hinder the happiness of the new man in his enjoyment of that which is good, in his communion with those dear to God; and, above all, in the enjoyment of the presence of his glorified Savior, who has loved him, and who (for the exercise of his faith) is at present hidden from him.

It is He who is the source and object of all these affections, who sustains and nourishes them, who attracts them ever to Himself by His beauty and by His love, and, in the sorrows of the Christian life, carries the heart onward thus to the day of our reunion with Himself, to the day of His coming, when the heart will be free to occupy itself with all the bonds of His love, without interruption. This thought of His presence has the mastery, when the heart is fresh in the Divine joy of redemption. We find this here: we are converted to wait for Him (chap. 1); we shall enjoy the communion of saints, and the fruit of our labors, when He returns (chap. 2); that day gives its force and its measure to our thoughts respecting holiness (chap. 3); it destroys the anguish of heart which would otherwise accompany the death of the saints (chap. 4); it is for that day we are kept (chap. 5). The coming of the Lord, the presence of Jesus, fills, therefore, the believer's heart, when life is springing up in its freshness, fills it with a joyous hope, the fulfillment of which shines bright before our eyes there where all our desires will be accomplished.

To return to the end of chap. 2. The link which Satan sought to break by interrupting its enjoyment, was but the rather strengthened by being connected with the coming of the Lord. The current of the Spirit, against which he had been allowed to set up this dike, though turned from its natural bed, could not be stopped, for its waters ever flow: they gushed out in waves that enriched all around them, taking their course towards the sea which contained the fullness of those waters and fed the source from which they sprang.

It should be observed here, that the special fruits of our labors are not lost; they are found again at the coming of Christ. Our chief personal joy is to see the Lord Himself and to be like Him. This is the portion of all saints, but there are particular fruits in connection with the work of the Spirit in us and by us. At Thessalonica, the spiritual energy of the apostle had brought a number of souls to God and to wait for Jesus, and into a close union in the truth with Himself. This energy would be crowned at the coming of Christ, by the presence of these believers in the glory, as the fruit of his labors. God would thus crown the apostle's work by bearing a striking testimony to its faithfulness in the presence of all these saints in glory; and the love which had wrought in Paul's heart would be satisfied, by seeing its object in glory and in the presence of Jesus. They would be his glory and

joy. This thought drew yet closer the bonds that united them, and comforted the apostle in the midst of his toils and sufferings.

Now, this forced removal of the apostle, as the chief laborer, without weakening the bond between him and the disciples, formed other links which would consolidate and strengthen the Church, knitting it together by that which every joint supplied. This is connected (all things are but the instruments of the power and wisdom of God) with the circumstances of which the Acts of the Apostle give us the principal details.

After the persecutions excited by the Jews, the apostle made a short stay at Thessalonica, and was then obliged to leave that city and go to Berea. Even there, the Jews of Thessalonica followed him, and influenced those of Berea, so that the Berean brethren had to provide for his safety. The persons to whom they committed him brought him to Athens; Silas and Timotheus remained at Berea for the moment, but soon, at his command, rejoined him at Athens. Meantime a violent persecution raged against the Christians at Thessalonica, a city of importance, in which, as it appears, the Jews had already exercised a considerable measure of influence over the heathen population- an influence that was undermined by the progress of Christianity, which the Jews, in their blindness, rejected.

The apostle, learning this state of things from Silas and Timotheus, was concerned at the danger his new converts ran, of being shaken in faith by the difficulties that beset their path while they were still young in the faith. His affection would not allow him to rest without putting himself in communication with them, and already from Athens he had sent Timotheus to inquire into their condition, and to establish their hearts by reminding them that while yet with them he had told them these things would happen. During his absence, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, where Timotheus again comforted him by the good tidings he brought from Thessalonica, and the apostle resumed his labors at Corinth with renewed energy and courage (see Acts 8:5).

On the arrival of Timotheus, Paul wrote this letter. Timotheus had informed him of the good state of the Thessalonian Christians - that they held fast the faith, that they greatly desired to see the apostle, and that they walked together in love. In the midst of his sorrows, and of the opposition of men - in a word, the afflictions of the Gospel - the apostle's spirit is refreshed by these tidings. He is himself strengthened, for if the

faith of the laborer is the means of blessing to souls, and, in general, the measure of the outward character of the work, the faith of the Christians who are the fruit of his labors, and who correspond to it, is in return a source of strength and encouragement to the laborer; even as their prayers are a great means of blessing to him. Love finds, in their spiritual welfare, both its food and its joy; faith, that which sustains and strengthens it. The work of God is felt in it. " I live," says the apostle, " if ye stand fast in the Lord. What thanks," he adds, " can we render to God for you, for all the joy wherewith we rejoice for your sakes before God." Beautiful and affecting picture of the effect of the operation of the Spirit of God, delivering souls from the corruption of the world, and producing the purest affections, the greatest self-renunciation for the sake of others, the greatest joy in their happiness - divine joy, realized before God Himself, and the value of which was appreciated in His presence by the spiritual heart that abode in it, the heart which, on the part of that God of love, had been the means of its existence.

What a bond is the bond of the Spirit! How selfishness is forgotten, and disappears in the joy of such affections! The apostle animated by this affection, which increased instead of growing weary by its exercise, and by the satisfaction it received in the happiness of others, desires so much the more, from the Thessalonians being thus sustained, to see them again; not now for the purpose of strengthening them, but to build upon that which was already so established, and to complete their spiritual instruction by imparting that which was yet lacking to their faith. But he is, and he ought to be, a laborer and not a master, (God makes us feel this), and he depends entirely on God for his work, and for the edification of others. In fact, years passed away before he saw the Thessalonians again. He remained a long time at Corinth, where the Lord had much people; he re-visited Jerusalem; then all Asia Minor, where he had labored earlier; thence he went to Ephesus, where he abode nearly three years; and after that, he saw the Thessalonians again, when he left that city to go to

Corinth, taking his journey by the way of Macedonia, in order not to visit Corinth before the restoration of the Christians there to order.

" God Himself"- it is thus that the apostle's desire and his submission to the will of God expresses itself " God Himself direct our way unto you." His desire is not vague. He refers to God as to his Father, the source of all these holy affections, He who holds the place of Father to us, and orders all things with a view to the good of His children, according to that perfect wisdom which embraces all things and all his children at once. Our God and Father Himself," the apostle says. But there is another consideration: not, assuredly, in opposition to this, for God is one - but which has another and less individual character; and he adds, " And our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ is Son over His own house, and besides joy and blessing and individual affections, there was the progress, the welfare and the development of the whole Church to be considered. These two parts of Christianity act assuredly upon each other. "Where the operation of the Spirit is full and unhindered, the well-being of the Church and the individual affections are in harmony. If anything is lacking in the one, God uses the failure itself to act powerfully on the other. If the Church, as a whole, is weak, individual faith is exercised in an especial manner, and more immediately upon God Himself. There are no Elijahs and Elishas in the reign of Solomon. On the other hand, the watchful care of the Church in the true energy of its spiritual organization, strengthens the life and re-awakens the spiritual affections of its slumbering members. But the two things are different. Therefore the apostle adds to " our God and Father," "and our Lord Jesus Christ," who, as we have said, according to Heb. 3, is a Son over His own house. It is a blessing that our path depends on the love of a Father, who is God Himself, acting according to the tender affections expressed by that name; and, as to the well-being of the Church, that it depends on the government of a Lord like Jesus, who loves it with a perfect love; and who, although He took such a place, is the God who created all things, the Man who has all power in heaven and on earth, and to whom Christians are the objects of incessant and faithful care -care which he expends in order to bring the Church unto Himself in glory according to the counsels of God.

Such, then, was the apostle's first wish, and such were they with regard to whom He formed it. Meanwhile, he must leave his beloved Thessalonians to the immediate care of the Lord, on whom he depended (comp. Acts 20:32). To that, his heart turns. May God direct my way to come to you. The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and toward all. And his heart could present its affection for them, as the pattern of that which they ought to feel for others.

This power of love maintains the heart in the presence of God, and makes it find its joy in the light of his presence. For God is love, and the exercise of love in the Christian's heart (fruit of the presence and the operation of the Spirit), is in fact the effect of the presence of God; and at the same time, it makes us feel His presence, so that it keeps us before Him, and maintains sensible communion in the heart. Love may suffer - and thereby prove its strength -but we are speaking of the spontaneous exercise of love towards the objects which God presents to it.

Now, being thus the development of the divine nature in us, and the sustainment of our hearts in communion with God Himself, love is the bond of perfectness, the true means of holiness, when it is real. The heart is kept, far away from the flesh and its thoughts, in the pure light of the presence of God, which the soul thus enjoys. For this reason, the apostle prays, while waiting to give them more light, that the Lord would increase love in them, in order to establish their hearts unblameable in holiness before God even our Father, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. Here we find again the two great principles of which I spoke at the end of chap. 1; God in the perfection of His nature, and the Lord Jesus in the intimacy of His connection with us. God, however, as Father; and Jesus as Lord. We are before God, and Jesus comes with His saints. He has brought them to perfection, they are with him, and thus before God, known in the relationship of Father.

Observe, also, that everything refers to this hope: it was an actual and present expectation. If they were converted, it was to serve God and to wait for His Son from heaven. Everything related to that wondrous moment when He should come. That which holiness was, would be demonstrated when they should be before God and the saints would be with their Head; even as then they should also fully enjoy the fruit of their labor, and the reward of love in the joy of all those whom they had loved.

The scene which would be the consummation of the work, is presented here in all its moral bearing. We are before God, in His presence, where holiness is demonstrated in its true character; we are there for perfect communion with God in the light, where the connection of holiness with His nature, and with the manifestation of Himself, is apparent. Even as this manifestation is in connection with the development of a nature in us, which, by grace, sets us in relationship with Him.

Unblameable he says, in holiness, and in holiness before God. He is light. What immense joy, what power, through grace, for the time present, to keep ourselves manifested before Him. But only love, known in Him, can do this.

But, also, we add " Our Father." It is a known and real relationship, which has its own peculiar character, a relationship of -love. It is not a thing to be acquired, and holiness is not the means of acquiring it. Holiness is the character of our relationship with God, inasmuch as we have received His nature as His children, and it is the revelation of the perfection of that nature in Him in love. Love itself has given us that nature, and has placed us in that relationship; practical holiness is its exercise in communion with God, having fellowship with Him in His presence according to the love which we thus know; i.e., God Himself, as He has revealed Himself towards us.

But the heart is not alone - there is companionship in this joy and in this perfection; and, above all, it is with Jesus Himself. He will come, He will be present, and not only He who is the Head, but all

the saints with Him will be there also. It will be the accomplishment of the ways of God respecting those whom He had given to Jesus. We shall see Him in His glory, the glory which He has taken in connection with His coming for us. We shall see all the saints, in whom He will be admired.

Observe, also, that love makes us rise above the difficulties, the persecutions, the fears, which the enemy seeks to produce. Occupied with God, happy in Him, this weight of affliction is not felt. The strength of God is in the heart; the walk is sensibly connected with the eternal happiness possessed with Him, and the affliction is felt to be but light and for a moment. Nor that only; we suffer for Christ's sake, it is joy with Him, it is intimacy of communion, if we know how to appreciate it, and all is invested with the glory and salvation that are found at the end: " at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

In reading this passage, one cannot but observe the immediate and living way in which the Lord's coming is linked with daily practical life, so that the perfect light of that day is thrown upon the hourly path of the present time. By the exercise of love, they were to be established in holiness before God at the coming of Christ. From one day to another that day was looked for as the consummation, and the only term they contemplated, to the ordinary life of each day here below. How this brought the soul into the presence of God I Moreover, as I have already, in part, observed, they lived in a known relationship with God which gave room for this confidence. He was their Father; He is ours. The relationship of the saints to Jesus was equally known. The saints were " His saints." They were all to come with Him. They were associated with His glory. There is nothing equivocal in the expression. Jesus, the Lord, coming with all His saints, allows us to think of no other event than His return in glory. Then, also, will He be glorified in His saints, who will already have rejoined Him to be forever with Him. It will be the day of their manifestation as of His.

The apostle then turns to the dangers that beset the Thessalonians, in consequence of their former habits (and which were still those of the persons that surrounded them), habits in direct contradiction to the holy and heavenly joy of which he spoke. He had already shown them how they were to walk and to please God. In this way he had himself walked among them (ii. 10). He would exhort them to a similar conduct with all the weight that his own walk gave him, even as he would desire their growth in love according to the affection he had for them (compare Acts 26:29). It is this which gives authority to the exhortation, and to all the words of a servant of the Lord.

The apostle takes up especially the subject of purity, for the pagan morals were so corrupt that impurity was not even accounted to be sin. It appears strange to us that such an exhortation should have been needful to such lively Christians as the Thessalonians, but we do not make allowance enough for the power of those habits in which persons have been brought up, and which become, as it were, a part of our nature and of the current of our thoughts, and for the action of two distinct natures under the influence of these, though the allowance or cultivation of one soon deadens the other. But the motives given here show upon what entirely new ground, as regards the commonest morality, Christianity places us. The body was but as a vessel to be used at will for whatever service they chose. They were to possess this vessel, instead of allowing themselves to be carried away by the desires of the flesh; because they knew God. They were not to deceive their brethren in these things, for the Lord would take vengeance. God has called us to holiness; it is with Him that we have to do; and if any one despised his brother, taking advantage of his feebleness of mind to encroach upon his rights in this respect, it would be to despise not man

but God, who would Himself remember it, and who has given us His Spirit; and to act thus would be to despise that Spirit, both in one's self and in one's brother, in whom He also dwells. He who was wronged in this way, was not only the husband of a wife, he was the dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost, and ought to be respected as such. On what high ground Christianity places a man, and that in connection with our best affections!

As touching brotherly love - that new mainspring of their life - it was not necessary to exhort them, God Himself had taught them, and they were an example to all of love. Only let them abound in it, even more and more; walking quietly, working with their own hands, so as to be in no man's debt, that in this respect, also, the Lord might be glorified.

Such were the apostle's exhortations. That which follows is an absolute, new revelation, for their encouragement and consolation.

We have seen that the Thessalonians were always expecting the Lord. It was their near and immediate hope, in connection with their daily life. They were constantly expecting Him to take them to Himself. They had been converted to wait for the Son of God from heaven. Now (for want of instruction) it appeared to them that the saints who had recently died, would not be with them to be caught up. The apostle clears up this point, and distinguishes between the coming of Christ to take up His own, and His day, which was a day of judgment to the world. They were not to be troubled with regard to those who had died in Christ, as they who had no hope were troubled. And the reason which he gives for this is a proof of the strict connection of their entire spiritual life with the expectation of Christ's personal return to bring them into heavenly glory. The apostle, in comforting them with regard to their brethren who had lately died, does not say a word of the survivors rejoining them in heaven. They are maintained in the thought that they were still to look for the Lord during their life-time, to transform them into His glorious image (compare 2 Cor. 5 and 1 Cor. 15). An especial revelation was required to make them understand that those who had previously died would equally have their part in that event. Their part, so to speak, would resemble that of Christ. He has died, and He has risen again. And so will it be with them. And when He should return in, glory, God would bring them -even as He would bring the others, i.e., the living -with Him.

Upon this, the apostle gives some more detailed explanations of the Lord's coming, in the form of express revelation. The living will not take precedence of those who sleep in Jesus. The Lord Himself will come as the Head of His heavenly army, dispersed for a time, to gather them to Himself. He gives the word. The voice of the archangel passes it on, and the trumpet of God is sounded. The dead in Christ will rise first, that is to say, before the living go up. Then we who shall be alive and remain, shall go with them, all together, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we be forever with the Lord.

It was thus that the Lord Himself ascended; for in all things we are to be like Him, an important circumstance here. Whether transformed, or raised from the dead, we shall all go up in the clouds. It was in the clouds that He ascended, and thus we shall be ever with Him.

In this part of the passage, where he explains the details of our ascension to the Lord in the air, nothing is said of His coming down to the earth; it is our going up (as He went up) to be with Him. Neither, as far as concerns us, does the apostle go farther than our gathering together to be

forever with Him. Nothing is said either of judgment or of manifestation; but only the fact of our heavenly association with Him, in that we leave the earth precisely as He left it. This is very precious. There is this difference: He went up in His own full right; He ascended. As to us, His voice calls the dead, and they come forth from the grave, and the living, being changed, all are caught up together. It is a solemn act of God's power, which seals the Christian's life and the work of God, and brings the former into the glory of Christ as His heavenly companion. Glorious privilege! Precious grace! To lose sight of it destroys the proper character of our joy and of our hope.

Other consequences follow, which are the result of His manifestation; but that is our portion, our hope. We leave the earth as He did; we shall be forever with Him.

It is with these words that we are to comfort ourselves if believers die - fall asleep in Jesus. They will return with Him when He shall be manifested; but, as regards their own portion, they will go away as He went, whether raised from the dead or transformed, to be forever with the Lord.

All the rest refers to His government of the earth. An important subject; a part of His glory; and we also take part in it. But it is not our own peculiar portion. That is, to be with Him, to be like Him, and even (when the time shall come) to quit, in the same manner as Himself, this world which rejected Him, and which has rejected us, and which is to be judged.

I repeat it: to lose sight of this, is to lose our essential portion. All lies in the words, " we shall be with the Lord." The apostle has here explained how this will take place. Remark here, that 15-18 is a parenthesis, and that 5:1 follows on 4:14.

To us, also, God gives this truth, the revelation of his power. He has permitted thousands to fall asleep, because, blessed be His name! He had other thousands to call in; but the life of Christ has not lost its power, nor the truth its certainty. We, as living ones, wait for Him, because He is our life. We shall see Him in resurrection, if haply we die before He come to seek us; and the time draws near.

Observe, also, that this revelation gives another direction to the hope of the Thessalonians, because it distinguishes with much precision between our departure hence to join the Lord in the air, and our return to the earth with Him. Nor this only; but it shows the first to be the principal thing for Christians, while at the same time confirming and elucidating the other point. I question whether the Thessalonians would not better have understood this return with Christ, than our departure hence all together to rejoin Him. Even at their conversion they had been brought to wait for Jesus from heaven. From the first, the great and essential principle was established in their hearts- the person of Christ was the object of their heart's expectation, separated thereby from the world.

Perhaps they had some vague idea that they were to appear with Him in glory, but how it was to be accomplished they knew not. They were to be ready at any moment for His coming, and He and they were to be glorified together before the universe. This they knew. It is the summing up of the truth.

Now the apostle develops more than one point here in connection with this general truth: 1st, they would be with Christ at His coming. This, I think, is but a happy application of a truth which they

already possessed, giving a little more precision to one of its precious details. At the end of chap. 3 we have the truth plainly stated (although it was still indistinct in their hearts, since they thought the dead in Christ would be deprived of it), that all the saints should come with Jesus- an essential point as to the character of our relationship to Him. So that Jesus was expected - the saints should be together with Jesus at the time of his coming - all the saints should come with Him. This fixed and gave precision to their ideas on a point already more or less known. That which follows is a new revelation on the occasion of their mistake with regard to those who slept. They thought, indeed, that the Christians who were ready should be glorified with Christ when He came back to this world; but the dead - were they ready? They were not present to share the glorious manifestation of Christ on the earth. For, I doubt not, the vague idea that possessed the minds of the Thessalonians, was this: Jesus would return to this world, and they who were waiting for Him would share His glorious manifestation on the earth. Now the apostle declares that the dead saints were in the same position as Jesus who had died. God had not left Him in the grave; and those who had, like Him, been there, God would also bring with Him when He should return in glory to this earth. But this was not all. The coming of Christ in glory to the earth was not the principal thing. The dead in Christ should be raised, and then, with the living, should go to meet the Lord in the air, before His manifestation, and return with Him to the earth in glory. And thus should they be ever with the Lord. That was the principal thing, the Christian's portion: namely, to dwell eternally with Christ and in heaven. The portion of the faithful was on high, was Christ Himself, although they would appear with Him in the glory.

For this world, it would then be the judgment.)

In this important passage, then, we find the Christian living in an expectation of the Lord which is connected with his daily life, and which completes it. Death, then, is only an accessory which may take place, and which does not deprive the Christian of his portion when his Master shall return. The proper expectation of the Christian is entirely separated from all which follows the manifestation of Christ, and which is in connection with the government of this world.

The Lord comes in person to receive us to Himself-He does not send. With full authority over death, which He has conquered, and with the trump of God, He calls together His own from the grave; and these, with the living (transformed), go to meet Him in the air. Our departure from the world exactly resembles His own: we leave the world, to which we do not belong, to go to heaven. Once there, we have attained our portion. We are like Christ, we are forever with Him. But He will bring His own with Him when He shall appear. This was the true comfort in the case of a Christian's death, and by no means put aside the daily expectation of the Lord from heaven. On the contrary, this way of viewing the subject confirmed it. The dead saint did not lose his rights by dying, by sleeping. in Jesus. He should be the first object of his Lord's attention when He came to assemble His own. Nevertheless, the place from which they go forth to meet Him is the earth. The dead should be raised - that was the first thing - that they might be ready to go up with the others. And then, from this earth, all would depart together, to be with Christ in heaven. This point of view is all-important, in order to apprehend the true character of that moment when all our hopes will be consummated.

The Lord's coming again into this world assumes, therefore, a very different character from that of a vague object of hope to a believer as a period of glory. In chap. 5, the apostle speaks of it, but in

order to distinguish between the position of Christians and that of the careless and unbelieving inhabitants of the earth. The Christian, alive and taught of the Lord, ever expects the Master. There are times and seasons - it is not needful to speak to him concerning them. But (and he knows it) the day of the Lord will come, and like a thief in the night, but not for him; he is of the day; he has part in the glory which will appear in order to execute judgment on the unbelieving world. Believers are the children of light; and this light, which is the judgment of unbelievers, is the expression of the glory of God; a glory which cannot endure evil, and which, when it shall appear, will banish it from the earth. The Christian is of the day that will judge and destroy the wicked and wickedness itself from off the face of the earth. Christ is the Sun of righteousness, and the faithful will shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

The world will say, "Peace and safety;" and in all security will believe in the continuance of its prosperity and the success of its designs, and the day will come suddenly upon them (comp. 2 Peter 3.3). The Lord Himself has often declared it (Matt. 24:36-44; Mark 13:33-36; Luke 12:40, etc.; 17:26, etc.; 21:35, etc.).

It is a very solemn thing to see, that the professing Church (Rev. 3:3), which says that it lives and is in the truth, which has not Thyatira's character of corruption, is yet to be treated as the world-at least, unless it repents.

We may, perhaps, wonder to find the Lord saying of a time like this, that men's hearts will be failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth (Luke 21:26). But we see the two principles-both security and fear-already existing. Progress, success, the long continuance of a new development of human nature-this is the language of those who mock at the Lord's coming. And yet, beneath it all, what fears for the future are at the same time possessing and weighing down the heart! I use the word "principles," because I do not believe that the moment of which the Lord speaks is yet come. But the shadow of coming events falls upon the heart. Blessed are they that belong to another world!

The apostle applies this difference of position-namely, that we belong to the day, and that it cannot therefore come upon us as a thief-to the character and walk of the Christian. Being a child of the light, he is to walk as such. He lives in the day, though all is night and darkness around him. One does not sleep in the day; they that sleep, sleep in the night; they that are drunken, are drunken in the night: these are the works of darkness. A Christian, the child of the day, must watch and be sober, clothing himself with all that constitutes the perfection of that mode of being which belongs to his position; namely, with faith and love and hope-principles which impart courage, and give him entire confidence for pressing onwards. He has the breastplate of faith and love; he goes straight forward, therefore, against the enemy. He has the hope of this glorious salvation, which will bring him entire deliverance, as his helmet; so that he can lift up his head without fear in the midst of danger. We see that the apostle here brings to mind the three great principles of 1 Cor. 13, to characterize the courage and steadfastness of Christian walk, as at the beginning he showed that they were the mainspring of our daily walk. Faith and love naturally connect us with God, as the principle of communion; so that we can walk with confidence in Him, His presence gives us strength. By faith, He is the glorious object before our eyes. By love, He dwells in us, and we realize what He is. Hope fixes our eyes more especially on Christ, who is coming to bring us into the enjoyment of glory with Himself. Consequently, the apostle speaks thus: "For God has not

appointed us to wrath" (love is understood by faith, that which God wills-His mind respecting us), " but to obtain salvation." It is this which we hope for; and he speaks of salvation as the final deliverance-" by our Lord Jesus Christ"-and he naturally adds: " Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep" (have died before His coming or be then alive), " we should live together with Him." Death does not deprive us of this deliverance and glory; for Jesus died. Death became the means of obtaining them for us; and if we die, we shall equally live with Him. He died for us, in our stead, in order that, happen what may, we should live with Him. Everything that hindered it is put out of our way, and has lost its power; and more than lost its power, has become a guarantee of our unhindered enjoyment of the full life of Christ in glory; so that we may comfort ourselves-and more than that, we may build ourselves up -with these glorious truths, through which God meets all our wants and all our necessities. This (ver. 10) is the end of the special revelation with regard to those who sleep before the coming of the Lord Jesus, beginning with ver. 13.

I would here call my readers' attention to the way in which the apostle speaks of the Lord's coming, in the different chapters of this Epistle. It will be noticed, that the Spirit does not present the Church here as a body. Life is the subject; that of each Christian, therefore, individually; a very important point, assuredly.

In chap. 1, the expectation of the Lord is presented in a general way, as characterizing the Christian. They are converted to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. Here, it is the object itself that is presented, the person of the Lord. God's own Son shall come, and shall satisfy all the heart's desire. This is neither His kingdom, nor the judgment, nor even rest: it is the Son of God; and this Son of God is Jesus, risen from among the dead, and who has delivered us from the wrath to come; for wrath is coming. Each believer, therefore, expects for himself the Son of God-expects Him from heaven.

In chap. 2, it is association with the saints, joy in the saints, at the coming of Christ.

In chap. 3, responsibility is more the subject-responsibility in liberty and in joy; but still a position before God in connection with the Christian's walk and life here below. The testimony rendered by God to this life, by giving it its natural place, takes place when Christ is manifested with all His saints. It is not here His coming for us, but His coming with us. This distinction between the two events always exists; for Christians even, and for the Church, that which refers to responsibility is always found in connection with the appearing of the Lord; our joy, with His coming to take us to Himself. Thus far, then, we have the general expectation of the Lord in person, His Son from heaven; love satisfied at His coming; holiness in its full value and full development.

In chap. 4, it is not the connection of life with its full development in our reunion with Christ, but victory over death (which is no barrier to this reunion); and, at the same time, the strengthening and establishment of hope in our common departure hence, similarly to that of Jesus, to be forever with Him.

The exhortations that conclude the Epistle are brief; the mighty action of the life of God in these dear disciples, made them comparatively little needed. Exhortation is always good. There was nothing among them to blame. Happy condition! They were, perhaps, not sufficiently instructed for a large development of doctrine-the apostle hoped to see them for that purpose-but there was enough of life, a personal relationship with God sufficiently true and real, to build them up on that

ground. To him that hath, shall more be given. The apostle could rejoice with them, and confirm their hope, and add to it some details as a revelation from God. The Church in all ages is profited by it.

In the Epistle to the Philippians, we see life, rising above all circumstances, as the fruit of long experience of the goodness and faithfulness of God; and thus showing its remarkable power when the help of the saints had failed, and the apostle was in distress, his life in danger, after four years' imprisonment by a merciless tyrant. It is then that he decides his case by the interests of the Church. It is then that he can proclaim, that we ought always to rejoice in the Lord, and that Christ is all things to him: to live, is Christ; death, a gain to him. It is then that he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him. This he has learned. In Thessalonians we have the freshness of the fountain, near to its source; the energy of the first spring of life in the believer's soul, presenting all the beauty and purity and vigor of its first verdure, under the influence of the sun that had risen upon them, and drawn up this sap of life, the first manifestations of which had not been deteriorated by contact with the world, or by an enfeebled view of invisible things.

The apostle desired that the disciples should acknowledge those who labored among them and guided them in grace and admonished them, and to esteem them greatly for their work's sake. The operation of God always attracts a soul that is moved by the Holy Ghost, and commands its attention and its respect: on this foundation the apostle builds his exhortation. It is not office which is in question here-if such existed-but the work which attracted and attached the heart. They ought to be known; spirituality acknowledged this operation of God. Love, devotedness, the answer to the need of souls, patience in dealing with them on the part of God - all this commended itself to the believer's heart; and it blessed God for the care He bestowed upon His children. God acted in the laborer, and in the hearts of the faithful. Blessed be God, it is an ever-existing principle, and one that never grows weaker!

The same Spirit produced peace between them. This grace was of great value. If love appreciated the work of God in the laborer, it would esteem the brother as in the presence of God-self-will would not act.

Now, this renunciation of self-will, and this practical sense of the operation and presence of God, give power to warn the unruly, to comfort the fearful, and to help the weak, and to be patient towards all. The apostle exhorts them to it. Communion with God is the power, and His word the guide, in so doing. In no case were they to render evil for evil, but to follow that which was good among themselves and towards all. All this conduct depends on communion with God, on His presence with us, which makes us superior to evil. He is this in love; and we can be so by walking with Him.

Such were the apostle's exhortations, to guide their walk with others. As regarded their personal state, joy, prayer, thanksgiving in all things, these should be their characteristics. With respect to the public actings of the Spirit in their midst, the apostle's exhortations to these simple and happy Christians were equally brief. They were not to hinder the action of the Spirit in their midst (for that is the meaning of quenching the Spirit); nor to despise that which He might say to them, even by the mouth of the most simple, if He were pleased to use it. Being spiritual, they could judge all things; they were, therefore, not to receive everything that presented itself, even in the name of the Spirit, but to prove all things. They were to hold fast that which was good; they who by faith have

received the truth of the word do not waver; one is not ever learning the truth of that which one has learned from God. As to evil, they were to abstain from it in all its forms. Such were the apostle's brief exhortations to these Christians, who indeed rejoiced his heart. And, in truth, it is a fine picture of Christian walk, which we find here so livingly portrayed in the apostle's communications.

He concludes his Epistle by commending them to the God of peace, that they might be preserved blameless until the coming of the Lord Jesus.

After an Epistle like this, his heart turned readily to the God of peace; for we enjoy peace in the presence of God-not only peace of conscience, but peace of heart.

In the previous part we found the activity of love in the heart; that is to say, God present and acting in us, who are viewed as partaking, at the same time, of the Divine nature, which is the spring of that holiness that will be manifested in all its perfection before God, at the coming of Jesus with all His saints. Here it is the God of peace, to whom the apostle looks for the accomplishment of this work. There it was the activity of a Divine principle in us-a principle connected with the presence of God, and our communion with Him. Here it is the perfect rest of heart in which holiness develops itself. The absence of peace in the heart, arises from the activity of the passions and the will, increased by the sense of our powerlessness to satisfy or even to gratify them.

But in God all is peace. He can be active in love; He can glorify Himself by creating what He will; He can act in judgment, to cast out the evil that is before His eyes. But He rests ever in Himself, and both in good and in evil He knows the end from the beginning, and is undisturbed. When He fills the heart, He imparts this rest to us: we cannot rest in ourselves; we cannot find rest of heart in the actings of our passions, either without an object or upon an object, nor in the rending and destructive energy of our own will. We find our rest in God; not the rest that implies weariness, but rest of heart in the possession of all that we desire, and of that which even forms our desires and fully satisfies them; in the possession of an object in which conscience has nothing to reproach us, and has but to be silent, in the certainty that it is the Supreme Good which the heart is enjoying, the supreme and only authority to whose will it responds-and that will is love towards us. God bestows rest, peace. He is never called the God of joy: he gives us joy, truly, and we ought to rejoice; but joy implies something surprising, unexpected, exceptional, at least in contrast with, and in consequence of, evil. The peace that we possess, that which satisfies us, has no element of this kind, nothing which is in contrast, nothing which disturbs. It is more deep, more perfect, than joy. It is more the satisfaction of a nature in that which perfectly answers to it, and in which it develops itself, without any contrast being necessary to enhance the satisfaction of a heart that has not all which it desires, or of which it is capable.

God, as we have said, rests thus in Himself, is this rest for Himself. He gives us, and is for us, this entire peace. The conscience being perfect, through the work of Christ, who has made peace and reconciled us to God, the new nature - and consequently the heart - finds its perfect satisfaction in God, and the will is silent: moreover, it has nothing farther to desire.

It is not only that God meets the desires that we have; He is the source of new desires to the new man, by the revelation of Himself in love. He is both the source of the nature, and its infinite object; and that, in love. It is his part to be so. It is more than creation; it is reconciliation, which is more than creation, because there is in it more development of love, that is to say, of God; and it is thus

that we know God. It is that which He is, essentially, in Christ.

In the angels He glorifies Himself in creation; they excel us in strength. In Christians He glorifies Himself in reconciliation, to make them the first-fruits of His new creation, when he shall have reconciled all things in heaven and on earth by Christ. Therefore is it written, "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." They have His nature and His character.

It is in these relationships with God, or rather, it is God in these relationships with us, in peace, in His communion, who develops sanctification, our inward conformity of affection and intelligence, and consequently of outward conduct, with Him and His will. "The God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly." May there be nothing in us that does not yield to this benignant influence of peace, which we enjoy in communion with God. May no power or force in us, own anything but Himself. In all things may He be our all, so that He only may rule in our hearts.

He has brought us perfectly into this place of blessedness, in Christ and by His work. There is nothing between us and God but the exercise of His love, the enjoyment of our happiness, and the worship of our hearts. We are the proof before him, the testimony, the fruit, of the accomplishment of all that He holds most precious, of that which has perfectly glorified Him, of that in which He delights, and of the glory of the One who has accomplished it, namely, of Christ, and of His work. We are the fruit of the redemption that Christ has accomplished, and the objects of the satisfaction which God must feel in the exercise of His love.

God in grace is the God of peace for us; for here divine righteousness finds its satisfaction, and love its perfect exercise.

The apostle now prays that, in this character, God may work in us to make everything respond to Himself thus revealed. Here only is this development of humanity given - "body, soul, and spirit." The object is assuredly not metaphysical, but to express man in all the parts of his being; the vessel by which he expresses that which he is, the natural affections of his soul, the elevated workings of his mind, through which he is above the animals, and in intelligent relationship with God. May God be found in each, as the mover, spring, and guide!

In general, the words soul and spirit are used without making any distinction between them, for the soul of man was formed very differently from that of animals, in that God breathed into his nostrils the breath (spirit) of life, and it was thus that man became a living soul. Therefore it suffices to say soul as to man, and the other is supposed. Or, in saying spirit, in this sense, the elevated character of his soul is expressed. The animal has also its natural affections, has a living soul, attaches itself, knows the persons who do it good, devotes itself to its master, loves him, will even give its life for him; but it has not that which can be in relationship with God - (alas! which can set itself at enmity against Him); which can occupy itself with things outside its own nature as the master of others.

The Spirit then wills that man, reconciled with God, should be consecrated, in every part of his being, to the God who has brought him into relationship with Himself by the revelation of His love and by the work of His grace, and that nothing in the man should admit an object beneath the divine nature in him; so that he should thus be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ.

Let us observe here, that it is in no wise beneath the new nature in us to perform our duties faithfully in all the various relationships in which God has placed us; but quite the contrary. That which is required is to bring God into them, His authority, and the intelligence which that imparts. Therefore, it is said, "Husbands live with your wives according to knowledge," or intelligence. That is to say, not only with human and natural affections (which, as things are, do not by themselves, even maintain their place), but as before God and conscious of His will. It may be that God may call us, in connection with the extraordinary work of His grace, to consecrate ourselves entirely to it; but, otherwise, the will of God is accomplished in the relationships in which He has placed us, and divine intelligence and obedience to God are developed in them. Finally, God has called us to this life of holiness with Himself, He is faithful, and He will accomplish it. May He enable us to cleave to Him, that we may realize it.

Observe again here, how the coming of Christ is introduced, and the expectation of this coming, as an integral part of Christian life. "Blameless," it says, "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The life which had developed itself in obedience and holiness, meets the Lord at His coming. Death is not in question. The life which we have is found to be such when He appears. The man, in every part of his being, moved by this life, is found there, blameless, when Jesus comes. Death was overcome (not yet destroyed), a new life is ours. This life, and the man living of this life, are found with their Head and Source, in the glory. Then will the weakness disappear which is connected with his present condition. That which is mortal shall be swallowed up of life: that is all. We are Christ's, He is our life. We wait for Him, that we may be with Him, and that He may perfect all things in the glory.

Let us also here examine a little into that which this passage teaches us, with regard to sanctification. It is connected, indeed, with a nature, but it is linked with an object; and it depends for its realization on the operation of another, namely, of God Himself; and it is founded on a perfect reconciliation with God, already accomplished. Inasmuch as it is founded on an accomplished reconciliation, into which we enter by the reception of a new nature, the Scriptures consider Christians as already perfectly sanctified in Christ. It is practically carried out by the operation of the Holy Ghost, who, in imparting this nature, separates us - as thus born again - entirely from the world. It is important to maintain this truth, and to stand very clearly and distinctly on this ground; otherwise, practical sanctification soon becomes detached from a new nature received, and is but the amelioration of the natural man; and then it is quite legal, a return - after reconciliation - into doubt and uncertainty, and an enfeebling, not to say destruction, of the work of redemption, i.e., of its appreciation in our hearts by faith.

We are then sanctified (it is thus the Scripture most frequently speaks) by God the Father, by the blood and the offering of Christ, and by the Spirit -- that is to say, we are set apart for God, personally and forever. In this point of view, justification is presented in the Word as consequent upon sanctification, a thing into which we enter through it. Taken up as sinners in the world, we are set apart by the Holy Ghost, to enjoy all the efficacy of the work of Christ according to the counsels of the Father. Set apart by the communication of a new life, no doubt; but placed, by this setting apart, in the enjoyment of all that Christ has gained for us. I say again, it is very important to hold fast this truth, both for the glory of God and for our own peace; but the Spirit of God in this epistle does not - speak of it in this point of view, but of the practical realization of the development of this life of separation from the world and from evil. He speaks of this divine development in the inner

man, which makes sanctification a real and intelligent condition of soul, a state of practical communion with God, according to that nature and to the revelation of God with which it is connected.

In this respect we find, indeed, a principle of life which works in us - that which is called a subjective state: but it is impossible to separate this operation in us from an object (man would be God if it were so), nor, consequently, from a continual work of God in us that holds us in communion with that object, which is God Himself. Accordingly, it is through the truth, by the word; whether at first in the communication of life, or in detail all along our path. " Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth."

Man, we know, has degraded himself. He has enslaved himself to the lusts of the animal part of his being. But how? By departing from God. God does not sanctify man apart from the knowledge of Himself, leaving man still at a distance from Him; but, while giving him a new nature which is capable of it, by giving to this nature (which cannot even exist without it) an object - Himself. He does not make man independent, as he wished to be; the new man is the dependent man, it is his perfection- Jesus Christ exemplified this in His life. The new man is a man dependent in his affections, who desires, who chooses to be so, who cannot be happy without being so, and whose dependence is on love, while still obedient, as a dependent being ought to be.

Thus, they who are sanctified possess a nature that is holy in its desires and its tastes. It is the divine nature in them, the life of Christ. But they do not cease to be men. They have God revealed in Christ for their object. Sanctification is developed in communion with God, and in affections which go back to Christ, and which wait for Him. But the new nature cannot reveal an object to itself; and still less could it have its object by setting God aside at its will. It is dependent on God for the revelation of Himself. His love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, whom He has given us; and the same Spirit takes of the things of Christ and communicates them to us. Thus we grow in the knowledge of God, being strengthened mightily by His Spirit in the inner man, that we may understand with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and know the love of Christ, and be filled unto the fullness of God. Thus gazing with open face upon the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. " For their sakes I sanctify myself that they also may be sanctified through the truth."

We see by these passages, which might be multiplied, that we are dependent on an object, and that we are dependent on the strength of another. Love acts, in order to work in us according to this need.

Our setting apart for God, which is complete (for it is by means of a nature that is purely of Himself, and in absolute responsibility to Him, for we are no longer our own, but are bought with a price, and sanctified by the blood of Christ according to the will of God, who will have us for his own), places us in a relationship, the development of which (by an increasing knowledge of God, who is the object of our new nature) is practical sanctification, wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost in us, the witness in us of the love of God. He attaches the heart to God, ever revealing him more and more, and at the same time unfolding the glory of Christ, and all the divine qualities that were displayed in Him in human nature; thus forming ours, as born of God.

Therefore it is that we have seen in this epistle, that love, working in us, is the means of sanctification (chap. 3:12, 13). It is the activity of the new nature, of the divine nature in us. And in this chap. 5 the saints are commended to God Himself, that He may work it in them, while we are always set in view of the glorious objects of our faith in order to accomplish it.

We may here more particularly call the reader's attention to these objects. They are God Himself and the coming of Christ. On the one hand, communion with God; on the other, the waiting for Christ. It is most evident that communion with God is the practical position of the highest sanctification. He who knows that we shall see Jesus as He now is, and that we shall be like Him, purifies himself even as He is pure. By our communion with the God of peace we are wholly sanctified. If God is our all, we are altogether holy. (We are not speaking of the flesh, which can neither be subjected to God, nor please Him). And the thought of Christ and His coming, preserves us practically, and in detail, and intelligently, blameless. It is God Himself who thus preserves us, and who works in us thus to occupy our hearts and cause us continually to grow.

But this point deserves yet a few more words. The freshness of Christian life in the Thessalonians made it, as it were, more objective; so that these objects are prominent, and very distinctly recognized by the heart. We have already said that they are God the Father and the Lord Jesus. With reference to the communion of love with the saints as His crown and glory, he only speaks of the Lord Jesus. This has a special character of reward, although a reward in which love reigns. Jesus Himself had the joy that was set before Him as sustainment in His sufferings, a joy which thus was personal to Himself. The apostle, also, as regarded his work and labor, waited with Christ for its fruit. Besides this case of the apostle (chap. 2), we find God Himself and Jesus, as the object before us, the joy of communion with God - and that, in the relationship of Father - and with Christ, whose glory and position we share, through grace.

Thus it is only in the two epistles to the Thessalonians that we find the expression "to the Church which is in God the Father." The sphere of their communion is thus shown, founded on the relationship in which they found themselves with God Himself in the character of Father (Thess. 1:3, 9, 10; 3:13; 4:15, 16; and here 5:23). It is important to remark, that the more vigorous and living Christianity is, the more objective it is. It is but saying that God and the Lord Jesus have a greater place in our thoughts; and that we rest more really upon them. This Epistle to the Thessalonians is the part of scripture which instructs on this point; and it is a means of judging many a fallacy in the heart, and giving a great simplicity to our Christianity.

. The apostle closes his epistle by asking for the prayers of the brethren, saluting them with the confidence of affection, and conjuring them to have his epistle read to all the holy brethren. His heart forgot none of them. He would be in relationship with all according to this spiritual affection and personal bond. Apostle towards all of them, he would have them recognize those who labored among them, but maintain withal his own relationship. His was a heart which embraced all the revealed counsels of God, on the one hand, and did not lose sight of the least of his saints on the other.

It remains to take notice of one interesting circumstance, as to the manner in which the apostle instructs them. He takes, in the first chapter, the truths which were precious to their heart, but were still somewhat vaguely seized by their intelligence, and as to which they were indeed fallen into mistakes, and employs them in the clearness in which he possessed them himself; in his practical

instructions, and applies them to known and experienced relationships, that their souls might be well established on positive truth, and clear as to its use, before he touched on their error, and the mistakes they had made. They waited for His Son from heaven. That they possessed already clearly in their hearts - but they would be in the presence of God when Jesus came with all His saints. This was clearing up a very important point, without directly touching the error. Their heart got straight as to the truth in its practical application to what the heart possessed. They understood what it was to be before God the Father. It was much more intimate and real than a manifestation of terrestrial and finite glory. Further, they would be before God when Jesus came with all His saints: a simple truth which demonstrated itself to the heart by the simple fact that Jesus could not have some only of His Church. The heart seized this truth without an effort; yet in doing so it was established, as was the understanding also, in what made the whole truth clear, and that in view of the relationship of the Thessalonians to Christ and those that were His. The joy even of the apostle in meeting them all (those who had died, consequently, as well as the living) at the coming of Jesus, placed the soul on an entirely different ground from that of being found here, and blessed by the arrival of Jesus when they were here below. Thus enlightened, confirmed, established, in the real bearing of the truth, which they possessed already by a development of it, which connected itself with their best affections, and with their most intimate spiritual knowledge, founded on their communion with God, they were ready with certain fixed bases of truth to enter on and set aside without difficulty an error which was in disaccord with what they now knew how to appreciate at its just value, as forming part of their moral possessions. Special revelation made all clear as to details. This manner of proceeding is very instructive.

2 Thessalonians

In the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the Apostle corrects some errors into which these disciples had fallen, with regard to the day of the Lord, through certain false teachers; as, in part of the first Epistle, he had enlightened the ignorance of the believers themselves, respecting the portion of the saints at the coming of Christ to take them to Himself; a point on which they were evidently but little instructed.

A measure of Jewish darkness was on their minds; and they were, in some points, still subjected to the influence of that unhappy nation, which was ever struggling to maintain a position lost through its unbelief.

This Jewish influence enables us to understand why the Apostle spoke as he did in chap. 2:15, 16, of the first Epistle. At that time, this influence showed itself in the tendency of the Thessalonians to lose sight of the heavenly side of the Lord's coming, to think that He would return to the earth, and that they should then be glorified with Him - as a Jew might have believed - and that the dead saints would therefore not be present to share this glory. I do not say that this thought had assumed a definite form in the minds of the Thessalonians! to them, the principal and living object was the Lord Himself; and they were awaiting His return with hearts full of joy and life; but the heavenly side of this expectation had not its place clearly marked in their minds, and they connected the coming too much with the manifestation, so that the earthly character predominated, and the dead seemed to be shut out from it.

When the second Epistle was written, this Jewish influence had another character; and the false teachers were more directly concerned in it.

The faithful at Thessalonica had learned to contemplate "the day of the Lord " as a day of judgment. The Old Testament had spoken much of this day of the Lord, a day of darkness and of unparalleled judgment, a day of trial to men (comp. Isa. 13, Joel 2, Amos 5:18). Now the Thessalonians were undergoing dreadful persecution. Perhaps their hope of an earthly intervention of the Lord, during their life-time, was weakened. The Apostle, at least, rejoiced at the increase of their faith, and the abundant exercise of their love, while he is silent with regard to their hope; and the joy of Christian life is not found here as it was manifested in the first Epistle. Nevertheless, they were walking well, and the Apostle gloried in them, in the churches of God. But the false teachers profited by their condition, to mislead them by means of their sufferings, which weighed more heavily on their hearts, from the joy of hope being a little weakened; and, at the same time, the remains of the influence of Judaizing thoughts, or of habits of mind formed through them, furnished occasion to the assaults of the enemy. The instruments of his subtle malice told them that the day of the Lord, that fearful time, was already come - the word (chap. 2:2) is not "at hand," but "come," "present" - and all that the Thessalonians were suffering, and by which their hearts were shaken, appeared like a testimony to prove it, and to confirm the words of the false teachers. Was it not written that it should be a day of trial and anguish? The words of these teachers, moreover, had the pretension of being more than human reasoning; it was a word of the

Lord, it was the Spirit who spoke, it was a letter from an inspired channel; and so bold and wicked were they in regard to this matter, that they did not fear to adduce the Apostle's own name as their authority for declaring that the day was come. Now, the dominion of fear, which Satan can exercise over the mind, when it is not kept of God in peace and joy, is astonishing. "In nothing terrified by your adversaries," is the Apostle's word to the Philippians, "which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." In such a state of mind as this, everything is believed: or, rather, everything is feared, and nothing believed. The heart gives itself up to this fear, and is ready to believe anything; for it is in darkness, and knows not what to believe. Thus the Apostle exhorts the Thessalonians (chap. 2) not to be soon shaken in mind, so as to lose their stability in the truth, and not to be troubled.

The Apostle deals with the case in the same manner as in the first Epistle. Before entering on the error, he treats the same, subject in its true light, building upon the knowledge which the Thessalonians already possessed. Only he sets it forth with clearness in its application to the circumstances of the moment. By this means, they were delivered from the influence of the error, and from the disturbance of mind which it had caused; and were rendered capable of looking at the error, as being themselves outside it, and of judging it according to the instruction that the Apostle gave them.

They were persecuted, and were in distress and suffering, and the enemy took advantage of it. The apostle puts that fact in its right place. The "day of the Lord" was the coming of the Lord in judgment; but it was not to make His own suffer, that He was coming - it was to punish the wicked. Persecution, therefore, could not be the day of the Lord; for, in persecution, the wicked had the upper hand, and did their own will, and inflicted suffering on those whom the Lord loved. Could that be His day? The apostle does not apply this argument to the question, but he puts the facts in their place; so that all the use which the enemy made of them, fell of itself to the ground. The truth of the facts was there in its simplicity, giving them their evident and natural character. When God should take the thing in hand, He would recompense tribulation to those who troubled His children, and these should have rest, should be in peace. The moment of their entering into this rest, is not at all the subject here; but the contrast between their actual condition, and that which it would be, if Jesus were come. It was not to persecute and harass His own that He was coming. In His day they should be at rest; and the wicked in distress; for He was coming to punish the latter, by driving them away forever from the glory of His presence. When we understand that the Thessalonians had been induced to believe that the day of the Lord was already come, the import of this first chapter is very plain.

Two principles are here established. First, the righteous judgment of God. It is righteous in His eyes, on the one hand, to reward those who suffer for His Kingdom's sake; and, on the other, to requite those who persecute His children. In the second place, the glorious manifestation of the Lord Jesus: His own should be in rest and happiness with Him, when His power should be in exercise.

We see also here, two reasons for judgment - they did not know God, and they did not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. All being without excuse as to the testimony that God had ever given concerning Himself, some among them had added the rejection of the positive revelation of His grace in the Gospel of Christ, to their abuse of their natural relationship with God, and their

forgetfulness of His majesty.

Meanwhile, the apostle presents the positive result in blessing, of the manifestation of Jesus in glory. He will come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that have believed in Him, and therefore in the Thessalonians; a thorough proof, at least, that they were not to view their persecuted condition as a demonstration that the day was come. With regard to themselves, they were thus entirely delivered from the confusion by which the enemy sought to disquiet them; and the apostle could treat the question of this error, with hearts which, as to their own condition, were set free from it, and at rest.

These considerations characterized his prayers on their behalf. He sought from God that they might always be worthy of this vocation, and that the Lord might be glorified in them by the power of faith, which would shine the brighter through their persecutions; and that, afterward, they might be glorified in Him at the manifestation of His glory, according to the grace of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now that the apostle has placed their souls on the ground of truth, he enters upon the subject of the error, sheaving that which had occasioned his remarks. Of this, we have already spoken.

In answering this error, and in guarding them from the wily efforts of seducers, he puts everything in its place here, by appealing to precious truths, of which he had already spoken. Their gathering together unto Christ in the air, was a demonstration of the impossibility of the day of the Lord being already come.

Moreover, with regard to this, he presents two considerations. First, the day could not be already come, since Christians were not yet gathered to the Lord, and they were to come with Him; second, the wicked one who was then to be judged, had not yet appeared, so that the judgment could not be executed.

The apostle had already instructed the Thessalonians with regard to this wicked one, when at Thessalonica; and, in the former epistle, he had taught them concerning the rapture of the Church. In order that the Lord should come in judgment, iniquity must have reached its height, and open opposition to God have been manifested. But the truth had another and more precious side: the saints were to be in the same position as Christ, to be gathered together unto Him, before He could manifest Himself in glory to those outside. But these truths require a more connected examination.

Their gathering together unto Christ before the manifestation, was a truth known to the Thessalonians; it is not revealed here, it is used as an argument. The Lord Jesus was coming, but it was impossible that He should be without His Church in the glory. The King would, indeed, punish His rebellious subjects; but, before doing so, He would bring to Himself those who had been faithful to Him, amid the unfaithful; in order to bring them back with Him, and publicly to honor them in the midst of the rebels. But the apostle here speaks only of the rapture itself, and he adjures them by that truth, not to allow themselves to be shaken in mind, as though the day were come. What an assured truth must this have been to Christians, since the apostle could appeal to it, as to a known point, on which the heart could rest. The relationship of the Church to Christ, its being necessarily in the same position with Him, rendered the idea that the day was already come, a mere folly.

In the second place, the already known fact is asserted, that the apostasy must previously take place, and then the man of sin be revealed. Solemn truth Everything takes its place. The forms and the name of Christianity have long been maintained - true Christians have been disowned; but now there should be a public renunciation of the faith-an apostasy; true Christians should have their true place in heaven. But, besides this, there should be a person who would fully realize, in sin, the character of man without God. He is the man of sin. He does his own will - it is but Adam fully developed; and, incited by the enemy, he opposes himself to God; it is open enmity against God, and he exalts himself above all that bears the name of God; he assumes the place of God in His temple. So that there is apostasy, i.e., the open renunciation of Christianity in general, and an individual, who concentrates in his own person (as to the principles of iniquity) the opposition that is made against God.

It will be noticed that the character of the wicked one is religious here, or rather anti-religious. The apostle does not speak of a secular power of the world, whatever its iniquity may be. The man of sin assumes a religious character. He exalts himself against the true God, but he shows himself as God in the temple of God. Observe here, that this sphere is on earth. It is not a God for faith. He shows himself as a God for the earth. The profession of Christianity has been abandoned. Sin then characterizes an individual, a man, who fills up the measure of the apostasy of human nature, and, as man, proclaims his independence of God. The principle of sin in man is his own will. He arises, as we have already seen, out of the rejection of Christianity. In this respect also, evil is at its height.

This man of sin exalts himself above God, and, sitting as God in the temple of God, he defies the God of Israel. This last feature gives his formal character. He is in conflict with God, as placing himself publicly in this position; skewing himself as God, in the temple of God. It is the God of Israel who will take vengeance on him.

Christianity, Judaism, natural religion, all are rejected. Man takes a place there on earth, exalting himself above it all, in opposition to God; and, in particular, arrogating to, himself (for man needs a God, needs something to worship) the place and the honors of God; and of the God of Israel.

These verses present the wicked one in connection with the state of man, and with the different relationships in which man has stood towards God. In them all, he shows himself an apostate, and then he assumes the place of. God Himself,- the first object of human ambition, as its attainment was the first suggestion of Satan.

In that which follows, we see, not the condition itself of apostasy with regard to the different positions in which God had placed man, but simply man unrestrained, and the work of Satan. The man is but the vessel of the enemy's power.

Man, in whom is the fullness of the Godhead, the Lord Jesus, and man filled with the energy of Satan, are opposed to each other. Before, it was man forsaking God; wicked, and exalting himself. Here, it is opposition against God, on the part of man, unrestrained, and inspired by Satan himself. Consequently, we have not the wicked one, but) the lawless, the unbridled one The principle is the same, for sin is lawlessness (see 1 John 3:4, Greek). But in this first case, man is viewed in his departure from God, and in his guiltiness; in the second, as acknowledging none but himself.

To this condition, in which all restraint will be removed, a barrier as yet existed.

The apostle had already told them of the apostasy, and of the manifestations of the man of sin. He now says that the Thessalonians ought to know the hindrance that existed to his progress, presenting his manifestation before the appointed time. He does not say that he had told them, but they ought to know it. Knowing the character of the wicked one, the barrier revealed itself. The main point here is, that it was a barrier. The principle of the evil was already at work: a barrier alone prevented its full development. Its character, when developed, would be unbridled will, which exalts and opposes itself.

Unbridled self-will being the principle of the evil, that which bridles this will is the barrier. Now it exalts itself above all that bears the name of God, or to which homage is paid: that which hinders it, therefore, is the power of God acting in government here below, as authorized by Him. The grossest abuse of power still bears this last character. Christ could say to Pilate,

Thou couldst have no power against me except it were given thee from above." Wicked as he might be, his power is owned as coming from God. Thus, although men had rejected and crucified the Son of God, so that their iniquity appeared to be at its height, the hindrance still existed in full. Afterward, God, having sent His Spirit, gathers out the Church, and although the mystery of iniquity began immediately to work, mingling the will of man with the worship of God in Spirit, God had always (He still has) the object of His loving care upon the earth; the Holy Ghost was here below; the Church, be its condition what it might, was still on earth, and God maintained the barrier. And as the porter had opened the door to Jesus, in spite of all obstacles, so He sustains everything, however great the energy and progress of evil. The evil is bridled; God is the source of authority on earth. There is one who hinders, until He be out of the way. Now when the Church is gone, and consequently the Holy Ghost, as the Comforter, is no longer dwelling here below, then the apostasy takes place, the time to remove the hindrance is come, the evil is unbridled, and at length (without saying how much time it will take), the evil assumes a definite shape in him who is its head. The beast comes up from the abyss. Satan -not God--gives him his authority; and in the second beast all the energy of Satan is present. The man of sin is there.

Here, it is not outward and secular power that is spoken of, but the religious side of Satan's energy.

With regard to the individual instruments who compose the barrier, they may change every moment, and it was not the object of the Holy Ghost to name them. He who was one of them when this epistle was written, would not be so at the present time; to have named him then, would have been of no use to us in the present day. The object was to declare, that the evil which should be judged was already working, that there was no remedy for it, that it was only a hindrance on God's part which prevented its full development: a principle of the highest importance with regard to the history of Christianity.

Whatever form it might take, the apostasy of the men who would renounce grace would necessarily be more absolute than any other. It is opposition to the Lord. It has the character of an adversary. The other principle of human iniquity enters into it, but this is the source of the "perdition." It is the rejection of goodness: it is direct enmity.

" That which hinders " is in general only an instrument, a means which prevents the manifestation of the man of sin- the wicked one. So long as the Church is on earth, the pretension to be God in

His temple, cannot take place, or at least would have no influence. Satan has his sphere, and must needs have it, in the mystery of iniquity; but there is no longer a mystery when the place of God in His temple is openly taken. That which hinders is, therefore, still present. But there is a person active in maintaining this hindrance. Here, I think, indeed, that it is God, in the person of the Holy Ghost - who for the time called "the things that are"-restrains the evil and guards divine authority in the world. As long as that subsists, the unrestrained exaltation of wickedness cannot take place. Consequently, I do not doubt but that the rapture of the Church is the occasion of the hindrance being removed and all restraint loosed; although some of the ways of God are developed before the full manifestation of the evil.

This thought does not rest upon great principles only: the passage itself supplies elements which skew the state of things when the power of evil develops itself. 1st. The apostasy has already taken place. This could hardly be said if the testimony of the Church still subsisted, as it had in time past, or even yet more distinctly as being freed from all false and corrupting elements. 2nd. Authority as established of God - has disappeared from the scene, for the wicked one exalts himself against all that is called God, and to which homage is paid, and presents himself as God in the temple of God. Compare Psa. 82, where God stands among the gods (the judges), to judge them before He inherits the nations. Before that solemn hour when God will judge the judges of the earth, this wicked one, despising all authority that comes from Him, sets himself up as God; and that, on the earth, where the judgment will be manifested. And then, 3rdly, in place of the Holy Ghost and His power manifested on the earth, we find the power of Satan, and with precisely the same tokens that bore witness to the person of Christ. So that the passage itself, whether as to man, or as to the enemy, gives us in the three points of which we have spoken, the full confirmation of that which we have ventured to set forth.

The Church, the powers ordained by God upon the earth, the Holy Ghost present here as the Comforter, in lieu of Christ, have all (as regards the manifestation of the government and the work of God) given place to the self-willed unbridled man, and to the power of the enemy.

We speak of the sphere of this prophecy, which, moreover, embraces that of the public testimony of God on earth.

Definitively, then, we have here, man in his own nature - as it has displayed itself by forsaking God - in the full enjoyment of his own will in rebellion against God; the willful man, developed as the result of apostasy the position of! grace in which the Church stood, and in contempt of all the governmental authority of God on the earth. And since that authority had shown itself directly and properly in Judea, this contempt, and the spirit of rebellion in man, who exalts himself above everything, but who cannot be heavenly (Heaven, and all pretension to Heaven, is given up by man, and lost by Satan), display themselves by men taking the place of God in His temple, under the most advanced form of Jewish apostasy and blasphemy. At the same time, Satan acts - God having loosed his bridle - with a power (a lying power, indeed, but) which gives the same testimony before men, as that which the works of Christ did to the Savior; and also with all the skill that iniquity possesses to deceive. It is in the wicked, the lawless one, that Satan works these things. Our consideration of the development of the latter part of this solemn scene, will come (God willing) in the Book of Revelation. We may add, that there we have this wicked one as the false Messiah, and especially as prophet; in Dan. 11 as king; here, as the unbridled man, and in

particular as the result of the apostasy, and the manifestation of Satan's power. In a word, instead of the Church, the apostasy; instead of the Holy Ghost, Satan; and instead of the authority of God, as a restraint upon evil, the unbridled man setting himself up as God on the earth.

Another circumstance, already mentioned, demands particular attention. I have said that he presents himself as the Messiah; that is to say, in His two characters as king and prophet, which are His earthly characters. In heaven, Satan has then nothing more to do; he has been cast out from thence, so that there is no imitation of the Lord's high-priesthood. In that respect, Satan had, in his own person, acted another part. He was previously, in heaven, the accuser of the brethren. But, at the time of which we are speaking, the Church is on high, and the accuser of the brethren is cast out, never to return there. In a man inspired by him, he makes himself prophet and king. And in this character, he does the same things (in falsehood) as those by which God had sanctioned the mission of Christ before men (comp. Acts 2:22). In Greek, the words are identical. I would also recall here, another solemn fact, in order to complete this picture. In the history of Elijah, we find that the proof of the divinity of Baal, or that of Jehovah, is made to rest upon the fact of their respective servants bringing down fire from heaven. Now, in Rev. 13, we learn that the second beast brings down fire from heaven in the sight of men. So that we find here the marvelous works that sanctioned the Lord's mission; and there, that which proved Jehovah to be the true and only God. And Satan performs both, in order to deceive men.

This may give us an idea of the state in which they will be; and it indicates, also, that these things will take place in relation with the Jews, under the double aspect of their connection with Jehovah, and their rejection of Christ, and reception of Antichrist.

Thus, thank God, the truth is abundantly confirmed, that these things do not relate to the Church, but to those who, having had opportunity to profit by the truth, have rejected it, and loved iniquity. Neither does it relate to the heathen, but only to those among whom the truth has been set forth. They refused it, and God sends a lie; and an efficacious lie, that they may believe it. He does this in judgment; He did the same thing with the nations (Rom. 1:24,26,28); He did it also with the Jews (Isa. 6:9,10); He does it here with nominal Christians.

This applies even to the Jews, as a nation that rejected the truth, the testimony of the Holy Ghost (Acts 7); but still more to Christians (in name). In short, to all those who will have had the truth presented to them.

With nominal Christians, this has, necessarily, the character of apostasy; or, at least, it is connected with this apostasy, and is consequent upon it, as verse 3 teaches us, the apostasy takes place, and then the man of sin is revealed.

In connection with the man of sin, he presents himself, without restraint, as God, in the temple of God. In relation to the lying power of Satan, and his efficient work, he presents himself in the character of Christ - he is the Antichrist; assuming, consequently, a Jewish character. It is not only the pride of man exalting itself against God, but the power of Satan in man, deceiving men, and the Jews in particular, by a false Christ; so that, if it were possible, the very elect would be deceived. We may remark, that all these characters are precisely the opposite of Christ; falsehood instead of truth, iniquity instead of righteousness, perdition instead of salvation.

It is to a power like this, of lies and destruction, that man -having forsaken Christianity, and exalted himself in pride against God will be given up. The apostasy (that is to say, the renunciation of Christianity) will be the occasion of this evil; Judea and the Jews, the scene in which it ripens and develops itself in a positive way.

The antichrist will deny the Father and the Son, i.e., Christianity; he will deny that Jesus is the Christ. This is Jewish unbelief. With the burden upon him, of sin against Christianity, grace, and the presence of the Holy Ghost, he will ally himself with Jewish unbelief, in order that there may be, not only the full expression of human pride, but also, for a time, the Satanic influence of a false Christ, who will strengthen the throne of Satan among the Gentiles, occupied by the first beast, to whom the authority of the dragon has been given. He will also set up his own subordinate throne over the Jews, as being the Messiah, whom their unbelief is expecting; while, at the same time, He will bring in idolatry, the unclean spirit long gone out, who then returns to his house, which is devoid of God.

And now, with regard to his destruction; whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the manifestation of His presence, or of His return. The first of these means characterizes the judgment; it is the word of truth applied in judgment, according to the power of God. In the Revelations, it says that the sword proceeds out of His mouth. Here He is not spoken of in the character of a man of war, as in Rev. 19. The spirit of His mouth is that inward and divine power which kindles and executes the judgment. It is not an instrument, it is the divine source of power which executes its purpose by a word (comp. Isa. 30:33). But there is another aspect of this judgment. The Lord, the man Jesus, will return. His return has two parts; the return into the air to take His Church to Himself, and the public manifestation in glory, of this return.

In the first verse of our chapter, we have read of His return, and of our gathering together unto Him. Here, verse 8, is the manifestation of His presence publicly in creation. At the time of this public manifestation of His coming, He destroys the whole work and power of the wicked one. It is the Man formerly obedient on the earth, exalted of God, and become Lord of all, who destroys the lawless man that has exalted himself above everything and made himself as God, instead of being obedient to God.

This evil - on the side of Satan's influence - was already working in the apostle's time, only it was bridled and kept back, until that which restrained it should no longer be on the scene. Then should the wicked one be revealed. To sum Up. The taking away of the Church, and the apostasy, were first necessary; and then this man should present himself as an apostate Jew, and the power of Satan' would be displayed in Him.

We are taught positively by John, that the rejection of Christianity and Jewish unbelief are united in the Antichrist.

It appears that apostasy with regard to Christianity, and Jewish unbelief are connected and go together; and afterward Jewish apostasy, and open rebellion against God, which, causing the cry of the remnant, brings in the Lord, and all is ended. Now, the apostle (ii. 3, 4) presents the complete picture of man's iniquity, developed when apostasy from the grace of the Gospel had taken place. He exalts himself even to the making himself God, without touching the Jewish side or the manifested power of Satan. These verses show us the man of sin, in result of the apostasy

which will break out in the midst of Christendom. Verse 9 begins to teach us in addition, that the coming of this wicked one is also in immediate connection with a mighty display of the energy of Satan, who deceives by means of marvelous works and by a strong delusion, to which God gives men up; and of which we have spoken in the text. It is man and Satan here, with enough to show its connection with Judaism in the last days (even as the mystery of iniquity was linked with Judaism in the days of the apostle), although it is not the occasion of giving the detail of the Jewish development of the evil. We must look for these details elsewhere, where they are in their place -as in Daniel. The Apocalypse and 1 John, furnish us with the means of connecting them. We do but allude here to this connection.)

Now, this Satanic influence was for those who had rejected the truth. Of the Thessalonians - to whom he had given these explanations respecting the day which they had fancied was come - the apostle thought very differently. God had chosen these "brethren beloved of the Lord" from the beginning, for salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, to which He had called them by Paul's Gospel (and that of his companions), and to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus. How different was this from the visitations of the day of the Lord, and the circumstances of which the apostle had spoken. They were numbered among those who should be the companions in that day of the Lord Jesus Himself.

There is nothing very particular in the apostle's exhortations. His great concern was the explanation which we have been considering. He prays that God, and the Lord Jesus Himself, who had given them the sure and everlasting consolations of the Gospel, would comfort their hearts and establish them in every good word and work. He asks for their prayers, that he may be preserved in his labors. He could not but expect to find men unreasonable and at enmity, for faith was not the portion of all. It was only a case for the protecting hand of God. With regard to them, he counted, for this end, on the faithfulness of the Lord. He reckoned also on their obedience, and prays God to direct their hearts towards these two points, of which we have spoken when studying the First Epistle; the love of God and the patient waiting with which the Christ waited - the two points in which the whole of Christian life is summed up, with regard to its objects, its moral springs. Christ Himself was waiting - sweet thought! they were to wait with Him, until the moment when His heart and the hearts of His own should rejoice together in their meeting.

It was this which they needed. On the one hand, they had believed that the dead saints would not be ready to go and meet the Lord; on the other, they had thought the day of the Lord already come.. The enjoyment of the love of God, and peace of heart in waiting for Christ, were necessary for them.

This excitement into which they had been led, had also betrayed itself in some among them, by their neglect of their ordinary labors, "working not at all, but being busy bodies," intermeddling in the affairs of others, The apostle had set them a very different example. He exhorts them to be firm, and to withdraw from those who would not hearken to his admonitions, but continue to walk disorderly and in idleness; not, however, in such a manner as to treat them as enemies, but to admonish them as brethren.

It will be observed here, that there is no longer the same expression of the energy of communion and of life, as previously (compare 3:16 with 1 Thess. 5:23). Nevertheless, the Lord was still the Lord of peace; but the beauty of that entire consecration to God, which would shine forth in the day

of Christ, does not present itself to the apostle's mind and heart as in the First Epistle. He prays for them, however, that they may have peace always and by all means.

The apostle points out the method by which he assured the faithful of the authenticity of his letters. With the exception of that to the Galatians, he employed other persons to write them, but he attached his own signature, in order to verify their contents to the Church; adding the prayer of blessing.

The Anointed One

The Divine Counsels were all laid in Christ, before the foundation of the world. The Son of the bosom was brought out in counsel then; and all the purposes of God had their foundation in Him, in the person He was preordained to be, and the place He was pre-appointed to fill.

We read this in Proverbs 8.

" The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth, while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens I was there, when He set a compass upon the face of the depth, when he established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep, when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment, when He appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by Him (as) One brought up (with Him), and I was daily (His) delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth, and My delights were with the sons of men.

What a message does this Scripture bring to us from the eternal ages! It tells us of those infinite ages which were before creation, in ways most wondrous and excellent. How exact and special is Wisdom's account of herself in that passage! The chief part of the dust of the world was not then made, when all was planned and settled in Christ. No work of His hand had God to survey then. No evening or morning had then given Him succeeding periods for delight and refreshment, as the good and holy work advanced to its perfection. But He had Christ in counsel before him, His first thought, and the foundation of all His thoughts. The things of creation and redemption, the things of Providence and grace, heavenly purposes and earthly purposes, things nearer at hand or further off, all had respect to Him. " The Lord possessed me," says Wisdom, " in the beginning of His way."

But in this beautiful mysterious passage, there are two things which specially engage my mind at this time-that Christ was, "by Him, as One brought up with Him," and again, that He was also "His delight." That is, He was ever at hand, so to speak, and ever a joy. He was God's resource and God's object.

These two things are strongly marked here; and as we pass down the current of Scripture, we find this to be so. Let what may arise, Christ is ever by God, ready to be used by Him at once, and then used by Him with delight. In Eden or at creation, among the Patriarchs, under the law, in the days of the kings, and by the voices of the prophets, as well as after His manifestation in flesh, and then in the light of the Holy Ghost through the Apostles, that is, from the opening to the close of the volume, this is seen. Let man be in innocency or sold under sin, whether the elect be in simple family order, or in the organized system of a nation, or in the unity of a mystic body, whether they be ruled or instructed, under government or under revelation, Christ is God's great ordinance. It

may be, that we, through unbelief and blindness of heart, get but a dim sight of Him at times, God sees Him clearly and at all times, under all changes and conditions. And this is what I would now contemplate for a little while, in some of the leading instances of it.

We know that, at the Creation, without Him was not anything made that was made.

As soon as sin enters, He comes forth at once. He is the burden of the first promise which was made immediately upon the entrance and conviction of sin. He is, as we know, the bruised, victorious seed of the woman. The Lord God brings him forth at once, as One already provided in counsel, or, as our Scripture speaks, "As One brought up with him.," as One that was "by Him." Sin, the great occasion for the manifestation of God and His grace, and His secrets, had come in, and Christ at once comes forth. Faith in Adam receives Him-with what measure of light we may not be able to say,-but as soon as believing Adam comes out from his guilty covert at the bidding of the seed of the woman now revealed to him, the Lord God uses Christ for him with delight. The action of clothing him with the coat of skins tell us this. There was freedom and fervency in that action. -It was done without reserve, and by the Lord's own hand. The coat of skins was first made by Him, and then by Him put on the naked Adam-all this bespeaking His delight in Christ, using Him, and using Him with readiness of heart, for " the sons of men" - as our Scripture speaks. The Lord God wrought in a ruined world now, as He had lately wrought for six days in an unstained creation. And, if the eternal purpose respecting Christ, the counsel of grace laid in Him ere worlds began, had been the delight of God, so also was the manifestation of this purpose now-this earliest use and application of it. This delight fed itself in action and service, when the need arose, as surely as it had fed itself in thought and counsel in eternity.

So again, shortly after this first case of Adam, Abel's altar and lamb speak the same truth. The sacrifice was to God a witness of Christ, and God had immediate respect to it. He answered that sacrifice at once, and evidently with delight. He had respect to Abel and to his offering. He pleads with Cain on the warrant and value of it, and would fain have had him, another sinner like Abel, serve at the same altar-all this still telling of the same purpose and joy, that His anointed was " by Him, as One brought up with Him," and "daily His delight," His equal and full delight one day as well as another, in the behalf of one sinner as well as of another, for Abel as well as for Adam.

Noah's ark was just the same. Another ruin had broken forth. The end of all flesh was again before God. It was the wreck of a world a second time. But Christ was " by Him" still. " Make thee an ark of gopher-wood," said the Lord to Noah, and that ark was Christ. And when Noah pleaded Christ, in other words prepared an ark to the saving of his house, " The Lord God shut him in," and then " the ark went upon the face of the waters." His own hand, which before had made the coat for Adam, now sheltered " the sons of men" in that sanctuary which grace had provided-and this action, this shutting of all the ransomed in that sure place by the hand of God Himself, again tells of the "delight" with which He used His Anointed for us, which He tasted when His Christ was thus trusted and pleaded by sinners.

And Noah's altar afterward was just what his ark had, thus, already been. That altar and the victim upon it was Christ. Noah took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. I say not how far he discovered the Christ of God in all this. In his measure I surely believe he did. The woman's seed promised to Adam, bruised yet victorious, was, I judge, before him, and so was Abel's lamb. But be this so, whether dimly or brightly as to Noah, as to the

Lord God Himself, the One whom "He had possessed in the beginning of His way, before His works of old," was assuredly before Him; and in the virtue of His name, and of the preciousness of His blood, He said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake." The Lord God "said in His heart." What words! What a witness of the profound and perfect satisfaction God was taking in Christ, the counseled, covenanted foundation of all His purposes about " the sons of men," the treasury of all His riches and secrets of eternal saving mercies!

And the Bow in the Cloud speaks the same language. In the fine glowing style of that beautiful token, God seems, as with His whole heart and His whole soul, to pledge security to the creation. But this was all in His anointed, for it was the blood of Noah's altar which prevailed thus to keep the token of the covenant, the pledge of the earth's security, ever under the eye of the Lord. That precious blood had drawn forth the deep delighted utterance of His heart, as we saw, and now this token shall draw His eye in its own direction continually. The cloud big with judgment may come, but the bow shall ride upon it, and control it, and give it an appointed measure-" here shall thy proud waves be stayed." The eye of Him who sits above all water-floods shall look upon the bow - and another witness is given, that time makes no change, successive seed times and harvests shall go on while the earth remains, for Christ is still. " by Him," and always " His delight," His predestined salvation and gift of grace, in behalf of " the sons of men."

But as we still pursue our way through Scripture, or along the path of God, we still find the same mystery; we still find Christ "by Him" and also "His delight."

In the day of the call of Abram, the world was in the darkness and abomination of idols. The family of Terah served them (Josh. 24:2). Another mighty moral, ruin was spreading itself every where. As disobedience had defiled the garden of Eden, and self-will and violence had corrupted all in the world before the Flood, so now, these idol abominations marked the apostasy of even the family of Shem -for Terah was of that line. But Abram is separated. Like Noah, he found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He was a chosen one, a vessel of mercy. Great promises are made to him; but of them all, Christ is the ground and title. "In thee," says the God of glory to him, when He called him out, "in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" - and his blessing, as we know from the divine teaching of Gal. 3, is through faith in Christ Jesus. In that word to Abram, the Gospel was preached to Abram, the Gospel of Christ, in whom is all our blessing.

How simple this is! Christ and Christ only is still before God, at His hand or "by Him" for use in the behalf of "the sons of men," produced without delay or effort, and given to their rising and recurring necessities. And the Lord God calling out Abram to look on the stars and see if he could number them, when Christ was about to be revealed to him, was an action which bespoke the delight which God took in using His Anointed for him. There was fervency in the action - a style about it that tells of secret joy, well marking or accompanying that moment when God was revealing Christ to the faith of His elect.

And thus, in this other and later day, this same mystery re-appears. In the day of the fall of Adam, in the apostasy and doom of the antediluvian world, and now in the hour of the call of Abram from amid the overspreading of abominations, Christ known in eternal counsels, is brought forth, and that with delight for the sons of men.

But as we go on with the Book of God, we find the Christ still. See this in the day of the Exodus. It was a time of judgment, as the time of Noah had been. But another Ark is prepared, and that Ark, like the former, in the day of the Flood, is Christ. "They shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side-posts and on the upper door-posts of the houses wherein they shall eat it, for I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am the Lord; and the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses wherein ye are, and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." The blood was upon the Jewish lintel; and that blood was Christ sheltering the house in the day of judgment and death.

His Anointed, after this manner, was again "by Him," for the use of "the sons of men" in the day of their necessity. And, as a people thus redeemed by Christ, and standing before God in the value of Christ, God takes them up as with His whole heart and His whole soul. In the cloud of His Presence He joins them on the road, as soon as they are freed from the place of judgment; He takes counsel with Himself about them; then He acts for them; He raises a wall of partition between them and their pursuers; feeds them with bread from heaven and with water from the Rock; and conducts them in strength and triumph, till He sets them in the place of glory at his own holy hill - and all this (with the song which He put into their lips on' the banks of the Red Sea) tells us of the full "delight" with which He had brought forth His anointed for them (Ex. 12-18).

This is surely a great and magnificent scene, and all is unchanged. The Christ of God "set up" from everlasting, is still with God for us, though our need arise again and again. He is at hand as One prepared and provided for "the sons of men," and brought forth in their behalf with "the delight" of God, according to this beautiful word in Prov. 8.

And I may here pause to say, prophets and oracles have also told this, and His own lips have uttered it. "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth," says Jehovah of His Anointed by Isaiah: "This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," was heard over Him again and again in the days of His flesh here. "Therefore doth my Father love me," says Jesus Himself, "because I lay down my life that I might take it again;" such words and like words telling, like the whole current of divine history, the joy which is known in our God over the manifestation and work of His Anointed in the behalf of us sinners.

But now, in still following that current of divine or scriptural history, we reach Ex. 19, and there we see God in a character in which we had not seen Him since the day of Gen. 2. He is now a lawgiver a second time. He who had been in a burning bush, has now taken His seat on a burning mount. The God of the Fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of Grace, now appears as the God of destructive righteousness and judgment. Through the self-confidence of Israel, their God is now rather a Lawgiver than a Redeemer; a character, again we say, in which He had not appeared since the time of Adam, and the Garden of Eden. (See Rom. 5:13,14).

This was a change indeed. The people had procured it for themselves; and however ruinous it may prove, they have to accept it all at their own hands.

But then, we read - " the covenant confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul." And so, the eternal purpose, which had been taken ere the world was, and not merely four hundred and thirty years before, Could not be disturbed by all this. No, indeed! The Anointed One, " brought forth" and " set up," possessed of God " in the beginning of His ways, before His 'works of old," no after-works could displace. This we have already seen, at different successive seasons from the beginning; and now again we are to see the same in this day of man's self-confidence, leading the God of - grace to the hill of judgment. Quickly again is Christ " by Him, as one brought up with Him," ready at hand to be used, and used with " delight," for " the sons of Men"-all this changing, shifting scenery, which sin, and judgment, and law, and human assumption induce; only sealing and verifying, and settling forever, the unchanging purpose of God, and his grace in the person, and work, and value of His Anointed.

This new condition into which Israel had now brought themselves, would work ruin as surely as sin had wrought it in Eden. Fallen man can no more answer law, than innocent man had resented temptation. But God's Anointed is still "by Him." We see this now in Ex. 25 as we saw it then in Gen. 3. The shadows of good things to come, now shown to Moses tell us this now, as the promise to Adam had told it then. Moses is called up to a region above and beyond that of darkness and thunder and tempest; and there, in figure, Christ is shown to him - Christ in the sanctuary of peace. The people had not yet broken the law; when this is done at least they had not been convicted. The national or conditional covenant is sealed in chap. 24, and this exhibition of the Anointed One is made to Moses in chaps. 25-30, that is, immediately afterward. No delay takes place, for Christ was " by Him." The thing is done suddenly. No counsel or preparation was needed - for counsel had been taken "in the beginning, before His works of old." Just as in the day when sin entered, God's resource was in Him that had been " set up from everlasting," and thus was at hand for immediate use; so that He now left the fiery mount, the place of judgment for the higher regions, the place of grace and of His Anointed One, not to say with all convenient, but with all immediate speed.

And " delight" again waits on this, action, as it had done in earlier days, as we have already seen. For when the congregation, in the obedience of faith, prepare the Tabernacle, and all is finished, the glory enters and takes its place there, and takes it with most evident and full joy. It will have the whole of it to itself, so that even Moses could not follow (Ex. 40) - all this again bespeaking the delight of the Lord God in seating Himself where Christ was seen. It was not after this manner He had taken His place on Mount Sinai. He had gone there with evident reserve. See this in chap.. xix. But now, it is not with reserve He fills the sanctuary, but with readiness and fervency, and manifest enjoyment, occupying the whole of it, courts and holy places and all. As we sing betimes-

" His wakened wrath doth slowly move,

His willing mercy flies apace."

And all this was but the expression of that "delight" which our Scripture (Prov. 8) tells us was known in counsel before the world was. For this delight is a "daily" delight - as fresh after ages as at the beginning -in action repeated again and again, as it was, in counsel, ere the world was.

There might be other witnesses to prove, that Christ, the Anointed One, is God's resource in the day of the need of " the sons of men," and is still called forth for them. But I would pass on only to

one other illustration of this.

The nation of Israel are set in the land, and there they are proved again, as they had been under the law in the wilderness. But they violate the very first article of their commission, as they had broken already the very first, commandment of their law. They strike confederacy with the peoples of the land, the nations of Canaan, whose destruction had been enjoined upon them, and the angel of the covenant weeps at Bochim over the insulted covenant (Judg. 1).

All, therefore, is wreck and ruin again. Adam in the Garden, man under law, Israel with their covenant in the land, alike witness this wreck and ruin. And as it thus began, so it goes on, with the nation set in their inheritance. This unfaithfulness, beginning in Judg. 1 with the tribes, is found again in their own King Saul, the son of Cis, in 1 Samuel. Like people, like prince, as Judg. 1 and 1 Sam. 15 tell us. But God is the same in grace, if man be the same in unfaithfulness and apostasy. For upon all this we quickly read, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul?" (says the Lord to Samuel, who was weeping over the fall of the king, as the angel had wept over the fall of the nation at Bochim) "how long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel; fill thine horn with oil and go, I will send thee to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king among his sons." (1 Sam. 16). This son of Jesse was unknown to men, but in secret God had provided him for Himself. David, the beloved, was known to God in counsel now, and David, the beloved, was the witness or the type of the Anointed One. Bethlehem carried the witness now, as it did, in due time, the Christ Himself. In the ear of faith, "good tidings of great joy" were now, in their measure, heard from the fields of that town of Judah. "Out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel," began to be said to her now. David was an arrow in the Lord's quiver, and he was the arrow of the Lord for deliverance to Israel, in this terrible day of Israel's calamity. He was the Bethlehemite, the anointed, the beloved, the pledge of Him who has since appeared for redemption and salvation the type of Him who in purpose was the Anointed One ere worlds began.

Thus, in these various but consistent forms, was this mystery again and again told out, that Christ was provided for "the sons of men" in their time of need. On the entrance of sin - in the day of the doom of the world, before the flood - in the call of Abraham forth from the overspreading of abominations - in the hour of the judgment of Egypt - in the ruin of Israel under the law - and again, in the day of their ruin under their own national covenant, Christ is at hand, "set up" and "brought forth" for sinners - the One whom God has "by Him" for immediate use, and that, too, at all times, and with "delight" for "the sons of men."

I might, of course, have gone further down, even to the end of the volume, with this story of God's grace in His Anointed One - nay, with a more vivid witness of it, as we got to the New Testament. But I stop here. The promise, the first promise, that of the seed of the woman, began to tell this story; and, after many other witnesses to it, as we have now seen, David, the shepherd-boy of Bethlehem, of the stem of Jesse, repeats it in our hearing, after so long a time-

"Jesus Christ I the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

Ere God had built the mountains,

Or raised the fruitful hills;

Before He fill'd the fountains,
That feed the running rills;
In Thee, from everlasting,
The wonderful I AM
Found pleasures never wasting,
And Wisdom is Thy name.
When, like a tent to dwell in,
He spread the skies abroad,
And swathed about the swelling
Of ocean's mighty flood:
He wrought by weight and measure;
And Thou west with Him then:
Thyself the Father's pleasure,
And Thine, the sons of men.
Thus Wisdom's words discover
Thy glory and Thy grace,
Thou everlasting Lover
Of our unworthy race!
Thy gracious eye survey'd us
Ere stars were seen above;
In wisdom Thou halt made us,
And died for us in love.
And could'st Thou be delighted
With creatures such as we,
Who, when we saw Thee, slighted
And nail'd Thee to a tree!
Unfathomable wonder!
And mystery divine
The voice that speaks in thunder

Says, "Sinner, I am thine!"

When Was the Blessing Given to Jacob

I would call attention to a fact, little noticed in general, in Jacob's history. Isaac blessed him twice, and not only once. When Jacob sought, by deceit, to get the blessing, Gen. 27, Isaac did give him a blessing, then and there, but it was not the blessing. The blessing came out, afterward, just when he was reaping the sorrowful fruits of his deceit, as above; viz., in chap.

This will be clear if we compare Isaac's first blessing of Jacob and of Esau, in Gen. 27, and Isaac's second, and God's first, blessings of Jacob, in chap. xxviii. Thus

Isaac blessed Jacob. 1.

" See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed: therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee" (Gen. 27:27-29).

Isaac blessed Esau.

"Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck" (Gen. 27:39, 40).

Isaac blessed Jacob. 2.

" And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham " (Gen. 28:3,4).

God blessed Jacob.

"I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen. 28:13-15).

The Church of God

"The Church of God," amazing, precious thought!
That sinners, vile and outcast, should be brought,
Renew'd in heart and cleansed by Jesus' blood,
To form the body of the "Church of God."
Angels around the throne that never fell, -
Seraphic spirits that in glory dwell, -
The holy patriarchs before the flood, -
Nor Israel since, - compose the "Church of God."
Distinct in glory from the Church they shine,
Though each unfolds a wonderful design;
The Holy Spirit makes His blest abode,
In those, alone, who form the " Church of God."
Renew'd and quicken'd by the Holy Ghost,
The Church began on earth at Pentecost,
When like a fire He came on each, and stood,
That little band commenced the " Church of God."
The Church is one, it has one glorious Head,
And by one Spirit through this waste is led;
And nourishment from Christ, on high, bestow'd,
Together binds in one, the " Church of God."
United to her risen Head above,
E'en now she knows the sweetness of His love;
His power is hers to help her on the road -
Bride of the Lamb, - Church of the living God!
Soon will he come and take His Church away -
And O sweet thought! fast hastens on the day,

When He will stand with all His saints avow'd
Head of the Church,-the purchased "Church of God."
A.M.

Colossians

In the Epistle to the Colossians, we have a proof of that which other Epistles demonstrate, namely, the blessed way in which our God in His grace turns everything to the good of those that love Him.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Holy Ghost had developed the counsels of God with regard to the Church - its privileges. The Christians of Ephesus had nothing to be reproached with, therefore the Holy Ghost could use the occasion furnished by that faithful flock, to unfold all the privileges which God had ordained for the Church at large, by virtue of its union with Jesus Christ its Head; as well as the individual privileges of the children of God. It was not so with the Colossians. They had in some measure slipped away from this blessed position, and lost the sense of their union with the Head of the body. This union itself, thank God! cannot be lost; but, as a matter of faith, the consciousness of it may. We know this but too well, in the Church of the day we live in. This grievous fault in the Colossians gives occasion, however, to the Spirit of God to develop all the riches and all the perfection which are found in the Head, and in His work; in order to recover the members of the body from their spiritual feebleness, and set them again in the full practical enjoyment of their union with Christ, and in the power of the position gained for them by that union. For us this is abiding instruction with regard to the riches that are in the Head. If the Epistle to the Ephesians delineates the privileges of the body, that to the Colossians reveals the fullness that is in the Head. Thus in that to the Ephesians, the Church is the fullness of Him who filleth all in all, in that to the Colossians, all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily. This difference well noted, we may say that the two Epistles have a great resemblance in their general character.

They commence in nearly the same way. Both are written from Rome, while the apostle was a prisoner in that city, and sent by the same messenger, and on the same occasion, as well, probably, as that to Philemon; as the names and salutations give us reason to believe. The address to the Ephesians places them, perhaps, more immediately in connection with God Himself, instead of presenting them as in brotherly communion on earth. They are not called brethren (Eph. 1.1), only saints and faithful in Christ Jesus. Also, in this Epistle, the apostle's heart expands at once in the sense of the blessing enjoyed by the Ephesians. They were blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. For the Colossians there was a hope laid up in heaven.

But let us consider more closely that which is said to the latter. The stream of glorious privileges, of which the apostle speaks (Eph. 1:3-15), is absent here, and the third verse of Col. 1, answers to the sixteenth verse of Eph. 1; only one feels that there is more fullness in the joy of Eph. 1:16. Faith in Christ and love to all saints, are found in each exordium, as the occasion of the writer's joy. The subject of his prayer is quite different. In the Ephesians, where he would develop the counsels of God with regard to the Church, he prays that the saints may understand them, as well as the power by means of which they participated in them. Here he prays that their walk may be guided by divine intelligence. But this belongs to another cause, to the point of view from which, in his discourse, he looks at the saints. We have seen that in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he views

them as sitting in the heavenlies.

Their inheritance, consequently, is that of all things which are to be gathered together under Christ as Head. Here the inheritance is laid up in heaven; his prayer, therefore, refers to their walk, that it may be in harmony with the object which they had set before them. Not having adhered to the Head, the believers in Colosse were in danger of departing from that object. He prayed, therefore, in view of that heavenly hope. They had heard of this perfect and glorious hope. The Gospel had proclaimed it everywhere. It was this hope of heaven which had produced fruit among men, fruit that was characterized by its heavenly source. Their religion, that which governed their heart in these relationships with God, was heavenly. They were in danger of falling back into the current of ordinances, and of the religious customs of man living in the world, whose religion was in connection with the world in which he dwelt, and not enlightened, not filled with heavenly light. There is nothing but union with Christ which can keep us securely there.

Nevertheless, how precious it is even if we are not at the full height of our calling - to have an object set before our hearts which delivers us from this world, and from the influences which hide God from us. Such is the apostle's object in this Scripture. He directs the eyes of the Colossians to heaven, in order that they may see Christ there, and regain that sense of their union with the Head which they had, in some measure, lost. The ground-work was, however, there; faith in Christ and love to all saints. They only needed union with the Head; which, moreover, could alone maintain them in the heavenly element, above ordinances, above human and earthly religion.

The apostle, in order to raise them up, sets out, as usual, from the point where he found good in the saints to whom he wrote. This heavenly hope had reached them, and had produced fruit. It is this which distinguishes Christianity from all other religions, and in particular from the Jewish system, which - although individuals by grace sighed for heaven - hid God behind the veil, and enveloped the conscience in a series of ordinances at a distance from Him.

Now, based upon this hope, which placed the inner life of the Christians in connection with heaven, the apostle prays that the Colossians may be filled with the knowledge of the will of God, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. This was very different from commandments and ordinances. It is the fruit of intimate communion with God, of knowledge of his character and of His nature, by virtue of this communion; and although it refers to practical life, it leaves (as belonging to the inner life), ordinances completely behind. The apostle had to begin at this practical end, at Christian life. Perhaps the Colossians did not at first understand the bearing of these instructions, but they contained a principle which, already planted in their heart, and capable of being re-awakened, led them to the point which the apostle aimed at, and was at the same time a very precious privilege, the value of which they were in a position to apprehend. Such is charity. The apostle develops their privileges in this respect with force and clearness, as one to whom such a walk was well known, and, moreover, with the power of the Spirit of God.

The first principle of this practical heavenly life was the knowledge of the will of God - to be filled with it, not to run after it as a thing without us, but to be filled with it, by a principle of intelligence which comes from Him, and which forms the understanding and the wisdom of the Christian himself. The character of God was livingly translated in the appreciation of everything that the Christian did. Thus he walked worthy of the Lord, he knew what became Him, and walked accordingly, that he might please Him in all things; bearing fruit in every good work, and growing

up into the knowledge of God. It was not, then, only the character of life, this life was productive; it bore fruit, and, as life, grew up into increasing knowledge of God. But this connection with God brought in another very precious consideration. Besides the character and the living energy which are in relationship with this knowledge, the strength of God was developed in it also. They drew strength from God. He gave it that they might walk thus. "Strengthened," he says of the Christian, "with all might, according to the power of His glory." Such was the measure of the Christian's strength for a life in harmony with the character of God. Thus the character of this life was revealed in the heavenly glory on high - in Jesus Christ. On earth its manifestation - as it had been in Jesus Christ - was realized in all patience and long-suffering with joy, in the midst of the sorrows and afflictions of the life of God in this world.

And here the apostle connects this life of endurance with that which is its source, its aim, and its present possession by faith. Walking thus, we are full of joy, and we give thanks to the Father who has made us meet to share the portion of the saints in light. Here are the saints established in their proper relationship with God (their Father) in heaven in the light; that which God is, and in which He dwells.

The means employed, and the practical character of the work which set us in the light, are then presented.

The Father has delivered us from the power of darkness, and transported us into the kingdom of the Son of his love. It is not a Jewish rule for a man; it is an operation of the power of God, who treats us as altogether by nature the slaves of Satan and of darkness; and places us, by an act of that power, in an entirely new relationship with Himself. We see, indeed, here, if we examine the principles in their origin, the same thing as in Eph. 1:4,5, and 2:1-6, as to our position before God. But it is evident, that the fullness and definiteness of an acquired position are wanting. "The inheritance of the saints in light," "the kingdom of this Son of His love," remind us of Eph. 1:4;5 but there is not the development of a position with which one is familiar, as standing in it. The power and the love of the Father place us in it, and although the character of God is necessarily there as Light and Love, according to His relationship to His Son, yet what we have here is not our own relationship with God Himself, outside the question of whence he took us, but the work in general which places us there, in contrast with our previous position. He has delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; we have part in the inheritance of the saints in light: but where is the saint "without blame before Him in love"-where our relationship to Him, according to the counsels of Him who saw only the good which He purposed in His own heart - where the "children unto Himself by Jesus Christ," through His eternal predestination? In Ephesians, deliverance is brought in as a consequence of the position in which the heirs, the objects of the eternal counsels of God, are found. Here deliverance is the chief subject. How dangerous and disastrous it is to depart from the Head; and to lose the full consciousness in the light, of our union with Him. How perfect and precious is that grace which adapts itself to our condition in order to bring us back again, and to make us enjoy - according to the power and grace of God - the inestimable position which he has given us in Christ.

The means which the Spirit here employs to accomplish this work of grace, is the development of the glory of the Lord, of the Son of His love.

Here alone, I believe, is the kingdom called the kingdom of the Son; and I think, it is only as introducing His person as the center of everything. It is, indeed, His kingdom; and in order that we may apprehend the character of this kingdom as it is now for us, and our nearness to God as having part in it, it is called the kingdom of the Son of His love. It is this which is the present foundation and characteristic of the relationship with God of those who are truly its members. As the kingdom of the Son of Man, it is His manifestation hereafter in glory and in government. Here it is characterized by the relationship of the Son Himself to the Father, in His person, with the addition of that which gives us a full title to share it: redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

The apostle, having thus introduced the Son in His relationship to the Father, as the central and mighty object which was to attract the heart of the Colossians, and set them free from the yoke of ordinances, sketches now the different parts of the glory of that Person. If, therefore, the Church's own glory is wanting, that of Jesus is so much the rather set in stronger relief before us. Thus God brings good out of evil, and in every way feeds His beloved Church.

The Lord is the image of the invisible God. It is in the Son of His love that we see what God is (compare John 1:18; and also 1 John 1:2). This is the first character of His personal glory, the essential center of all the rest. Now, in consequence of this proper character of His person, He takes, by right, the position of representing God in the creation. Adam was created in some sort the image of God, and placed as center in a creation that was subjected to Him. But, after all, he was only a figure of the Christ, of Him who was to come. The Son, in His very person, in His nature (and for us as in the bosom of the Father) is He who makes God known, because He presents Him in His own person, and in a full revelation of His being and of His character, before men, and in the whole universe; for all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Him. Nevertheless, He is a man. He is thus seen of angels. We have seen Him with our eyes or by faith. Thus He is the image of the invisible God. The perfect character and living presentation of the invisible God have been seen in Him. Wondrous truth for us with regard to the person of our Savior! But then what place can He have in creation when He has come into it according to the eternal counsels of God? He could have but one, namely, that of supremacy, without contestation and without controversy.

He is the first-born of all creation: this is a relative name, not one of date with regard to time. It is said of Solomon, " I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." Thus the Creator, when He takes a place in creation, is necessarily its Head. He has not yet made good His rights, because, in grace, He would accomplish redemption. We are speaking of His rights-rights which faith recognizes. He is then the image of the invisible God, and the first-born of all creation when He takes His place in it. The reason of this is worthy of our attention-simple, yet marvelous: He created it. It was in the person of the Son that God acted, when by His power He created all things, whether in heaven or in the earth, visible and invisible. All that is great and exalted is but the work of His hand; all has been created by Him (the Son) and for Him. Thus, when He takes possession of it, He takes it as His inheritance by right. Wonderful truth, that He who has redeemed us, who made Himself man, one of us, in order to do so, is the Creator! But such is the truth. In connection with this admirable truth, it was a part of God's counsels that man should have dominion over all the works of His hands. Thus Christ, as man, has it by right, and will take possession of it in fact. This part of the truth of which we are speaking, is treated in Heb. 2 we shall consider it in its place. I introduce it here merely that we may understand the circumstances under

which the Son takes possession. The Spirit speaks of the One who is man, but the One who is at the same time Creator of all things, the Son of God. They were created by Him, they were necessarily then created also for Him. Thus we have, hitherto, the glory of the person of Christ, and His glory in creation connected with His person. In Him is seen the image of the invisible God. He has created all things, all is for Him, and He is the first-born of all that is created.

Another category of glory, another supremacy is now presented. He takes a special place in relation to the Church in the power of resurrection. It is the introduction of divine power, not in creation but in the empire of death; in order that others may participate in His glory, by redemption, and by the power of life in Him. The first glory was, so to speak, natural-the latter special and acquired (although in virtue of the glory of His person) by undergoing death, and all the power of the enemy. Accordingly it is connected, as we have just said, with redemption, and with the introduction of others into the participation of the same privileges. He is the Head of the body which is the Church, the Beginning, the First-born from among the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. He is the First-born of creation, He is the Firstborn, according to the power of resurrection, in this new order of things after which man is predestined to an entirely new position, gained by redemption; and in which he participates in the glory of God (as far as that which is created can do so), and that by participating in divine life in Jesus Christ the Son of God, and everlasting life; and, as regards the Church, as members of His body. He is the First-born of creation, the First-born from among the dead; the Creator, and the conqueror of death and the enemy's power. These are the two spheres of the display of the glory of God. The special position of the Church, the body of Christ, forms a part of the latter. He must have this resurrection-glory, this universal pre-eminence and superiority also, as being man, for all fullness (namely, of the Godhead, see 2:9) was pleased to dwell in Him. What place could He have except that of first in all things. But, before speaking of that which follows, some important remarks are yet to be made on that which we have been considering.

The Son is here presented to us as Creator: not to the exclusion of the Father's power, nor of the operation of the Spirit. They are one; but it is the Son who is here set before us. In John 1 it is the Word who creates all things. Here, and in Heb. 1, it is under the name of Son that He, who is also the Word, is revealed to us. He is the Word of God, the expression of His thought and of His power. It is by Him that God works and reveals Himself. He is also the Son of God; and, in particular, the Son of the Father. He reveals God, and he who has seen Him has seen the Father. Inasmuch as, born in this world by the operation of God through the Holy Ghost, He is the Son of God (Luke 1:35; Psa. 2:7). But that is in time, when creation is already the scene of the manifestation of the ways and counsels of God. But the Son is also the name of the proper relationship of His glorious person to the Father, before the world was. It is in this character that He created all things. The Son is to be glorified even as the Father. If He humble Himself, as He did, for us, all things are put into His hands, in order that His glory shall be manifested in the same nature in the assumption of which He humbled Himself. And already the power of life and of God in Him is manifested by the resurrection, so that He is declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection. That is the proof of it.

In the Epistle to the Colossians that which is set before us is the proper glory of His person as the Son, before the world was. He is the Creator as Son. It is important to observe this. But the persons are not separated in their manifestation. If the Son wrought miracles on earth, He cast out

devils by the Spirit; and the Father who dwelt in Him (Christ) did the works. Also it must be remembered that that which is said, is said when He was manifested in the flesh, of His complete person, man upon earth. Not that we do not in our minds separate between the divinity and the humanity; but even in separating them we think of the one person with regard to whom we do so. We say, Christ is God, Christ is man, but it is Christ who is the two. I do not say this theologically, but to draw the reader's attention to the remarkable expression, " All the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him." All the fullness of the Godhead was found in Christ. The Gnostics, who in later years so much harassed the Church, used this word " fullness " in a mystical and peculiar sense, for the sum and source; and yet, after all, in the sense of a locality (for it had an epos, limits which separated it from everything else) of divinity which developed itself in four pairs of beings-syzygies-of which Christ was only one of a pair. It is not necessary to go farther into their reveries, except to observe that, with different shades of thought, they attributed creation to a god, either inferior or evil, who also was the author of the Old Testament. Matter, they said, did not proceed from the supreme God. They did not eat meat; they did not marry: at the same time they gave themselves up to all sorts of horrors and dissoluteness; and, strange to say, associated themselves with Judaism, worshipped angels, etc.

The apostle was often in conflict with these tools of Satan. Peter also mentions them. Here Paul sets forth, by the Word of God, the whole fullness of the divinity of Jesus Christ. Far from being something inferior, an emanation, or having a place, however exalted, in those endless genealogies, all the fullness itself dwelt in Him. Glorious truth, with regard to the person of the Lord our Savior! We may leave all the foolish imaginations of man in the shade, in order to enjoy the perfect light of this glorious fullness of God in our Head and Lord. All the fullness was in Him. We know, indeed, the Father-but revealed by Him. We possess indeed, the Spirit-but the fullness of the Spirit was in Him; and because, having accomplished our redemption and our purification, He then received that Spirit for us. And God Himself, in all his fullness, was revealed, without any reservation, in the person of Christ: and this Christ is ours, our Savior, our Lord. He has been manifested to us and for us. What a glorious truth for us!

It is for His own glory, no doubt, that He should be known as He is, as love; but it is not the less true that this revelation was in connection with us. It is not only the Son revealing the Father, sweet and precious as that fact is. It is the fullness of the Godhead, as such, that is revealed and shown forth in Christ. It was the good pleasure of the fullness to dwell there.

But Christ was not only the Head of creation in virtue of the divine glory of His person, and the Head of the Church as risen from among the dead and victorious over the power of the enemy. Creation, and all those who were to form the Church, were alike far from God; and the latter were so even in their will. To be in relationship with God they must be reconciled to Him. This is the second part of the glory of Christ. Not only was it the good pleasure of the fullness of the Godhead to dwell in Him, but by Him to reconcile all things to itself, having made peace by the blood of the Cross. This reconciliation of things in Heaven as well as on the earth, is not yet accomplished. Peace is indeed made by the blood, but the power has not yet conic in, to bring back the whole into actual relationship with God, according to the value of that blood.

Thus, in Israel, the blood was put upon the mercy-seat, and expiation, peace, was made; but besides this, everything was sprinkled, and the sins of the people were confessed. This, with

regard to Israel and to creation, has not yet been done. As to that which is outward, it remains still at a distance from God, although peace is made. We know that it is the good pleasure of God to reconcile all things in heaven, and on the earth, by virtue of this blood. All things shall be restored to order under a new rule. The guilty, remaining in their sins, will be outside this scene of blessing; but heaven and earth will be completely freed from the power of evil, and even from its presence, as regards its manifestation - still later, absolutely from its presence itself, according to the virtue of that blood which has separated between good and evil, after the character of God Himself, and so glorified God that peace is made. God can act freely for blessing; but here the work is two-fold, like the glory of the person of Christ, and refers to the same objects as His glory. It is in the counsels of God to reconcile unto Himself all things in heaven and on the earth, through Christ. But Christians He has already reconciled. Once, not only defiled, like the creature, but enemies in their minds, - He has already reconciled them by the body of His flesh, by means of death. The perfect work which Christ accomplished in His body, blotting out sin for us, and perfectly glorifying God His Father, has brought us into relationship with God in His holiness, according to the efficacy of that work; that is to say, it is efficacious to present us, perfectly reconciled, holy, without blemish, and without blame, before His face: always supposing that we continue steadfast in the faith unto the end.

The position of the Colossians gave room for this warning. We have seen that they had a little departed from the realization of their union with Christ.

It will be noticed, also, that the apostle speaks of his Gospel as spread abroad in all the world. Grace had overstepped the narrow limits of Judaism and the expectation of the Messiah, in order to make known the testimony of the perfect love of God in the whole creation under heaven, of which Paul was the instrument, as the apostle of the Gentiles.

Hitherto, then, the Spirit of God has set before us the two pre-eminences of Christ, that over creation and that over the Church, and the two reconciliations which answer to them, namely, 1st, that of the things over which Christ is set, as Head, namely, of all things in heaven and earth; and 2nd, that of Christians themselves. The latter already accomplished, the former yet to come. The ministry of the apostle has now the same double character. He has not, undoubtedly, to preach in heaven; but his ministry is exercised in every place under heaven where there is a soul to hearken. He is a minister of that Gospel, and then he is a minister to the Church, and preaches its true position and its privileges (ver. 23, 25). By this last instruction he completed the Word of God: an important principle with regard to the exclusive authority of the written Word, which shows the spiritual man that its totality already exists, demonstrated by the subjects which it comprises - subjects which are entirely completed, to the exclusion of others which people may seek to introduce. The circle of truths which God had to treat, in order to reveal to us the glory of Christ, and to give us complete instruction according to His wisdom, is entire when the doctrine of the Church is revealed. There were no others to be added.

But this doctrine in particular exposed the apostle to persecutions and sufferings, which the Jews especially and the enemy sought in every way to inflict upon him. But he rejoiced in it as a privilege, because Christ had suffered on account of His love for the Church - for His own. The apostle speaks here not of the efficacy of His death, but of the love which led Him to suffer. Looked at in this point of view, the apostle could participate in His sufferings, and we also in our

little measure; but the apostle in a peculiar manner, as the special witness-bearer to this truth. If Christ had been content to accept the position of Messiah according to man, He would have been well received. If Paul had preached circumcision, the offense of the Cross would have ceased; man could have taken part in the religion of God. But if God is revealed-if His grace extends to the Gentiles - if, by this grace, and without having respect to the Jew more than to the Gentile, He forms a Church, which is the body of Christ, sharing the heavenly glory of His Son - this is what the flesh cannot endure. To be thus shut out, as nothing worth before God, even in its religion, take what pains it might, - this is unbearable. This is the source of the enmity of the Judaizing spirit, which is founded on the flesh, on man, and which is constantly reappearing in the apostle's history, whether as exciting the hatred of the heathen, or as corrupting the doctrine of Christ and the simplicity of the Gospel.

Thus we have a double ministry, as well as a double pre-eminence of Christ and a double reconciliation; and each having a similar relationship the one to the other. Christ, the Head of all things in heaven and earth-the Head of the Church: all things in heaven and earth are to be reconciled; Christians are reconciled. Paul exercises his ministry in the whole creation under heaven; he is the minister of the Church. Naturally, his ministry was limited to the earth. In every respect, the extent and bearing of the glory of Christ, and of the ministry, went beyond the limits of Judaism, and were in contrast with the whole system.

The apostle then insists on the second part of his ministry, of which he had been just speaking; dwelling, however, particularly on that which met the need of the Colossians, and developing it in order to bring back their hearts to the enjoyment of the whole circle of these precious truths. He completed the Word of God by announcing this mystery, which had been hidden from all ages and generations, but was now manifested to the saints. No display of the ways of God since the Creation had (in the truths on which it was founded, in the revelation of God - of His power, or of His thoughts, which formed its basis and gave it its character) contained this mystery of the Church. It had not been communicated to any of those who formed part of the system which preceded it, or who were the medium of light to others, as instruments of the revelation of the light of God. Angels, men, Israel, the prophets - all were alike in ignorance of it. The Church (this body united to the Son of God become man and glorified) was hidden from them all.

Now that Christ the Head of the Church, the Head of the body, was glorified, the mystery of this body was made known. The apostle here dwells on one particular side of this subject, which, after the person of Christ, forms the center of all God's ways. This side is, Christ in us, the hope of glory. In fact, it was in every way a new thought, a new truth. That which was known was a Messiah who should be manifested among the Jews, the accomplishment of glory in their midst; the Gentiles, at most, having part in it, as subordinate to the people of God. But according to the doctrine of the Church, Christ invisibly dwelt in the midst of the Gentiles, and even in them; and as to the glory, He was only the hope of it. A Christ dwelling in the heart of men, and of men formerly rejected and outside the promises, and filling their heart with joy and glory in the consciousness of union with Himself; this was the wondrous mystery prepared of God for the blessing of the Gentiles. It was this Christ, a Christ such as this, whom Paul preached, warning every man, and teaching every one according to the full development of the wisdom of God, which wrought mightily in the apostle by the Spirit, in order that he might present every man in a spiritual state answering to this revelation of Christ, as being also its fruit. Not that every man would receive it;

but there was no longer any limit. All distinction between them was blotted out alike by sin and by grace, and there was but one thing to do, i.e., to seek that every man, by the power of the "Word and the Spirit, should reflect Christ and grow up unto the stature of His fullness, as revealed in the doctrine committed to the apostle. He labored for this according to the working of Christ in him; for Christ was not only the object, but the power that wrought, to form souls after His own image.

Now this power wrought in the apostle's weakness; in a human heart, that felt the necessities of men and the difficulties that occurred by the way -that felt them as a man, although according to God. He desired that the Colossians should understand the conflict he had for them, and for all those who had never seen him, in order that they might be encouraged, and be thoroughly united in love; so that they might understand, in all the riches of a full assurance, the mystery of God.

The apostle felt that it was this which they needed, and which would be a blessing to them. He knew that union with Christ, realized in the heart, was a safeguard from the wiles of the enemy, to which the Colossians were exposed. He knew the unutterable value of this union, and even of its realization by faith. He labored, he wrestled in prayer,- for it is, indeed, a conflict,- in order that the full sense of this union with the glorious Head might be wrought in their hearts, so that the Christ on high should be in them by faith. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were in the Head. They had not to seek elsewhere. Science, falsely so called, might pretend to furnish them with heights, to which the simplicity of the doctrines of Christ did not reach; but, in fact, the wisdom of God and the depth of His counsels left these cloudy efforts of the human mind at an infinite distance. Moreover, they were truth -reality-instead of being but the creatures of imagination, inspired by the enemy.

For this reason, the apostle had brought forward these marvelous revelations of God respecting the double glory of Christ; and, with regard to His person, he declared them, in order that no one should beguile the Colossians with enticing words. He avails himself of the order that existed among them, and of their faith, to guard them against the danger they were in from these thoughts, which might glide unperceived into their minds, while all was yet going on well, and the consciousness of their faith was not touched. This often happens: people have faith in Christ, they walk well, they do not perceive that certain ideas overthrow that faith; they admit them, while still maintaining the profession of faith together with these ideas; but the force of the truth and the sense of union with Christ are lost. The enemy has so far attained his end, That which is received is not the development of Christ, but something outside Him. Therefore the apostle says, " As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and confirmed in the faith, even as you have been taught." When we have received Christ, all the rest is but a development of that which He is, and of the glory which the counsels of God have connected with His person. Knowledge, or pretended knowledge outside this, does but turn us away from Him, withdraw Our hearts from the influence of His glory, throw us into that which is false, and lead our souls into connection with the creation apart from God, and without possessing the key to his purposes. Thus, since man is incapable of fathoming that which exists, and of explaining it to himself, his efforts to do so cause him to invent a mass of ideas that have no foundation, and to endeavor to fill up the void that is found in his knowledge, through his ignorance of God, by speculations, in which (because he is at a distance from God) Satan plays the chief part without man's suspecting it.

Man is not at the center of the immense system of God's ways. Out of Christ and without Christ, he does not know the center; he speculates without foundation and without end, only to lose himself more and more. His knowledge of good and evil, and the energy of his moral faculties, do but lead him astray the more, because he employs them on higher questions than those which simply relate to physical things; and they produce in him the need of reconciling apparently inconsistent principles, which cannot be reconciled without Christ. Moreover, the tendency of man is always to make himself the center of everything. And this renders everything false.

Christians, then, ought to walk with simplicity in the ways of the Lord, even as they have received Him; and their progress ought to be in the knowledge of Christ, the true center and fullness of all things.

When man occupies himself philosophically with all things, the insufficiency of his own resources always throws him into the hands of an intellectual leader, and into tradition, and, when religion is the subject, into traditions which develop the religion of the flesh, and are united to its powers and its tendencies.

In those days, Judaism had the highest pretensions to this kind of religion, allied itself with human speculations and adopted them, and even pursued them assiduously; offering at the same time proofs of divine origin, which the absence of the coarseness of Pagan mythology rendered credible. This relative purity tended to remove - for enlightened minds that which was disgusting in the Pagan system. The Jewish system had, by the death of Jesus, lost all pretension to be the true worship of God; and was, therefore, suited, by the advantages it offered in the comparative purity of its dogmas, to be an instrument of Satan's in opposing the truth. At all times it was adapted to the flesh, was founded on the elements of this world, because by its means God was proving man in the position man stood in. But now, God was no longer in it; and the Jews, moved by envy, urged the Gentiles to persecution; and Judaism allied itself to Pagan speculations, in order to corrupt and sap the foundations of Christianity, and destroy its testimony. In principle it is always thus. The flesh may appear for a time to despise tradition, but that which is purely intellectual cannot stand in the midst of humanity without something religious. It has not the truth nor the world which belongs to faith, and for an immense majority superstition and tradition are needed; that is to say, a religion which the flesh can lay hold of, and which suits the flesh. God, by His power, may preserve a portion of the truth, or allow the whole to be corrupted, but in either case true Christian position and the doctrine of the Church are lost.

We may, indeed, find philosophy apart from the religion of the flesh, and the latter apart from the former; but in this case, philosophy is impotent and atheistic, the religion of the flesh narrow, legal, superstitious, and, if it can, persecuting.

In our chapter we find philosophy and the emptiness of human wisdom united with the traditions of men, characterized as "the elements of this world," in opposition to Christ; for we have a heavenly Christ who is a perfect contrast to the flesh in man living on earth, a Christ in whom is all wisdom and fullness, and the reality of all that which the law pretended to give, or which it presented in figure; and who is, at the same time, an answer to all our wants. This the apostle develops here; showing death and resurrection with Him as the means of participating in it.

And first, all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily. Instead of the misty speculations of men, we have the fullness of God, bodily and efficaciously, in the person of Jesus Christ. In the second place, we are complete in Him: we need nothing out of Christ. On the one side, we have, in Him, God perfectly presented in all His fullness; on the other side, we possess in Him perfection before God - we are wanting in nothing as to our position before God. What a truth! What a position! God, in His perfect fullness, in Him as man, we in Him before God, in the perfection of what he is; in Him who is head of all principality and power, before which man, in his ignorance, would incline to bend the knee. We are in Him, in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells, as to His person; in Him, who is above all power and principality as to His position and His rights, as Christ-man exalted on high.

The apostle then enters into some details of application, to demonstrate that the faithful have all in Christ, viewed according to the position which He has taken, without having anything to seek elsewhere here below.

Circumcision, the divine token of the covenant with the Jews, and of the putting off of the flesh which was required in order to form a part of God's people, - had its reality in Him. By the power of the life which is in Him, and which is theirs- being made partakers of the efficacy of His death - Christians account themselves to be dead, and have put off this body of sin, by faith. This is the true circumcision of Christ, made without hands. Circumcision made by hands was but the sign of this putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, which is effected in death to sin and to the flesh - the privilege of the Christian in Christ. Having a new life in Christ, he has efficaciously put off the old man.

We are buried with Christ by baptism (for this is its meaning), in which also we are risen with Him by faith in this operation of the power of God, whereby He was raised from among the dead. Baptism was the sign and expression of this; faith, the means by which is effected in us this marvelous new birth, this happy death, or rather this precious participation in the death of Him who has accomplished all for us. But it is the power of God Himself, as it wrought in Christ, which works in us to give us this new life, which implies -by the very fact of our receiving it - that we are forgiven perfectly and forever. We were under the burden, of our sins, and dead in them. This burden Christ took upon Himself, and died for us. Raised up with Him, inasmuch as partaking of that life which he possesses as risen from the dead, we have - like Him and with Him - left all that burden of sin and condemnation behind us, with the death from which we have been delivered. Therefore He says, " having forgiven you all trespasses."

Christ, when He arose, left death and the weight of condemnation behind Him -we also, being raised up with Him. Naturally, God, in thus raising us up from the state in which we were, has not raised us up to condemn us, or with condemnation attached to this new life, which is Christ Himself. For He had already borne the condemnation, and satisfied the justice of God, and abolished sin by His death, before He communicated this life to us. God brought us out of death and condemnation with Christ.

All the ordinances, likewise, which weighed as an insupportable yoke upon the Jews (and to which they endeavored to bring others into subjection) which put the conscience always under the burden of a service unaccomplished by man, and a righteousness unsatisfied in God - these ordinances were blotted out. In them, the Jew had put his signature, so to speak, to his guiltiness;

but the obligation was destroyed, and nailed to the cross of Christ. We receive liberty, as well as life and pardon.

This is not all. There was the strength of principalities and powers against us, the might of spiritual wickedness. Christ has vanquished and despoiled them on the cross, having triumphed over them in it. All that was against us, He has put aside in order to introduce us, entirely delivered from it all, into our new position. It will be seen here, that what the apostle says of the work of Christ, does not go beyond that which He did for our deliverance, in order to set us in the heavenly places. He speaks (ver. 10) of the rights of Christ, but not as sitting in the heavenly places, nor as leading the enemy captive; neither does he speak of us as sitting in Him in the heavenlies. He has done all that is necessary to bring us into them; - but the Colossians had a little lost the sense of the position which was theirs in virtue of their union with Christ, and were in danger of slipping back into the elements of the world and of flesh, of the man dead, not risen with Christ; and the apostle seeks to bring them back to it, by showing them how Christ had accomplished all that was requisite, had taken out of the way all that prevented their attaining it. But he cannot speak of the position itself - they were not consciously in it. In the things of God we cannot comprehend a position without being in it. God may reveal it. God may show us the way to it. The apostle does so here, with regard to the person of Christ, which alone could bring them back to it; and at the same time he develops the efficacy of His work in this respect, in order to set them free from the shackles which kept them back, and to show them that all obstacles had been removed. But, in detail, he has to apply it to the dangers that beset them, rather than to display its glorious results in heaven.

Jewish ordinances were but shadows, Christ is the body. By bringing in angels as objects of homage, and thus putting them between themselves and Christ, they separated themselves from the Head of the body, who was above all principalities. The simplicity of Christian faith held fast the Head, from which the whole body directly drew its nourishment, and thus increased with the increase of God. It looked like humility, thus to bring themselves into relation with angels, as superior and exalted beings who might serve as mediators. But there were two faults of immense importance in this apparent humility. First, it really was thorough pride, this pretension to penetrate into the secrets of heaven, of which they were ignorant. What did they know of any position held by angels, which would make them the objects of such homage? It was pretending to mount up into heaven for and by themselves, and to measure their relations with God's creatures without Christ, and at their own will to connect themselves with them.

Secondly, it was to deny their union with Christ. One with Him, there could be nothing between Him and them; if there were anything, then they were dead, and twice dead. Besides, by this union, they were one with Him who was above the angles. United to Him, they received, as we have seen, a communication through all the members of the body, of the treasures of grace and life which were in the Head. The mutual links between the members of the body itself, were thereby strengthened, and thus the body had its increase.

Two applications of his doctrine follow (2:20), he applies the principle of death to all the ordinances, and to the asceticism which treated the body as a thing vile in itself which ought to be rejected. And (3:3), he uses the resurrection to raise their hearts into a higher sphere, and to bring them back to Christ by looking up.

To make these instructions more plain by showing their connection, we may remark that the apostle points out the double danger, namely, philosophy and human tradition in contrast with Christ (2:3; see vers. 9-15). While identifying us with Christ, he speaks of the bearing of the work of Christ Himself, rather than of this identification. In vers. 16-19, he applies it, first (ver. 16) to subjection to ordinances, i.e., to the Jewish side of their danger; and then (ver. 18) to the Gnostic philosophy, science falsely so called, which linked itself with Judaism (or to which Judaism linked itself), reproducing itself under a new form. From ver. 20, the apostle applies our death and resurrection with Christ to the same points, or to the deliverance of the Colossians by raising their thoughts on high.

But the Colossians are not the only ones who may have been in this danger. In the main, these principles have been the ruin of the Church at all times. They are those of the mystery of iniquity, which has so much ripened since then, and produced effects so various, and under such different modifications on account of other principles which have also acted, and under the sovereign providence of God. We shall see the deep, simple and decisive principle which is involved in it in the verses that follow.

The verses already quoted, as far as the 20th, had judged this whole Judeo-philosophic system, from the point of view of Christ's work, of His resurrection, and of union with Him in His heavenly position.

That which follows, judges it after our position. The preceding verses had demonstrated that the system was false; because Christ and His work were such as is declared in them. The passage we are going to consider, shows that this system is absurd, cannot be applied to us, has no possible application, because of our position. On the one hand, it is a false system, null and void in all its parts, if Christ is true, and is in Heaven; and on the other hand, it is an absurd system in its application to us, if we are Christians. And for this reason: it is a system which supposes life in this world, and relationships to be acquired with God, having their foundation in that life, while it pretends to mortify flesh; and yet it addresses itself to persons who are dead. The apostle says, that we are dead to the rudiments of this world, to all the principles on which its life acts; why then, as though we were still living (qy. alive) in it, as though we were still alive in this world, do we subject ourselves to ordinances which have to do with this life, and which suppose its existence: ordinances which apply to things which perish in the use of them, and which have no connection with that which is heavenly and eternal. They have, indeed, a semblance of humility and self-denial as regards the body, but they have no link with Heaven, which is the sphere of the new life- of all its motives, and all its development - and they do not recognize the honor of the creature, as a creature come out of the hand of God, which, as such, has always its place and its honor.

These ordinances had to do with merely corruptible things; were not connected with the new life, but with man living in his life of flesh on the earth, to which life the Christian is morally dead: and as far as regarded this life, they did not recognize the body as a creature of God, as it ought to be recognized.

Thus this system of ordinances had lost Christ, who was their substance; it was connected with the pride that pretended to penetrate Heaven, in order to put itself in relation with beings whom we do not know in such a manner as to have any relations with them - pride which in so doing separated from the Head of the body, Christ; and thus disowned all connection with the source of

life, and with the only true position of the soul before God. This system falsified equally our position on earth, by treating us as though living after the old man, while we are dead; and dishonored the creature, as such, instead of recognizing it as coming from the hand of God.

That which was a danger to Christians in the apostle's days, characterizes Christianity at the present time.

The Christian's position was thus set forth; but, in its application, rather to the dangers of Christians than to their heavenly privileges. Thus Grace has provided us with all we need; using every privilege, using the faith of some, giving warnings and instructions above all price, and turning the faults of others to account.

3. Now begin the exhortations, founded on the truth that has been developed, and adapted to the state in which the Colossians were.

Risen with Christ, they were to set their affections on things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God, and not on things of the earth. The two could not go together. To look, to have one's motives, above and below at the same time, is impossible. Be tempted by things, have to resist them, we may; but this is not to have them as our object. The reason for this is, however, found in our position; we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. It does not say, "we must die." Man cannot do this by will, we cannot deny will by will. If it acts it does not abdicate. We are dead: this is the precious comforting truth with regard to the Christian, by virtue of Christ's having died for him. He has received the life of Christ, and all that Christ did for him in that life, belongs to him. Thus he is dead, because Christ died for him. The life with which the power of temptation, guilt, the attacks of Satan, are connected, exists no longer to faith. By death, all that was connected with it has come to an end. Now that which was connected with the life of the old man was sin, condemnation, weakness, fear powerlessness against the assaults of the enemy - all this is past. We have a life, but it is in Christ - it is hidden with Him in God. It is not yet manifested in its glory, as God will manifest it before the eyes of all in heaven and earth. It is hidden, but safe, in its eternal source. It has the portion of Christ, in whom we possess it. He is hid in God, so also is our life: when Christ shall appear, we shall also appear with Him.

It will be remarked, that the apostle does not speak here of our union with Christ, but of our life; of the fact that we are dead, and that our life is hid with Him in God. He does not speak of the Church with regard to our position; he speaks no doubt, of Christ, as being its Head, as to His personal glory, but not as to us. He speaks of us individually. Each one has his own life, in Christ truly, but as his own, it is not union with other Christians. We have this life in Christ, but it is not here our union as one body with Him. It is the individual character of the Christian, to whom Christ the Head in heaven is everything.

That which is also highly important to observe in connection with this truth is, that in this Epistle there is nothing said of the Holy Ghost. The apostle speaks practically of their love in the Spirit, but in the instruction of the Epistle he does not name Him. Even when he says, "there is neither Jew, nor Greek," &c., it is in the new man, not because we are one in Christ. The individual was to cleave to the Head. He was no longer living in this world; he was dead, and his life hid with Christ in God. But this was for himself; he was to know it, and hold it fast for himself, as necessary truth. that he might be preserved from the wiles of the enemy. In a word, it is life in Christ. Elsewhere we

see many of the things which the apostle mentions here, spoken of as the fruit of the Spirit, by which communion and union are maintained; but here it is simply in the nature of the life that these fruits have their source. It is quite natural, consequently, that the compass and the assemblage of all spiritual relationships in one, in Christ, which we find in the divine instruction when the Holy Ghost is introduced, are wanting here.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, this operation of the Holy Ghost is found every where, and characterizes the whole of that which is developed in communion with the Head, Christ, with whom we are united in one body by the Spirit. Thus we are individually sealed by the Spirit of promise, the earnest of our inheritance; - we all have access to the Father by one Spirit; - we are also builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit; - the union of the Gentiles, in one body, is now revealed by the Spirit; saints are strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man; - there is one body and one Spirit; - we are not to grieve the Spirit; - we are to be filled with Him; the Word itself is the sword of the Spirit. The union of the body with Christ, our resurrection with Him, that we are sitting in the Heavenlies in Him, all that flows from this union, is fully developed; but, at the same time, the Holy Ghost, who unites us to Him, and unites us all together as one body, and who, here below, characterizes the presence of God in the Church, who acts in us, secures our future and becomes our strength in the present, - the Holy Ghost, I repeat, is found everywhere, to complete the truth, and to give it its present force for us here below.

Many of the exhortations in the Epistle to the Ephesians are nearly the same as those to the Colossians. But in the Epistle to the Ephesians they are connected with the Spirit; in that to the Colossians, with the action of the Word and of grace in the heart. This gives an immense range and a connectedness to the doctrine of the Epistle to the Ephesians, in that which regards our position here below, because it brings in God Himself, and as dwelling in us by the Spirit, and filling us; whether as individuals or in the oneness of the body..

In the Epistle to the Romans, we have (chap. 8) this action and presence of the Holy Ghost presented in a very remarkable way as to the individual. He characterizes us vitally, in the principle of our resurrection, the witness in us that we are children, filling us with joy and with the hope of glory as heirs, the support of our weakness and the source of our petitions, our groans. In the Epistle to the Romans, it is in connection with our personal relationship to God; in that to the Ephesians, as the presence of God in us, in connection with our union to Christ.

There is another thing to be noticed here, which throws light on the purpose of the Holy Ghost in these epistles. The starting point in that to the Ephesians is the counsels of God. Man is looked at as he is, without one pulse of life as regards God; he is dead in trespasses and sins, by nature the child of wrath. God is rich in mercy, He raises him up with Christ, who in grace went down into death, and places him according to His counsels in the same position as that Christ is in. We are His workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus. God is pleased to bring us into His presence, according to His own counsels and His nature. It is not said that we are dead with Christ. Man is not viewed as living in the flesh so that in one way or in another he had to die. That was not necessary. The Ephesians were able to apprehend, on the one hand, the full contrast between God and man, according to His counsels; and on the other, man's sinful state according to nature. In their epistle all is the work of God Himself, according to the original purpose of His own heart, of His nature, and of His will: man is already dead.

The Colossians were inclined to subject themselves to ordinances, and thereby were in a position to consider man as living in the world; and the apostle makes them feel that we are dead with Christ. He was obliged, in grace, to follow them where they were, and (sad necessity!) to take man into consideration as living on the earth; in order, nevertheless, to show that the Christian was already dead with Christ.

In the letter to the Ephesians, man is not said to die with Christ. He is dead in his sins when God begins to act towards him. No man is alive to God. The Christian is quickened together with Christ.

This, however, has its value for us all, and a great value, because the life, the new nature, and grace working in it, are much less brought forward in the Epistle to the Ephesians; where the subject is the energy of God, who fills the believer, and the Church here, with the nature and the character of the new man, and thereby of Christ. One might suppose that there was only the Holy Ghost acting in the fullness of His power, and filling the individual and the Church. But in this Epistle to the Colossians, we find that there is a new nature, an intrinsic change, not of the flesh, but of the man. A source of tastes, of sentiments, of desires, of arguments, and of moral capacities, which are in connection with the very nature of God who has caused it to spring up in the heart: that this source is a life, which needs that the Holy Ghost should reveal to it the objects that are suited to it, and that awaken these tastes and feelings, that satisfy them and cause them to grow. It needs that the Spirit of God should act in it, to give it strength; but it is a real life, a nature, which has its tastes attached to its very existence; which, being enlightened by the Holy Ghost, is conscious of its own existence; and in which we are the children of God, being born of Him.

Neither is it unimportant that we should learn, with regard to the life of the flesh, and when thinking of it, although it be on the negative side, that we are dead; that God recognizes nothing belonging to the old man; that He takes pleasure in a new nature which is, indeed, ours by grace; but which is of God Himself, and which is the moral reflection of His own.

We are dead then, and our life is hid with Christ in God. We have members on earth - no recognized life - and we have to put to death all these members of the old man. The Christian has to deny them practically, as belonging to the old man, while his life is there where Christ is. They bring down the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Christians walked in these things when they had their life in them; but this is no longer the case; and they deny not only gross sins, but all the workings of an unbroken will and an unsubdued heart, every indication of the actings of the will of that nature which knows not God, and is not ruled by His fear. Truth reigns in the heart which has put off the old man, according to the simplicity of the new man, which is renewed also in knowledge after the image of Him who created it. The new man walks in the light. It is not only that there is a conscience which judges good and evil according to that which man ought to be, according to his nature as a responsible being; there is a new man who judges the old man altogether.

Before Christianity, which is the full revelation of God, there were, indeed, as need not be said, souls born anew; but their rule, when a rule was definitely given, was man's responsibility (whatever piety and grace might inspire), and the law which was the perfect measure of that which man, as a being responsible to God, ought to be. Saints, then, did not distinguish between a new and an old man, although of necessity they thoroughly had the conscience of the old man and

the tastes of the new. The sense, for instance, of the evil of falsehood, had not at all the same place as with the Christian. Now, the new man is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him who created him. God Himself, in His nature, is the standard of good and evil, because the new man has the knowledge of what that nature is - he is made a partaker of it, and he has the light of God. It is an intelligent participation, by grace, in the nature of God, which is the marvelous and precious privilege of the Christian. God works in this nature; but by communicating it, He has placed man in this position. Christ is the perfect model of this image, the type of the new man.

Other differences have disappeared: there remains but the old man, which we only acknowledge as dead, and the new man. To the latter, Christ is all, and in all believers; so that there is none but He whom they see and whom they acknowledge. They put on, therefore, as such, elect, holy, beloved (Christ being their life), the character of Christ, mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if offense has been given, even as Christ has done to us. Finally, they put on love, the bond of perfectness, that which gives a divine character to all the qualities that have been enumerated, and that were manifested in Christ.

Several of these qualities may be resembled by things in nature, but the energy, the features, the bond of divine love, which acts in the sense of communion with God, is totally wanting in the latter; and this gives a character, a completeness, a righteousness of application, a perfection, a propriety, and an energy, to the manifestation of these qualities, which love alone can give. For it is, indeed, God Himself who is there, acting in His nature which He has imparted to us. For he who dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him. With regard to the state of the soul, there is a crown to this walk, wherewith they who follow it constantly are adorned. The peace of God reigns in the heart, that sweet and ineffable peace which nothing can disturb, even as nothing can disturb the nature of God Himself, of which it is the sovereign expression. God has also called us to this: He is the God of peace. And here the apostle introduces the oneness of the body, not as to its privileges in Christ, but as to the fact that Christians are called to be together in the unity of which peace is the seal and the bond. And then there will be thanksgiving, for the soul is conscious of the love and the activity of God, and everything flows to it from that love.

But besides peace and thanksgiving towards God, there is an energy that applies to that which surrounds us. These are the two parts of Christian life - the enjoyment of God and of that which is in His presence, and the responsible activity of the soul with regard to others. Nevertheless, when the latter is real, it is the joyful liberty of a nature that is itself in health, the activity of love that is natural to it, and which receives its energy from communion with God, according to His nature. The Word of Christ is here the rule, and the active and directing power, because it is the expression of that nature, and of its active energy in Him.

The Apostle, therefore, exhorts that the Word of Christ may dwell in them richly. This is the development, according to the perfection of God, of the new man, and the wisdom of God to direct him. Paul desires that Christians may fully realize this. It is by communion with the Lord, holding intercourse with Him, that it is done. But, in this case, it is not only wisdom that we learn, and that is displayed in us, but affections in connection with Him in whom we have found this wisdom, so that these expressions of the life of Christ, as true wisdom in the world, find their voice in our hearts in praise, in thanksgivings, in singing His excellency. All the intimate affections in which spiritual life develops itself, express themselves, and edify and instruct souls, because they flow

from Christ, and are the expression of the soul's connection with Him, and of the feelings it produces in the heart. Christ, in His person, in the consciousness of His presence, as the object of our thoughts, and in the moral fruits proceeding thence, sustains the intercourse and the communications of the soul that is occupied with His praises.

But this consciousness of relationship with Christ, in the life which is of Him in us, applies to everything. Nothing is done without Him. If He is the life, all which that life does has Him for its end and object, as far as the heart is concerned. He is present as that which gives its character to our actions, and which pre-occupies the heart in performing them. Everything relates to Him, we do not eat without Him, how can we when He is our very life? we do not drink without Him; what we say, what we do, is said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus. The sense of His presence, the consciousness that everything relates to Him, that we can do nothing-unless carnally-without Him, because the life which we have of Him, acts with Him and in Him, does not separate from Him, and has Him for its aim in all things, even as water rises to the height from which it descended. This is what characterizes the life of the Christian. And what a life! Through Him, dwelling in the consciousness of Divine love, we give thanks to our God and Father.

Observe, here, that the Christian life is not only characterized by certain subjective qualities which flow from Christ, but by its having Christ Himself for the aim and object of the heart and mind, in all that we do in every respect. Christ personally reigns in, and is present to the heart in everything.

To the inexperienced eye of man, nature is often confounded with grace; but the intelligent consciousness of Christ as the heart's object, of His presence, of the seal of His approval when one thinks of Him, cannot be confounded with anything. There is nothing that resembles it, nothing that can appear to take its place. When He reveals Himself to this heart, and the heart walks with Him, and communes with Him in all things, and seeks only the light of His countenance, the seal of His favor on the soul in all things, then He is known, well known. There is none but He who thus communicates Himself to the soul when it walks in the way of His will, as expressed in the Word.

After these great and important principles, the apostle enters into the diverse relationships of life, giving warnings against that which would endanger them, by showing what the Christian character of each one of them is.

To the wife, obedience-affection was natural to her" Thy desire shall be to thy husband." To the husband, affection and kindness-his heart may be indifferent and hard. Children are to be obedient; fathers, gentle, in order that the children's affections may not be estranged from them, and that they may not be induced to seek that happiness in the world, which they ought to find in the- sanctuary of the domestic circle, which God has formed as a safeguard for those who are growing up in weakness; the precious home (if Christ is acknowledged) of kind affections, in which the heart is trained in the ties which God Himself has formed; and, which, by cherishing the affections, preserves from the passions and from self-will; and which, where its strength is rightly developed, has a power that, in spite of sin and disorder, awakens the conscience, and engages the heart, keeping it away from evil and the direct power of Satan For it is God's appointment.

I know, indeed, that another power is required to deliver the heart from sin, and to keep it from sin. Nature-even as God created it-does not give eternal life, does not restore innocence, does not purify the conscience. We may, by the energy of the Spirit, consecrate ourselves to God outside

these relationships,-break them, even, if God should call us by more powerful obligations, as Christ teaches us in the Gospel. The rights of Christ over man, lost by sin, are sovereign, absolute, and complete. He has redeemed him, and the redeemed one is no longer his own, but belongs to Him who gave Himself for him. Where relationships exist, sin has perverted everything, and corrupted the will; passions come in. But the relationships themselves are of God; woe to him who despises them as such. If grace has wrought and the new life exists, it acknowledges that which God has formed. It well knows that there is no good in man, it knows that sin has marred everything, but that which sin has marred, is not itself sin. And where these relationships exist, the renunciation of self-will, death to sin, the bringing in of Christ, the operation of life in Him, restore their power; and if they cannot give back the character of innocence, lost forever, can make them a scene of the operations of grace, in Which meekness, tenderness, mutual help, and self-denial, in the midst of the difficulties and sorrows which sin has introduced, lend them a charm and a depth, (even as Christ did in every relationship) which innocence itself could not have presented. It is grace, acting in the life of Christ in us, which develops itself in them.

To be without natural affection is a sign of hopeless apostasy and estrangement from God, of the complete selfishness of the last days.

I am not drawing a false picture, or speaking poetically, as though the bright side were all; I only say that God has formed these relationships, and that whosoever fears God, will respect them. Grace is requisite: they give occasion, through their intimacy itself, to all that is most painful, if grace does not act in them. The apostle warns us here of this danger. If the Lord is the bond in them, if our still closer union with Him forms the strength of our natural relationships, then grace reigns here as elsewhere; and, to those who stand in these relationships, they become a scene for the lovely display of the life of Christ.

It will be observed how the apostle, consequently, introduces Christ into them, and especially in regard to those who are subject in them, wives and children; in order to sanctify, by so exalted a motive, the obedience suited to their position. He does this still more where the tie is not of nature, but one which sin has formed, that between slaves and their masters. Grace does not set itself to change the state of the world and of society, but to lead souls to heaven by renewing them after the image of God. I doubt not that it has very much altered for the better the social condition of man, because through bringing the conscience immediately before the only true God, whom it has revealed in His own perfections, and establishing by its authority that of the natural relationships in the human family, grace has wrought upon that conscience even where the heart was not converted, and has furnished it with a rule in that which regards morality. But Christianity, as to its own doctrine, treats the world as alienated from God, and lying in evil; man, as the child of wrath, and lost.

Christ, the Son of God-who if He had been received could have put all things right, and who will hereafter by His kingdom establish righteousness and peace-was rejected by the world, and the friendship of the world is enmity against God. The state of man is treated in the gospel in a deeper way than in regard to his social condition. It is viewed with reference to the soul's connection with God, and consequently with that which is eternal. God imparts a new life unto us, in order that we may enjoy those new relationships with Himself, which Redemption has gained for us. Now, as Christ, while living, was the expression of the love and the omnipotent goodness of God, in the

midst of a fallen creation, so, being now rejected by the world (which thus condemned itself), Christ, who dwells by His grace in the heart of one who has received life, becomes to that heart a source of happiness in communion with the love of God, which lifts it up and sets it above circumstances, be they what they may. The slave, in possessing Christ, is free in heart; he is the freed man of God Himself. The master knows that he himself has a Master, and the relationship in which he finds himself, takes the form of the grace and love that reigns in the heart of him who in it exercises his authority.

But, as I have said, to the poor slave, Christ is especially presented as a resource. He may serve his master, whether a good or bad one, with faithfulness, meekness, and devotedness; because in so doing he serves the Lord Himself, and is conscious that he does so. He will have his reward there where nothing is forgotten that is done to glorify Christ, and where masters and slaves are all before Him who has no respect of persons.

Two principles act in the heart of the Christian slave; his conscience in all his conduct is before God, the fear of God governs him, and not his master's eye. And he is conscious of his relationship to Christ, of the presence of Christ which sustains and lifts him above everything. It is a secret which nothing can take from him, and which has power over everything, because it is within, and on high: Christ in him, the hope of glory. Yes, how admirably does the knowledge of Christ exalt everything that it pervades, and with what consoling power does it descend into all that is desolate and cast down, all that groans, all that is humbled, in this world of sin.

Three times in these two verses, while holding their conscience in the presence of God, the apostle brings in the Lord, the Lord Christ, to fill the hearts of these poor slaves, and make them feel who it was to whom they rendered service. Such is Christianity.

The apostle ends his epistle with some important general exhortations.

He desires that the saints should continue, through prayer, in communion with God, and in the sense of their dependence on Him, conscious of His nearness to them, and His readiness to hear them. For that which speaks to the heart for our walk, is not enough; the soul must know its own relations with God, exercising itself in those relations; and it must receive directly from Him that which assures it of His love. There must be perseverance in this. We are in conflict with evil, which has a hold upon our own hearts, if we are without the strength of God. We must, therefore, commune with God. We must watch, with settled purpose of heart, not merely as an occasional thing; any one can cry out when he is in need. But the heart separated from the world and all that is of it, occupies itself with God, with all that regards the glory of His name, according to the measure in which we are concerned in it. The conflict is carried on with a tender and freed spirit, having only His glory as the object, both in the Church and the individual walk. But thus one understands that God works, and that He does not forsake us, and thanksgiving is always mingled with the prayers we address to Him.

Paul felt his dependence on this blessing, and he asked for a share also in their prayers, that God might open his mouth, and that he might proclaim the gospel as he ought to do.

Now, we are in a hostile world, in which hostility is easily awakened where it does not already exist openly, and in which offense is quickly taken, at things wherein, perhaps, we neither saw nor intended evil. We must take away the occasion even, from those that seek it, and walk in wisdom

with respect to them that are without.

How clearly the within and the without are here distinguished. Those within, whom God acknowledges, His family, His church-they are His own. Those without, they are the world, those who are not joined to the Lord. The distinction is plainly marked, but love is active towards them that are without, and being itself in the enjoyment of communion with God, it is careful to do nothing that might prevent others from enjoying it.

But there was something more: they were to redeem the time. The natural man, taken up with his own affairs, and disinclined to serious things, gave Christian love little opportunity to set grace and truth before him and make him care for his own soul, thus serving the Lord and using time in His name. The heart of man cannot always escape the influence of surrounding circumstances, which bear witness to his heart and conscience that he is under the dominion of sin, and already eating its bitter fruits here below; circumstances which bring to his conscience the remembrance of a too much forgotten God, which speak with the mighty voice of sorrow to a broken heart, glad, at least, to have a resource in God, when his hand is pierced by the broken reed on which he leant. God Himself acts upon man by these circumstances, and by every circumstance of life. One who is walking with the Lord, knows how to avail himself of them. Satan may, indeed, deceive a man, but he cannot prevent God at all times from speaking to the heart. It is a happy thing so to walk with God that He can use us as His voice, when He would thus speak to poor sinners. Our speech ought always to be the expression of this separation from evil, this power of the presence of God which keeps us inwardly apart from it; so as to make that power felt by others; and, that in all the questionings which arise in the heart of man, wandering out of the way in confusion and darkness, and even leading others astray thereby, we may know how to give an answer which comes from the light and conveys light.

Tychicus was to carry the testimony of the interest which the apostle took in the welfare of the Colossians, and of his confidence in their interest in him. Paul bears witness to the love of others, and to their concern also in the progress of the gospel, and the prosperity of the faithful.

Marcus, who had formerly drawn back from the toils of the work, receives a testimony here on the apostle's part, and a still better one later (2 Tim. 4.11)' for he had made himself useful to the apostle himself. Such is grace. The secret of the interest Barnabas took in him, comes out here, he was nearly related to him. This dear servant of God was from Cyprus. The flesh and Judaism find their way everywhere. The power of the Spirit of God is requisite to raise us above, and set us beyond, their influence.

Demas receives no especial testimony. The apostle conveys his greetings, but is silent as to himself. Only in the Epistle to Philemon is he named as a fellow-laborer of the apostle. Afterward he forsook Paul. He was a brother- the apostle admits his claim, but says nothing; he had nothing to say. "And Demas," for Paul's style, is terribly cold.

We may observe that the Epistle to the Ephesians was written at the same time, and sent by this same Tychicus. The one "from Laodicea" is, I doubt not, one that they were to receive from that assembly, written by Paul, and by which the saints at Colosse were to profit; possibly the Epistle to the Ephesians, which he may have communicated to the Laodiceans. Be this as it may, all that is said, is, that it was one of which the assembly at Laodicea were in possession, and by no means

that it was directly addressed to them: rather the contrary. It is very possible that a letter, or a hundred letters, may have been written by Paul to others, which it was not in the purposes of God to preserve for the universal Church; but here there is no proof that a letter had been written to the Laodiceans. Tychicus was the bearer of two, he may have been the bearer of three, one of which differed only in some details of application which might serve to confirm the Colossians without being in the main another divine communication for other days; but, I repeat, it does not appear to be so from that which is said here. It might be said a letter " from Laodicea," because it was there, instead of a letter to Laodicea, but it is not the usual mode of expression. We have seen that the letter to the Ephesians is another communication of the Spirit of God. It has been preserved for us. We do not know whether that from Laodicea was the same, communicated by them to the Christians of that city; or another, which they were to send to the Colossians (a Church in their vicinity) and which - adding nothing to the divine revelations - has not been preserved for us.

It appears that Christians were not very numerous at Laodicea. The apostle salutes the brethren there. There were some who assembled in the house of one Nymphas; they were not in a case to have a letter addressed to them in particular; still the apostle does not forget them. But that which he says here is an almost certain proof that the apostle had not addressed any epistle, to them. He would not have sent greetings through the Colossians to the brethren in Laodicea, if, at the same time, he had written a special epistle to the latter. The case is plain enough; there were brethren at Laodicea, but not in great numbers, and not in that distinct position which gave rise to an epistle. But this little assembly in the house of Nymphas was not to be forgotten; it should profit by the epistles addressed to other assemblies more considerable than itself, and whose condition required an epistle, or gave occasion to write one, which epistles were transmitted to Laodicea, according to the apostle's order.

With regard to the epistle to the Colossians, it is not a supposition. The apostle commands them expressly to have it read in the assembly at Laodicea. The latter had also received another epistle from some other assembly, and the Colossians were to profit by it in the same manner. The two assemblies, which were near each other, were mutually to enjoy the spiritual favors that were granted them.

The apostle does not forget individuals even. Archippus receives a solemn exhortation to take heed to the ministry which the Lord had committed to him, and to fulfill His service.

The apostle had not seen these assemblies (2:1).

Colossians 2:15

" HE was crucified in weakness, but He arose by the power of God." There never was such an exhibition of weakness as the cross. All was set against the Lord. God was withdrawn; man had proved his full enmity; disciples were faithless; and hell had its hour of power. But it was succeeded by a time of the most glorious, magnificent strength that was ever displayed. As soon as the life was surrendered, heaven, earth, and hell, God even, and Satan, all bore their several witness that the strength of that moment was felt and understood by them. The veil of the temple was rent, the rocks of the earth were split asunder, and the graves were burst wide open. Glorious, victorious strength thus touched the most entire, and absolute, and unrelieved weakness, joining together, I may say, the point on which the divine and counseled history of eternity was to turn.

The death was the victory of the living Son of God; resurrection and ascension were His triumph, or the public celebration of the victory. But the victory could not altogether wait for the third day - it must publish itself at once. And so it did, as we see, by the rending of the veil, the rocks, and the graves; and whether it were by those earlier results of the victorious death, or by the more orderly and material fruit of that victory, in the resurrection and ascension, still, in each way, " a show " has been made of all the powers of darkness, and that " openly," or in the way of " triumph." The Church takes companionship with the Lord in His rejection, in the eye of the world; but finds companionship with Him in His victorious death and triumphant resurrection, as far as conscience and personal, hidden peace with God goes -a calling of wondrous moral beauty!

1. Eph. 2:4,5

" But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved)."

The first word, here, is "but"; a little word which shows that what follows it is disconnected from what goes before: in this case, it is in contrast with it. Man had just been spoken of,-but now God is brought in, in contrast to man. It was man, according to what God saw of his ways, when dead in trespasses and sins; thus (ver. 1), dead in trespasses and sins - this was their state; and the marks of this state, as found in man's ways, are thus described in ver. 2:-"A walk according to the course of this world" (which is at enmity against God), and, therefore, a walk according to the god of this world, who is the prince of the power of the air; the spirit who now worketh in the children of disobedience; and the habitual walk, the turn of such, was in the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, for they were children of wrath, even as others.

That was on one side; and an awful view it gave of man. " But," on the other side, in contrast with all this, there was God, and God according to His nature and ways; " God who is rich in mercy, for His great love, wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here is God and His wondrous ways in contrast with man and his ways. First, God in contrast with man - then His characteristic trait, who is rich in mercy- and then a particular proof of it in His love to us. Mark, here, that mercy, in its very nature, excludes every thought of worthiness, merit, or claim, being in the party to whom it comes; it supposes unworthiness, demerit, want, and misery, in the party benefited; and that all the benefit conferred flows forth from the party that confers it, upon the sole ground that He can compassionate and feel pity for the party in need, although He distinctly recognizes, at the very time of doing so, that the said party is in a state other than He counts happy or desirable. We could not say, God was merciful to Christ. If any one used such an expression to us, we should be obliged to point out the impropriety of the expression; it would be a most injurious and wrong word to use in such a connection. For Christ Jesus could say, " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also"; and the Father could say of Him, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Christ Jesus came to do God's will, and did it perfectly in all things; and had worthiness and claims before God, which God delights to honor. He was not the object of mercy, nor could be so, because there was nothing in Him to move the compassion or pity of God, hut everything calculated to give God delight - everything that pleased God. To use such an expression would be (however unconsciously it might be done) to speak disparagingly and injuriously of the Lord. For in Christ was life, and the life was the light of men. But when God looked on us, we were dead in trespasses and sins; and God's bearing toward us was a bearing of mercy. Death in trespasses and sins He did not delight in; it might have turned him away offended; but He pitied, compassionated us; had mercy upon us, and He who condemned the sins, desired to save the sinner.

Thus we have man, his condition, and ways; and God, his compassion and ways, set in contrast. I say His compassion and ways, because " who is rich in mercy" gives a trait or mark in His character, and " for the great love wherewith He loved us," gives an acting of that characteristic trait in the salvation which grace has set before us and made ours.

" For His great love wherewith He loved us." What a word is this! To know, with certainty, that, notwithstanding all that we have done and were by nature, yet that there

is one bosom in which there is love toward us; and that bosom the very one in which we should have supposed there would have been displeasure and wrath; for, if we look at ourselves merely as creatures standing before a Creator whom we have dishonored, what else but indignation and wrath had we to expect? Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, would have been our just reward for our evil deeds and fallen nature. But it is not so. Vile as we were, and vilely as we acted, God, acting as Redeemer, and not merely in the character of Creator, has loved us freely; has given His Son for us; and we that believe can say, " He loves us and loves us with a great love."

Ver. 5. "Even when we were dead in sins." Here we have our state in nature again brought before us, and brought before us in the most concise way possible. The acorn has an oak tree folded up in it; many a little spring of water is the mother of a river; and a soul that has death in sins in it has all the big tree of sin and all its fruits folded up in it, and is the mother source of all the swollen river of man's wickednesses. Now, if I was such, what had I to expect as such from God? What, if God had acted according to my state and my deserts, would have been my lot? Nothing but the second death. And what motive could God draw from anything which I, who was altogether dead, could give Him. I thought myself to be as God himself; and had no notion that the Lord He is God alone; and had altogether a wrong notion about Himself. No; He could find, He did find, nothing good in me. But where all was death in sins, there He was pleased to act from Himself, to draw forth motives from within Himself; and He could find reasons why He should quicken us together with Christ. If I consider what I was, I can find no reason why God should bless me, and not rather curse; and if I consider that God was the blesser, for His own name's sake, and what the way is in which He has blessed, I say, " It is clear, merit and deserving in the creature is quite shut out of the question." God was the source, the spring of the blessing; why should He have done; it? He is rich in mercy. Ay, He has a character of His own I and 'tis a blessed one too. Fallen man does not like Him alone to be God. But God He is still. Fallen man draws his picture of God according to his own fallen imagination and corrupt lusts and passions. But God has a character of His own. He has no thought of ceasing to be or of ceasing to be God alone - or of changing His character because man has become a wreck and a ruin. He is God, and He is rich in mercy. He has loved us when we were dead in sins. And the how and the why of the blessing, which He has bestowed upon us, both alike declare that it was not according to our thoughts, nor for our sakes, as the end of His acting, that He blessed us thus.

Mark the why of His blessing: " That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." What could be plainer? " That He might show the exceeding riches of His grace." Yes; God will not give His glory to another. If He, whose very existence and being, fallen man hates, despises, and rebels against, does act in a way to make such happy, He does it for His own glory's sake as an end; does it on the ground of what He

God is. In nature and character He is rich in mercy. And this shuts out all thought of its being done because of any deserving in us.

But as the party blessing, His motives for blessing, and His end in blessing, each and all, bid us think of Him, and cease from thinking of ourselves; just so does also His way of blessing. What is His way of blessing? Is it a way that lies, so to speak, in the field of fallen human nature (as the putting forth of our power to stop sin, and to work good works in ourselves does); Or is it a way such as fallen man never thought of, never knew anything about? Yes; it is a way quite above man, quite outside the field of human nature, fallen or unfallen.

" Quickened us together with Christ," is His first word when setting forth that way. What could Adam in the Garden have understood about being quickened together with Christ? What does a sinner know about God's quickening together with Christ? The way is God's way; and as the heavens are high above the earth, so are God's ways high above man's ways: " His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts.

God had an only begotten Son. Him He gave, that He might become Son of man, the anointed of God. Man I did he bring in that Christ into the world? No: men, with wicked hands, crucified and slew Him. They did what they could to send Him out of the world, when He had come into it without their leave, and had stayed in it a good bit longer than they liked. And, mark it, this matter whereof He speaks had no place in Eden, did not lie, was not found, in that field which was given to man. Man ought not to have touched the forbidden tree, then would he not have died. But death was the end of all that man could see, so as to reap it by disobedience.

Having a new life, resurrection and glory were not fruits that grew in nature's barren soil. But God, to please Himself, introduced the seed of the woman, this Christ of whom we speak, as the One by whom and for whom He could go on with the earth, after Adam and Eve had altogether failed in the Garden of Eden; saying: " The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.' And that He, the Christ, might, as Son of man and the Woman's Seed, not be alone in His glory, He had to die. For, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." Well! death, the wage due to our sin, He freely took, in obedience to the thoughts of God. He was crucified, died, and was buried, that God might be able to be just while justifying us poor sinners; and He has said, that He reckons us crucified, dead, and buried, as to our old man, together with Christ; and that we are to reckon ourselves so likewise. But His taking of His life again, His rising from the grave, His going up into heaven, His being blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, was part of what pertained to the second Adam, and had no place in the portion of the first. Now, no man can go beyond what is human in thought. And it was God, and not man, from whom that thought and that way came forth of believers being quickened together with Christ.

Christ was buried in the sepulcher in the garden. But He could see no corruption. And He who had power to lay down His life, had power also to take it again; for this commandment had He received of the Father. Well, on the first day of the week, He awoke, was quickened while in the grave; and, therefore, all that ado outside, of earthquake, of sepulcher door-stone rolled away, etc.; He was quickened-and, says our text, " we were quickened together with Him."

The act and fact and moment of the Lord Jesus Christ's taking His life again, is not sufficiently thought of by us. It ought to be looked at in and by itself. The Roman Catholic religion (religion of fallen human nature) pictures to us a Christ a-crucifying, and gives us images of wood, stone, and ivory out of all number of a human figure on the cross. Of eternal moment to us is the fact, that the Christ of God was crucified, has been crucified, because He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. But, as Paul tells us 1 Cor. 15, His death was naught, if He did not rise from the dead; we are yet in our sins But Christ is risen from the dead; and He left the grave empty, save of those grave-clothes which have since, as has His cross on which He was hung, and our sins also, passed away; never more to be found. God honors the Christ who was crucified, the Christ who was buried, but is alive again.-Now, if I had to prove, as saith Paul, 1 Cor. 15, the forgiveness of sins, I point to the One that is risen: and might, in a figure, say, " Turn to the grave; it is empty. He left there naught but the grave-clothes." But this is not enough when the question comes as to God's way of blessing us-" quickened together with Christ." Then I have to turn neither to the guarded, imprisoning tomb where the body of the Lord lay; nor to the empty tomb, He being gone up on high; but I turn in thought to the tomb burst open now, for He is just alive from among the dead; and because He is therein, and because God gives testimony in the scene; the guards are fled, and the disciples are being drawn, by various means, thereunto. Oh, it is a blessed thought! that blessed One taking His life again; that One, who was all God's joy, and God's delight, quickening into life afresh, as Son of man, in the tomb. Blessed in itself! and blessed to us, because it is written of us-" quickened together with Him."

The life He took, is that of which He has communicated to us, as He did to Paul and to these Ephesians: and, therefore, as that life which He gives to us believers is of that life which He took when He awoke from death, it can be said, and it is said, "quickened together with Him." Saul 1 where was he when Christ awoke in the grave? These wicked Ephesians! where were they at that time? Both were dead in sins. Well, when Christ had called them, and given them of that life which He took, they were no longer looked upon by God according to the old man, but according to the new man. By reason of the old man in us, Christ has been crucified, dead, and buried. But He took life anew, and has given to us of that life, of a life which the old man had not; and God looks upon us as vessels in which it dwells -a life inseparable from the source whence it flows; a life in us which enables Him to say to us, enables us to say of ourselves that believe, " Quickened together with Christ." The root, the germ, the incorruptible seed of all blessing is in -this life. And I pray you, reader, to mark, that the moment the Spirit, through Paul, has said, 'Quickened together with Christ,' He makes a pause, -marks a bar, -so as to shut this off from all the consequences of it. For, however blessed and important these consequences of life possessed are, they are not the life itself, but consequences of it. Therefore, the moment He has said, " quickened together with Christ," He makes a pause,-introduces a parenthesis,-which seems to be a mark, to mark off what He has just said from that which follows after it: "quickened together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)." Ay! if quickened together with Christ, then we are saved in, and inseparably from, Him. And that is the best part of what God has to give us.

Truly, this salvation is of the Lord God alone. And as man never dared to say to God, " I have sinned, and Thou must bear the penalty," so he never hit upon such a thought as this, " if God quickened in the grave His Son whom we had crucified, we will share all that is His I" But what man never thought of, what, if he had said, it would have been awful, blasphemy on his part, both

in the one case and the, other,-that was God's thought and plan. Man had sinned; God manifest in the flesh should bear the penalty; and the reward and glory which He should win for this service, He would freely share with all His disciples: For they should be quickened together with Him.

2. Colossians 2:13

" And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses."

The Epistle to the Ephesians presents us with the doctrine of " ye in Me" (John 14:20), if I may so say; that is, the doctrine of the believer's being blessed in Christ Jesus - as being hidden by God in Christ. The privileges which go along with being in Christ being the special object of that epistle when it speaks of the quickening of a believer together with Christ - the mind has that subject brought before it, as connected with the character and date of the first blessing of having association with Christ in His life, as taken anew after He had borne our sins in His own body on the tree. The Epistle to the Colossians gives us rather, " I in the Father" (John 14:20); and accordingly, as it seems to me, when we have the quickening together with Christ spoken of in it, it is more in that connection. Ordinances and man's doings were being plied by Satan on the Colossians, as things necessary to make their salvation complete, to make their blessing perfect and secure. Such a thought was worthy of Satan; to Paul and the Spirit of God it seemed to be nothing short of calling into question the Sonship of Jesus, and all the counsels, plans, and thoughts of God the Father about that Son. The present day is a day in which the busy energy of man's flesh lends itself, in many places, to Satan in this way; and in Romanism, Puseyism, and a good many other " isms," which are but the expression of the workings of the flesh, it is held and taught that there is an " unless ye do" this or that (in addition to having Christ for salvation), ye cannot be saved. This evil may have two phases of it; the one (as in Colossians),:the being subject to ordinances; and the other (as in Galatians), the subjecting of the flesh to rites and ceremonies; but, in both cases, it is, in essence, the same thing. The flesh in us is accredited, man honored, and worldliness sanctioned; and so the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost dishonored, discredited, and contemned.

Satan is very crafty; he hates Christ with a perfect hatred; and hates those who stand upon Christ as the foundation for His sake. If he cannot injure Christ in His own person, he is glad in any way to show his own hatred against Him, and to mar: His honor in His people. He will attack them, and Christ's honor in them, in foundation and superstructure. Is a soul brought into peace, and at rest, to the praise of God's grace and mercy, upon Christ? Satan sees it, and his spite is kindled. He knows the self-righteousness of our flesh, he knows the love of man for having something to do; he does not like that hanging, that dependance of ours, upon what is above in Christ; he would like to have us occupied for rest with something round us in that world which is enmity against God. Some one comes to the place where such are, no one may know whence or why, and sets forth most beautifully the great work which God has done in Christ, and all the wondrous benefits connected with it; and that all man has to do to get the benefit, is to observe a rite (as circumcision, etc.), or some ordinance, a sabbath-day or a moon. O how little a thing to give for so great a benefit! Only just suffer yourself to be dipped, only just do this or that little thing! What heart will refuse? And oft he so succeeds, and draws the very hearts which were full of mercy and grace, in their folly and simplicity, to allow all the impulse which mercy and grace had to their hearts to be

turned round against the Giver. Such a little thing! such a nothing! Yes: but it is man's little thing,-it is a nothing of this world which is at enmity with God. God will not give His glory to another; and if you substitute anything for mercy as the fountain, if you give anything in exchange for Christ, man, and not God, is glorified. The energy that raises my foot to go into the water, or leads me to forbear touching a dog, is quite as bad in this place, little as it be, as the energy which would compass sea and land to make one proselyte. The gift to God of a prayer, even, would be as great an insult, if it were in exchange for Christ, as a bag of gold. The Spirit's severity in meeting both cases is awfully stern: " But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8,9).

And though the rebuke be couched in softer words in Colossians, yet is the judgment of the apostle quite as clear. Such things are tantamount to " not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19).

See who and what the Christ is, in whom we are complete; and then, as a man, say whether we can add anything to Him, and whether, it is not worse than madness to think of doing so. " The Father hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;.: -bath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Such is our blessing; and who is He in whom it is?

He is, 1st, the Son of God's love (Col. 1:13); and He is, 2ndly, the image of the invisible God; 3rdly, born. pre-eminent to every creature; (necessarily so, because) 4thly, all things were created by and for Him; who is, 5thly, the one by whom all is upheld; 6thly, He is the Head of the body, the church; the beginning; the first-born from the dead; and in Him, too, it was pleasing that all fullness should dwell -Redeemer, for heaven and for earth. He being such, and the one in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and we complete in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power, how can we add to or take from him as foundation? If quickened together with Him, no ordinance, no rite, can possibly be necessary in order that we be blessed; for we are blessed in Him. And to say otherwise was, according to Paul, to give up Christ as the Head, and to compromise the faith.

There is this difference in the two contexts, Eph. 2 and Col. 2 In the first, the quickening comes in as the starting-point of all the vast range of blessing attendant upon faith. In Colossians, it comes in as showing that law and ordinance had no hold of a Christian, because they had no hold upon Christ when He took His life anew - we were quickened together with Him. And the life so communicated is given without ordinances or rites; and it leads us to walk as they could not give us power to do.

Note.-If any have, or make, any difficulty as to the meaning of quickening in Scripture, the following texts will serve them:-

"That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die;...the last Adam was made a quickening [or life-giving] spirit" (1 Cor. 15:36, 45).

" If there had been a law which could have given life" (Gal. 3:21).

Comments Upon Texts: 3. Living Together With Christ

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him" (Rom. 6:8).

This statement might be taken into its component parts, thus:- There is, first, "death together with Christ;" which is put forward, not in a form which declares it attaches to this or to that one, to those or to these persons, but put with an hypothesis, which is the second point to notice-an if:- "If death together with Christ is true of us "-then there follows, thirdly, the certain consequence thereof, "that we shall reign together with Him."

Or, if you please, you may state it thus:-This is faith's assured statement, " We shall live together with Christ, IF we be dead together with Him."

So far all is clear, I think. But some pass over the mode in which the consequence (of being dead together with Christ) is put, viz., " we shall also live together with Him;" " for," say they, " we know, and assuredly believe, that we do already live together with Him; why, then, is a future tense (we shall live) used, and not a present tense, we do live."

it is quite true, we that believe have life already, and know that we have it together with Christ; for it is written, as of that which is a truth, and true at the present time to the believer. " Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me; because I live, ye shall live also. At that time ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:19,20). Now this is a truth, which we that believe realize the blessing of now-because He lives, we live also; and the same, also, may be said of vers. 16-18. For the Father has given to us a guardian to supply the place of Christ-and He abides with us evermore, even the Spirit of truth-who is in us. And, again, we are not comfortless (ver. 18), for Christ manifests Himself to us (ver. 21-29). And, again, " God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son, hath life" (not shall have it, but hath it).

First, then, we remark, they are quite right who say, " The believer hath life already, and knows he hath it." Texts might be multiplied to prove the truth of this, but the context of the verse which is under examination suffices, for the whole of chaps. 6, 7 and 8 suppose life to be already in the believers, and to be known by themselves to be there; though they needed instruction from the apostle as to, 1st, many things in connection with it, if they were to understand their privileges, and, 2ndly, as to many other things in connection with themselves, if they were to be workers that needed not to be ashamed; able to walk in liberty, and to keep themselves apart from the world and the flesh and the devil.

Yes, the believer hath life already, and knows he hath it. But remark the difference of taking up a fragment of truth, thus (as the difficulty-finder does) judging of it according to his own blessed and happy experience in faith, and the apostle's handling the same item of truth in connection with God's mode, in theory and practice, of interposing, His Christ-- 1st, in what He suffered vicariously, between the believer and his sins and their just consequences; and, 2ndly, in what He is as the fountain and source of new and, till then, unheard-of blessings.

Let the verse itself be weighed in the scales of reason and of mere human intelligence, and the vast fullness of the subject will be better felt. "If we be dead with Christ, we believe also that we shall live together with Him." "Too much learning hath made thee mad," would be nature's first comment; her second, perhaps, "Why, how can a dead man be talking of what is to be?" Alas! To-day has its own class of corrupters of the word, Whose senseless insubjection to Scripture shows that the flesh profiteth not. Familiarity with a subject is not the same thing as knowledge of it. But it would be vain and thankless work to attempt, even, to show how the human mind, when in' the place of light and under the responsibility of having God's written Word, has corrupted the doctrines of grace as to Christ's substitution for sinners, and His being the source of new blessings to the believer. I turn to the text.

The following points may be noticed as having been brought by Paul before the mind, previously, in the epistle. First, that man, left to himself on account of sin, had made gods many, after his own corrupt lust (chap. 1); 2ndly, that those who had knowledge (as the Jew) through a law, or standard of right and wrong, having been given to them to see and judge this, did just as badly themselves, and caused, by their conduct, the first-named class to blaspheme (chap: 2) 3rdly, that the law, requiring perfectness in the party it blessed, had pronounced all mere men, without exception, under the curse (chap. 3:1-20). 4thly, that this only tended to make manifest that free-gift righteousness of God, which was by faith in Jesus Christ-not of works, and open equally to Jew and to Gentile (chap. 3:20-31). That this was borne witness to by Abraham, and by David, each in his own way (chap. 4:1-16). But these four points might be looked at (not only thus, as to what they show of man, but, on the other side also) as to what they show of God. Thus, 1st, when man had sinned, and would not seek unto God, God showed Himself a God of patience and goodness toward the Gentile; and, 2ndly, while he waited till the due time was come for him to act fully, He dealt with the Jew, allowing him to use a standard of right and wrong, put into his hand to be a means of showing what it really was which fallen man had in him. 3rdly, was shown where man really was and to what reduced as a creature; and, 4thly, what it was which He, the living God, thought man wanted, if he was to be blessed; and how He knew Himself alone to be sufficient as the Source of such blessing, and His Son the alone able Accomplisher of it. Observe, the law does not go further than to enumerate what a man, under given circumstances, ought to do; and what the reward, if he does as he should, is to be, and what the curse is if he fails in any one point. The gospel was God's remedy for the confessedly failed ones-His plan and His way of getting to Himself honor in undertaking the cure and the blessing of those whom the law had justly cursed. This brings me to the fifth point. If God had left man to try what he could do,- had God any plan of His own? He clearly had, and it was this-to introduce Himself into the scene of ruin as the God of resurrection, who could raise from the dead, the Redeemer-God, who could say to the strongest enemy, "Give up," and could take back to Himself in a higher and better scene what elements He thus took from the fall. And, observe the time He chose for this was when man, left to himself, had corrupted the very notion of Deity, and when man, placed under light, had used that light to puff up his own heart with before God.

And, mark here, sixthly, what the wants were according to God's thoughts.

1st. There was a righteousness wanted; for all were under condemnation (chap. 3:21, 22).

2ndly. This must be in a way which supposed no power to be in the party blessed-it was, therefore, by faith (ver. 22).

3rdly. It must be "by free grace" (ver. 24).

Now this, 4thly, supposes the introduction of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (ver. 22-26). Who else, indeed, but He, the Son, could clear the honor and glory of God in working out salvation.

5thly. That it was of promise (chap. 3:13, 14), given long before the accomplishment of the blessing (Rom. 3:3, 17-21), showed how God would have His counsel recognized, and how He meant to make it approve itself and show forth his faithfulness and power, too, by allowing all the waters of the stream of time, and its circumstances, to roll in, and prove their powerlessness to change His promise. And, 6thly, this promise supposed certain things to be in Him, the living God, which were needful if ruined man was to get a blessing. He must needs be God, who, 1st, quickeneth the dead; and, 2ndly, who calleth those things which be not as though they were. And with these thoughts, God separated persons to Himself in time-He gave promises-they believed he was able to perform them-" and therefore it was imputed to them for righteousness" (ver. 22).

This brings us back to the great point of difficulty.

" Now it was not written for His sake alone, that it was imputed to Him. But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:23-25).

Observe, Paul is here speaking, not as you and I might speak, experimentally of his own enjoyed portion, but of God's way (theory and practice) of salvation. There is a certain Jesus - the benefits of whose death and resurrection belong to those who believe in Him who raised Him from the dead.

There is a certain abstract manner of putting it here which is just the difference between the handling of the way as the truth of God and the speaking of it as a matter of enjoyment.

It is just so, I conceive, in our text. " Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live together with him" (Rom. 6:8). But there is another thing to remark, as connected with this, and that is the real -difficulty when one comes to ponder the remedy in Christ for man, and the fullness of the salvation which is in Christ, which will be found, as we pass on, to justify fully the future tense, instead of the present.

If any one will weigh up what Saul was ere Christ called him; what Christ's call to him was; what the change in spirit, in heart, and in mind, and in outward life of Paul was; what that conflict with himself, with Satan, and with all his circumstances, while he was in the body; what the moral education of his soul by Christ; what his state from the time of his decease till the time of Christ's raising his body in glory-if, I say, any one can, however inadequately, run through these things, he will see the magnitude of the subject; and how, too, eternal life in heavenly glory being that for which Paul was called-there is, evidently, great propriety in the life being spoken of, in its fullest future display (" We shall live together with Him"), and not according to its present in-dwelling in us. In us it is a fountain of living waters, springing up to everlasting life, most surely. It and its true eternal character are known to us now, and they are the basis of our actions and of an entirely new life; but the eternal life is to be looked at in its future bright and unhindered display in heaven, if the

real privilege of its possession is to be seen.

The truth of God acts upon us, through faith, and by the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is,, there is liberty. But this liberty in the Spirit is a most real and true thing, and is, in one sense, higher than affection and understanding, for it is divine-the Spirit of God witnessing with our (renewed) spirits. But redemption is not merely divine, as to its source, and divine in itself as God's remedy, but is meant for man;-man is to be redeemed; and, therefore, God gives not only His Spirit and spiritual instincts, but He also both divinely forms affections in our hearts, as men, to Himself and His son, and understanding gives us an understanding that we may know and be able to comprehend and understand the why and the wherefore of the truth, and His ways with us.

The testimony of the Spirit Himself, the spiritual instincts, the trained affections of the heart, the detailed knowledge of the understanding, can often be separated the one from the other. But as they are all found necessarily in the common salvation of each soul and in the Church, they cannot always be nicely distinguished the one from the other by us, who are the subjects of that salvation. We shall see this, and the amazing scope, too (its breadth and width), of the salvation which our God has made ours in Christ, if we turn to Rom. 5.

" Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (ver. 1).

[Not only is the Lord the one who is peace, in whom alone there is peace, hut we HAVE peace; He is OUR Lord].

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (ver. 2).

[What an immeasurably blessed position and prospect! Yet the Spirit, the new nature, the heart and the mind here also, each and all, have their place].

Then " not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience. And patience, experience; and experience, hope. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:3-5).

Observe it, not only peace within (ver. 1), and a standing place of grace (ver. 2), where we can rejoice, and hope for the glory of God-but here we get two other things marked; let, power of voluntary hearty concurrence with God in His training of ourselves, though by sorrow and patience; and, 2ndly, God's love shed abroad in the heart, as ointment, by the Holy Ghost given to us. What a blessed people we are!

Next we have that which shows what God saw of our state, and what He did. Oh, how unlike the law of Moses! " When we were without strength-ungodly -Christ died for us" (ver. 6).

The law said to us, as creatures, Do the will of God, and live in it; or be cursed, "but God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (ver. 8).

And, then, see what follows-this divine arguing out of things-the blood stayed all the claims of justice against us-the death of Christ was in substitution for us-but, if saving us from the wrath to come, it has reconciled us, there is yet more for us; we shall be saved by His life. "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we

were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled we shall be saved by His life" (vers. 9, 10).

This (as ver. 11 shows us) sets us free to rejoice in God Himself. Not only to rejoice in hope of his glory (as ver. 2), nor to glory in tribulation (as ver. 3), but in God Himself. For the believer is brought unto God to find his joy in Himself. " And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (ver. 11).

Then (and mark it well) Paul contrasts the two Adams and their works and fruits.

Adam The First.

By him sin entered the world; - and death by sin; - a death which passed over all, for all were sinners.

The offense of one, led by judgment unto a condemnation, reigning over all, which, alas, harmonized with the sinnership of all.

Him That Was To Come.

By Him came God's grace, and the free gift of grace, even through Jesus Christ.

Righteousness led, by free grace unto a justification of life which was toward all, but upon them that believe; and abounded unto them that believed, that so grace might reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is wondrous how the Savior and the Redeemer-God does, in this portion, show how He has stooped to measure out a blessing in contrast with all the ruin of creature-work as introduced by man.

And, notice here, that, the blessing is (not merely justification unto life, but is) grace reigning, through righteousness, unto ETERNAL life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now, if we are to see what that is, in its full meaning, we must get past the present enjoyment of it in this our time state, into that time and state in which the eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, will be shown and seen in its own proper sphere and scenes hereafter. Thus we see a "why" and a "wherefore" of its being said, in our text, not " Now if we be dead together with Christ, we know that we do also live together with Him," but " Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."

We have thus far looked at the antecedents of the chapter in which our verse is; and we have seen, on the one hand, tiny man, in the least of all his littleness when in sin; and, on the other hand, God in all the greatness of His patience and long-suffering, and in the grandeur of His mercy. Man was shown out as in progress on the earth,-Gentile and Jew (chaps. 1-3), and, after that, man, as a head, originating the ruin in which his family had been found (chap. 5); and God was seen first in His greatness as Creator, and as the long-suffering God in patience, and then in all that greater greatness, immeasurable, in which He displayed Himself when acting against, and in contrast to, the ruin which man had brought in. His counsel, His plans, His ways, confess Him always and everywhere to be God alone; not one requirement of His own infinite glory has been forgotten; and so fully is it all poured forth in the gift of His Son, and the presence of the Spirit, that

the all-pervading testimony of grace and mercy leaves every soul without excuse; they can only be lost through neglect of the mercy. God has not only done a work by which to glorify Himself in the salvation of them that believe, but it is a work which leaves man, guilty unbelieving man, more condemned than even did the broken law. For who will not say that the guilty condemned culprit is without excuse, self-condemned, and condemnable by every one,-the culprit who, having forfeited life to violated law, despises the free forgiveness and mercy of a sin-pardoning God.

Toward the close of the portion already considered-man having been uncovered in all his pitiful state, and God's estimate of what was needed, if he was to be blessed after a divine fashion-we get the grand thought presented to us of " Grace reigning through righteousness, unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

There are, so to speak, five chapters upon this subject. 1st. Chapter 6, in which the connection of a poor sinner with the Christ, by God, but through faith in the sinner, is shown-and shown in. the various parts of the subject; 2ndly (chap. 7) certain things which to man might seem insuperable difficulties in the making good of some parts of the plan are explained; 3rdly (chap. 8), the entire and realized association of the believer thus and now with God;-all difficulties notwithstanding, no condemnation can reach to that which is in Christ, and no separation from God. 4thly. The connection of this, tasted now only in individual experience, perhaps, with the drift of all. the dealings of God upon earth, through all his dispensations which wend onward till mercy fills the heavenlies and fills the earthlies (chap. 9-11); and, 5thly (chap. 11), to the end of the epistle, the entire association in walk and character now, of God's people with Christ-earth-rejected and heaven-honored.

Their present experience may be, as His was, from the earth-and the taste of it may reach them in blows and sorrows, which only draw forth His sympathies [for blessed be God, He is safely housed, and personally is above all the billows and waves of the wicked world we are in], but we hold His position as earth-rejected, which He was in fully, until His cross-He had a mission from God to the Jews, and was a healer upon earth of sickness, etc.

Blessed as the meditating upon each of these five chapters might be, I must confine myself more particularly, now, to the first of them, viz., chap. 6. In which chapter; I conceive, we get an explanation fuller in detail than usual of the salvation in Christ, so far as its application by God to the believer is concerned.

The complexity of the circumstances of the party to whom the salvation has to be applied, as well as the complexity of the evil which is internal, will soon be evident. The born thrall of Satan, man, is in a world of Satan's arranging, and has a body ready in every way to identify itself with all the evil around. Then as to how it is with " the patient," when grace finds him, the disease is very complex; 1st, there is thorough ignorance of God as He really is, and a thorough accrediting of the false picture of God, which the sinner, in his delusion, has of Him. 2ndly, there is an overweening good opinion of himself-by which, in self-complacency, man takes it for granted that he cannot have a lie in his right hand, and, as a result, a self-sufficiency, as though by his own wisdom and power he would be able to settle everything for God and for himself too, in a way better than the best;-a heart, made to be satisfied with God alone, but gone astray from Him, ever filling itself with vanity and discontentment, blowing its own bubbles of lust; there is, too, a will fickle as the weather-cock, but obstinate and unbending as sinews of brass. Now, how -is such a one to be

fitted to be happy and at home in the Father's house in heaven, to be a channel, through which the river of divine goodness can flow forth in unselfish heavenly and divine blessing. God will do it by His own application of the rich salvation found in Christ Jesus, through faith and by the Spirit. But then, and here enters what is an enlargement of the difficulty to man's mind; while God's whole mind and heart are pledged to each solitary believer, to make all His full salvation to be that of the individual-individual salvation is part of a present testimony, and of a future glory which shall pervade every field in which redeeming love is known. State it, in a rough way, thus, and the difficulty will be seen: I am to be saved,-but my salvation has connection with God's dealings through the last 5000 and odd years, and more especially with His testimony through the last 1857 years, and issues in a glory which is to fill the heavens and fill the earth in the resurrection-morn. This, while it gives that comparative increase of importance to my salvation which a brick built into a wall has, as part of a house, above a brick by the wayside, at the same time reduces me to my just proportion. The temple would not be a perfect temple without that stone; it is an integral part of the Lord's temple now-little as it was and is if looked at in itself.

The sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, opens with a proposition which is common enough among men of perverse and ignorant mind, when they handle God's truth. Only that which they lay down as, according to their logical reasonings-a self-evident axiom of certain result-Paul, or the Spirit of God by Paul, holds up as an absurd and foolish thing, to be denounced at once. The doctrine of free forgiveness of sins, is to man synonymous with, and inseparable from, liberty to go on sinning. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in "sin, that grace may abound?" [Paul says, once and again, "I speak as a man;" but note that he does not stoop to say so here.] He puts the question. His answer is double. First, an expression of revulsion. God forbid [or, away with it (such a thought)]. Then, an expression of the folly of the idea. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (ver. 2). Three things were true of me individually; 1st, I had sin in me; 2ndly, this made me necessarily to be under the penalty of the judgment of God against sin; 1st, in death, and after that, 2ndly, in judgment to come. Sin, death, and judgment, were mine. I was morally dead in sins; and as such my prospect was death, and then judgment. Christ, who was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, in whom Satan had nothing-and who was not of this world-died, as Son of man, under the judgment of the wrath of God due to me. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" was his cry. For me, morally dead, He bore the penalty. God has revealed His own grace and mercy in providing such a way for poor sinners. If others do not admit the death of Christ as a substitute through grace, I do. It is an eternal reality, and I know it exists as such, independent of my faith in it, or my want of faith in it. This faith God has given to me, and His Spirit, that I might receive His truth, and, by act of my own, set to my seal to His truth. "I do," would be my answer to Paul's. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death" (ver. 3). Yes; blessed be God for His grace! I can say, and add, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death."

I, morally dead, had a future death and judgment before me. Christ has borne that judgment in His own death. God's Christ did that: He was sent of God to settle that matter. Certainly God does not think that His Christ failed, or that His work failed in this matter. They are the parties most competent; yea, alone competent, to pronounce a judgment herein: such a judgment they have pronounced, that "it is finished." Through grace, my Amen has been put in, where God's Amen was long before mine. My Amen has little value, in comparison with His; but it is not without its

value; for it is, 1st, the proof of a fresh and present act of His grace-even that He has caused His thought about Christ to be light and brightness to my soul-and this, 2ndly, marks a new and present action of the Holy Ghost, who not only gave the testimony to Christ at first, and wrote the epistles of old, but has now, of recent date, brought home that testimony to my soul. Grace, too, in God, sets a high price in heaven upon a poor sinner's Amen upon earth, to the worthiness of mercy, through Christ, by the Spirit. To the poor sinner's self; the worth is past measure-'tis a measure of eternal, heavenly, divine love. But then, what, if I had done with my Adamic ruined inheritance, and had naught else? Adam's inheritance in Eden is forfeited, I cannot return there-might a poor sinner say, who, having discovered that sin, death, and judgment, were his portion, as a descendant of Adam's, had just learned that God looked upon him as dead and buried in Christ. Well, but this dead and buried together with Christ, is only the first blessing. The second is this,-

" That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified together with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no dominion over Him. " For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God, Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. 6:4-13).

Mark it well, we are those that are alive from the dead; nothing can be clearer. And, indeed, no one can read the portion down, without seeing how this is quietly assumed throughout the whole of it. It is assumed, that since my identification with Christ, through faith, I have complete power over myself: this certainly was not the case when I was in sin. So far from being greater than myself and my members, I was led captive by them, and they were dragged hither and thither, through lust, by Chance influences from without, in what was around me, guided by Satan. It is not, note it, a man trying to overcome himself and his evil, that he may get associated with God, or that God may honor him, but a man recognizing that he is, in grace, associated with Christ by God, and so associated, that Christ's penal death rolls in upon his soul, at once a moral judgment upon all that he, the sinner, was, and at the same moment a complete deliverance from all its consequences; not only from its just judgment-that cloud has passed from the sinner, and is seen to have hurtled once for all over Jesus when upon the cross, having no power to descend ever again upon the believer, but also the power of the law of sin is broken. With a new life given to us in Christ, there is the certainty given, that when He is displayed in life, we shall be displayed in the same life with Him. When He has changed these vile bodies, and fashioned them like unto the body of His glory, then will there be indeed a perfect walk in newness of life; then shall we be also in the likeness of His resurrection fully; we shall never serve sin, but be free from it forever; we shall also live with Him; with Him who dieth no more, over whom death hath no dominion; but while this is blessed truth, the Christian antedates, in his conduct here, through faith, the fulfillment of these blessed

hopes. This is the third truth Paul is pressing here, viz., this: if, FIRST, you have been cleared out from Adam's standing with its sin, death and judgment, by God's reckoning you through grace one with the Christ that died and was buried; and if you have, SECONDLY, been associated in life with the Christ who dies no more, over whom death has no dominion, who lives unto God; why then, THIRDLY, there is a present acting by you upon this being reckoned of God free from sin and this life together with Christ communicated to you, viz. a life here below, according to the life of Christ Himself-as Paul said to me to live is Christ-and according to the life now hidden with Christ in God; which, when it shall appear, shall alone, without let or hindrance, shine in us, and shine fully. Having already gone elsewhere into the force of this reckoning of ourselves to be dead unto sin, I do not rest upon it now: my subject being, " If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him " (ver. 8).

I would, however, just notice a few things:-

1st. The positive unqualified statement of ver. 13: the hands of the clock are to give the true time; a Christian life is to be manifest to all; not merely right affections, happy thoughts, but a life, outside life, which will speak for God.

2ndly. The positive declaration of ver. 14: " For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." With the fair deduction that the soul under grace is more cut off from sin and shut up to good works than a soul under law.

We do not serve Adam with law, sin, and death, but we serve Christ with His grace, obedience, and righteousness.

Holiness and fruit-bearing, and eternal life are ours; " Who boast that though the wages of sin is death-the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." I cannot here enter upon the chapters vii. and viii.; they hardly fall within my subject, though they are deeply interesting, and throw immense light upon what this life of Christ in us is not connected with, and what it is connected with; and how it works amid all the difficulties found in us and around; difficulties of Satan, and of the world in God's past and present dealings dispensationally on earth; and how, too, this life has its own proper range and sphere in Christ, who sits on a throne, under which all the counsels of God for eternity, and heaven, and all the plans and covenants of God for earth and time, roll. Yes; our life is in Him, who is in God; and all God's counsels and plans roll around, and are subject to Him in whom our life is, who Himself is our life (happy, blessed people that we are!). He is the object of them all. Oh that the Lord our God would open wide our hearts, to understand his praise, and to taste the sweetness of that place of Confidante which He has assigned to the Church.

In conclusion, I would remark, there is something unutterably blessed, but withal solemn, in the thought of being a vessel, a member, in which the life of Christ is displayed. Is this my present call and work, to display, here below, the life which is in Christ, as to which Christ is the fountain-source, myself but a channel? And what, if Satan and the world oppose, and if the body has to be reckoned dead? Shall I only comfort myself with the thoughts that soon, in the Father's house on high (the Spirit all pervading), this life shall (in how little a while) have free, and full, and perfect course? No. I have more than this; I can joy and rejoice, not only in what the life will be in courts above, but, in one sense, more purely and more unselfishly, and in the most divine and

Christ-like way; I can rejoice, I say, in all these wilderness sorrows and conflicts, which the life brings to me with it. It is fellowship with Christ's own self; it is the realization of the best part of the blessing, apart from the Circumstances of joy.

Comments Upon Texts: Fourth Text

"It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with Him (Christ Jesus), we shall also live with Him" (2 Tim. 2:11).

So much of what has just been said upon the third text applies to this, that little remains to be added. In Romans, the apostle was laying down the theory, the foundations of the doctrine of the Christian faith. In writing to Timothy, he takes up the practice, the superstructure of a life so built; and, as the times were difficult, stirs him up to enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. His life we have; With Him we expect to live and to reign when we come home to Him-till then, the world under Satan, and heavenly places preoccupied with foes-assure us of suffering if we walk as He, whose life we have, walked here below.

Συ ο■ν κακοπαθησον thou, therefore, endure hardness, is almost the key-note of this letter, chap. 1:8, 12, chap. 2:3, 9, chap. 4:5; and this flows out of the life of Christ, possessed now in circumstances, and amid power strangely contrasted with, and opposed to, itself. The circumstances and the powers around, are adverse to the life; but the life of Jesus Christ is already in us; and he that has it can say, in the power of it, I choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God and of Christ, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. May we, then, endure hardness, as the God soldiers of Jesus Christ, for the little of that, "yet a little while," which remains. Even so. Come, Lord Jesus.

If, what the Spirit states by Paul is, that " we were quickened TOGETHER WITH Christ" (Eph. 2:3, Col. 2:13), then, clearly, we have one life in common with Him. Not; He possessed of one kind of life, held in one kind of way, and we of another kind of life, held in another kind of way; but one life possessed in one and the same way; for we were quickened together with Himself.

It was a life taken by Himself-upon earth, in the grave - taken by, with, and in perfect divine power. A life not subject to death (Horn. vi. 9, Rev. 1:15), nor in us to corruption (1 Peter 1:23). That it has been, as yet, comparatively little displayed by and in Himself upon earth, since His taking of it, is true; in Him its chief display has been in heaven. Yet this matters not: in Him it has been seen in action among His disciples, He being upon earth (John 20 and 21, Acts 1, &c.).

Now that He has left the earth and abides " the little while" in heaven, He is there as Son of man, and interested in what passes down here. He showed it in Stephen's martyrdom, often in connection with Paul, and does so constantly, as we see at the close of Heb. 4, to the feeblest of His disciples. He will return to earth to show it forth again here, in narrower circumstances, which are to be more limited than those of His present position-more restricted to earth.

In us, it never is separated from Himself. It acts in. us down here, but turns us to the heaven where He is; acts in us to make us know ourselves as members of a body, the Head of which is in heaven; acts in us, poor channels of blessing, which it fills as itself ever flowing ceaselessly down from Himself; the alone Fountain-Head. That He is God over all blessed forever, must never be forgotten: yet we have a life in common with Him as Son of Man, He having taken His life again as

man, in other circumstances, and in other connections, than He had it at first.

And what is most peculiar of all to us is, not that the liberty from all condemnation which is His should be ours; not that we should be graced in Him the beloved; not that we should have experiences and prospects in common with Him, but that the objects and motives which influenced Him in His highest acts, are the objects and motives which influence this life in us. As Paul most abundantly shows in Phil. 2 " Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," &c. "For it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure," &c.

Compared View of the First Three Gospels

I apprehend that the Gospel of Mark, which brings under our view the service of Christ, and particularly His prophetic service, and, hence, records simply the accomplishment of that service, as the events arose, is that of the three first gospels, which gives, generally, the chronological order of events. Luke places, in general, events in the same order as Mark, where he follows chronological order at all. In a large portion of his gospel, he drops the chronological order, and gives a general series of instructions, of which the occasions and elements are found scattered in the other two Gospels, or are found only in Luke 1 take Mark, therefore, as presenting, in the main, the historical order. It is to be remarked, that, as is stated in the end of John, very few of the events or miracles of our Lord's life are recorded; only such as show forth his ministry, and specially in the earlier part in Galilee, and then at the close at Jerusalem. In these, the Gospels, in the main, go together. Luke has a large portion of the middle part of his Gospel, occupied with general moral teaching. But the way in which this comes in, is not difficult to perceive, as, in the ninth chapter, it is said, the time was come for Christ's delivering up. In all the Gospels, the common history of the concluding events, begins with the healing of the blind man near Jericho. In Matthew, the method pursued by the Evangelist, is very evident; and the displacement of subjects, where they are found, is connected with that method. I will begin with him. The birth of Christ itself - not found in Mark - is treated in connection with the subject of the Evangelist, or rather of the Holy Ghost, by his pen. Luke's account of Christ's birth, far more detailed than Matthew's, bears its own stamp, too.

But I will now consider the order of Matthew, and the reasons of it, as far as God enables me. Matthew gives us the presenting of Messiah-Jehovah, son of David, to the people; and the form His service took in consequence of His rejection, with the substitution of the new thing, which took place of Messiah's being then received - the church prophetically announced, and the kingdom of glory. The residue of Israel have also their place beyond the intervening epoch of the Church, existing on to the close. The general subject of the Gospel, what characterizes it, is the presenting of Messiah-Jehovah, according to hope and promise, and its consequences. Hence, the genealogy by which the Gospel begins, is Messiah's genealogy, traced to David and Abraham, the two great depositaries of promise, and heads of blessing to Israel, by original promise, and given royalty. Christ was heir of both. It begins also the Gospel, for the accomplishment of this blessing, according to promise, is its subject. Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God to confirm the promises made to the fathers. Luke has his genealogy elsewhere, after the whole history of Christ's birth has been given in connection with Israel, but in Israel's subject-place in the world. From heaven only, the angels announce its universal scope. It is connected with the opening of His ministry, and goes up to Son of Adam, Son of God.

To return to Matthew. In speaking of Christ's birth, Joseph is addressed as son of David, Mary being espoused to him. The child's name thus divinely born, is to be called Jehovah the Savior, for He is to save His people from their sins; all coming to pass, that the prophecy of Emmanuel's coming might be fulfilled. He was the Emmanuel of Israel who was thus born.

Next, at Bethlehem, according to the prophecy, the Gentiles come to own Israel's king, in contrast, moreover, with the false one. Such is His place; but, from the beginning, to be rejected in it. But He is to begin Israel's fortunes afresh, so to speak, as called out of Egypt, the true vine. In due time, He returns back, but it is to take His place with the remnant of Israel, the poor of the flock, in despised Galilee, and be called a Nazarene. Such was the place in Israel of Jehovah-Messiah. Fulfillment of promise -The place to which He had really a title, what He really was His place, in fact. Such are the three great elements of the history of the introduction of Christ into the world, as given in this Gospel. Of course, this is not in Mark; but it gives to us the character of the Gospel. Matthew then passes on to the opening of His ministry, John preparing His way. This, and the temptation, are given in all three Gospels, as the two opening facts, but with some characteristic differences. As to John's ministry, it is simply generally introductory. In Luke, you have, " All flesh shall see the salvation of God;" and various moral instructions to different classes; and the title of "generation of vipers," is applied to the multitude in general. In Matthew, he is simply to prepare the way of the Lord (Jehovah). His prophetic appearance is noticed. The Pharisees and Sadducees only are a generation of vipers. In Luke, he preaches the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. In Matthew, " Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." As regards the temptation, Mark only briefly mentions the fact. The only point to be noticed is, that Luke puts the temptation of the pinnacle of the temple last, giving the moral order: Matthew, the offer of the kingdoms of the world; after which, he sends Satan (now fully manifested) away. Luke, consequently, does not notice this last circumstance, not necessary for his object. Matthew and Mark both notice 'hat Jesus' ministry commenced after John was cast into prison. This makes Him go into Galilee.

In Matthew, thereupon, a fact is noticed which casts a light on the course of the Lord's ministry, connecting Him, as it does, with the poor and despised of the flock in Galilee. He came and dwelt in Capernaum, leaving Nazareth; accomplishing thus, a remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, directly connected with the most specific prophecy there is, of the separation of the residue in Messiah's time (see Isa. 8:13, and following). All this is generally stated in Luke (4:14, 15), only His preaching in Nazareth is given- of that when we speak of Luke.

The call of Andrew, Simon, James, and John, follows, as in Mark; for here what naturally followed historically, has its place in Matthew. It is not merely preaching, but the beginning of the gathering of the residue round His own person. They leave all, and follow Him. They believed on Him, note, already (John 1). Luke here leaves the order, to give the character and service of Christ's ministry, with which the Spirit is specially occupied in that part of that Gospel. Mark had already stated, generally, His preaching on His going into Galilee; and then proceeds with historical circumstances in Capernaum, etc. But Matthew opens out here, into a large general view of His public ministry, and the attention it drew; and then gives a full summary of all the principles of the kingdom He was preaching, and what characters had a place in it. Hence, after His beginning to gather the residue, he tells us of His going all round Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom (Mark says, Kingdom of God), healing, casting out devils, so that His fame spread throughout all Syria. The (■κο■) report went abroad, and multitudes followed him from on all sides. This, of course, embraces some considerable time, and presents, purposely, a general view of the work, and its effects; a picture, in a few verses, of the effects of his ministry, The Gospel of the Kingdom was spread abroad, and attention universally attracted, for it was accompanied with power.

Hereupon, the Spirit of God, without defining any time, but merely saying that the sight of the multitudes gave occasion to it, enters into a full statement, well known as the Sermon on the Mount, of the great principles of the Kingdom embraced as preached, before it came in power, by a faithful few, to whom persecution for righteousness, and for His name's sake, are presented as a probable part of their lot. These principles are the spirituality of the law, and the revelation of the name of the Father. Israel was on the way to the Judge. It was not the great, wise, doctors, Pharisees, but the poor of the flock who entered into the mind of God about the state of things - were like Christ - who would enter into the Kingdom. It is not preaching the Gospel of salvation, but the principles of the Kingdom. The suitability of this, after skewing us how the preaching of that kingdom had attracted the notice of all, is evident. The comparison of Mark 3:13, and Luke 6, shows, I think, clearly, that these are the same occasion; but Mark does not give the sermon; and Luke, who does more briefly, shows it was when he had chosen the twelve. This last circumstance is not given in Matthew. They are noticed as already chosen, at the time of their sending forth (10:1), which was a subsequent act. We can hardly speak of date in Matthew for the Sermon on the Mount; because, while Mark gives details of Christ's ministry in Galilee (of which Matthew, indeed, gives many afterward), Matthew here gives a general comprehensive view of that ministry as a whole. Still it was, in a general way, at its commencement; and the sermon is introduced, out of its historic place, before all the details of the ministry in Galilee, in order to give the character of the heirs of the kingdom, when the fact of its preaching in Galilee, and the public attention it had excited, had been brought before us. The place which these instructions have in this Gospel, is entirely determined by the subject. He gathers the residue round Himself. The kingdom is announced in all the prophetic country (Galilee) with power, the report spread, the character of the kingdom given. This closes this great introductory portion. We have then the details of the presentation of Jehovah Messiah, and the result gradually developed: and that at once very rapidly and characteristically. For the great statement, as a whole, of what was doing as regards Israel, was closed with the Sermon on the Mount.

A second portion of this Gospel closes with 9:34. Into this second part I will now enter. First, He is Jehovah in Israel; for Jehovah alone cleansed the leper, and the Jewish Mosaic ordinances are here owned. This miracle is introduced out of its place. It took place after the going into Capernaum, and healing Simon's wife's mother. But it gave the first grand characteristic of Jesus' presence in this Gospel Jehovah Messiah in Israel. But Matthew teaches us the rejection, also, of this, and the consequent setting aside of Israel, and the introduction of the new thing. Hence, on the cleansing of the leprosy by "I will, be thou clean," follows the healing of the Gentile's servant, on the Gentile's faith in the divine person of the Christ, with the announcement of the admission of the nations, from all sides, into the kingdom, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while the children of the kingdom would be thrust out. This, Mark does not mention. Though happening at this period, generally, when the Lord was frequently at Capernaum, I apprehend, from the history given in Luke, that it happened later. It is introduced here for the great principle involved in it. -What passed in the synagogue, in Capernaum, in the first mentioned visit to it, is omitted in Matthew. It had no place in the purpose for which Matthew's account is given. But he takes up the latter part of the same sabbath visit, the healing of Peter's wife's mother, and a multitude of other sick, because it gives an additional character of Christ's presence, in which, in grace, prophecy was accomplished as to Him - His profound interest in the sorrows of Israel (and, indeed of man), that is, His charging Himself and His own heart with all, taking them on Himself. This pity, note, is mentioned. His going

out into the desert is left out. This scene at Capernaum is only so far out of place, as the account of the leper and the centurion are introduced before it, as the great characteristics of his position, whereas they historically come after it. Another characteristic element of His condition, as thus come in Israel, was that, Messiah and Lord as He was, He had nowhere to lay His head. He was just going to cross over the sea of Tiberias, when he declares this to the scribe: but this happened later in His service in Galilee, as we see by comparing Mark and Luke. But it is introduced here in Matthew, without any note of time, as an important element in the position of Jesus. The circumstances of this passage over the sea, afford us another element of His history. Not only is He rejected and houseless, through man's hatred, and God's love serving man in spite of that hatred; but, if so, His disciples, the remnant, will be tossed about while he appears to be asleep. But they are in the same boat with Him who can calm the sea with a word, and still the raging of the waters, though He may allow them to rise for the trial of the faith of those that are His. The healing of Legion comes in exact order as regards the passage over the sea; but as to the general order, is, consequently, displaced with it. But the picture it affords of the character and results of Christ's presence, tends to complete the divine instruction of this Gospel. Power was there to set aside wholly the most mighty, and, for man, unbridled and irresistible power of Satan. The time was not come for his being bound in the bottomless pit, and the demons therefore say, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" The effect on the poor maniac is not told here. That is blessedly given in Luke; who, therefore, only speaks of one in whom this effect was produced. The simple point here, was the complete power of Satan, and the power present to set it aside. In Luke, we find the subsequent service of the delivered remnant unfolded. Here, it is the present position of Jesus and the Jews. A word where His power is exercised, gives complete deliverance, and thus the remnant are set free; but, as regards the mass, the result is figured by the unclean swine. They hurry on to destruction. As to Christ, He leaves their coasts.

Here Matthew returns pretty much to the general order of the history of His service in Galilee; but the bearing of the Gospel is fully maintained. The Lord heals the sick of the palsy in Capernaum, his own city, as it is called; for there he had fixed his residence when not going through the country. This case begins a new series, showing the power, character, and efficacy of His coming, always keeping in view, an illustrative of, the general subject of the Gospel. That coming is presented here to Israel, according to promise; and its result as reaching far beyond Israel on His rejection. And here the case of the paralytic is presented with special view to this result; that is, to the place Jesus takes as rejected by Israel, and the grace and personal power from which that flows. Palsied as man, as Israel particularly, was, the source of this in the government of God, lay deeper than outward circumstances. It was their sins that had brought them there. But grace had come; one having title to forgive, and specially here as regards God's ways and government, though surely in view of, and founded on, the needed sacrifice. He is really the Son of Man (far more than King of Israel); but, as such, He has brought grace and power into the midst of the people. The Lord meets the whole case - goes to the heart and conscience of the sufferer. " Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." In reply to the reasoning of the scribes in their hearts, He, who searches the heart, replies by this wonderful truth: "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Thus He takes not the title of Messiah, not the righteous man of Psa. 1, nor the Son of God of Psa. 2, but of the Son of Man of Psa. 8; His full title, when rejected in the former character, and, at the same time, of perfect grace, as entering into man's condition and sorrow. To prove His title, He, by a word makes the paralytic rise up and walk. This act, then, under the title of

Son of Man, is of the largest import. It is grace, forgiveness so as to restore. He is Son of Man - all Israel wants-but His title much larger; and, meanwhile, the Accomplisher of that which is the witness that He is the Jehovah of Israel's blessing (though coming as Son of Man), who forgives all their sins, and heals all their infirmities. He proved His title to one by the accomplishment of the other. In this way, it is very characteristic. Compare Psa. 8:3. The Lord, in this Gospel, never calls Himself anything but Son of Man; others, Son of David; and the demons, Son of God.

Next, the Lord calls Matthew, or Levi. This is still in the historical order; but introduces most important elements of the Lord's history, in connection with the subject of this Gospel. It is grace above all traditional, or even Israelitish thoughts (for he was the expression of Gentile dominion over Israel); but the Lord came as physician, not to call the righteous, but sinners. Mark! to call, not simply to bring blessing to Israel (though laboring in Israel), and crown their hopes and state. He calls, and calls sinners. It is grace; but the Lord's comment on this goes further, and is more explicit. He cannot put the new wine of power, living power and grace, which He is bringing in, into the old bottles. The whole position is brought out in its double aspect. The Bridegroom - the Bridegroom of Israel was there. The faithful remnant of Israel, the disciples, the children of the bride-chamber, who recognized Him, and attached themselves to Him, could not mourn. How should they? Besides, the truth was, these ordinances for flesh could not receive the new wine of grace, and of the Spirit. Thus, that He was present in Israel, and the impossibility of Israel, as it was, being the vessel of the power, grace and purpose of God in Him, are both here brought out. The new wine was to be put into new bottles. Chapter 8 gives, historically, His service, and its results. This applies its principles, showing the grace that met Israel in Jehovah's presence; but, in fact, the impossibility of that power in its energies, being introduced into the system in which Israel then stood. In point of fact, He is rejected by the characteristic leaders of the nation.

In what follows in Matthew, we have the Lord's persevering grace in Israel, though the new wine, He well knew, had to be put into new bottles. Israel's real state is shown, explaining why there must be this new power - life-giving power - introduced; but grace towards Israel is shown, which will persevere across (however temporarily suspended by judgment on the people) the whole church interval of time, to resume its activity, in the latter days, towards the beloved and chosen people. This is remarkably brought out to the end of the tenth chapter. The disciples are sent forth, forbidden to go to Gentiles or Samaritans; and they would not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man will come. Chapter 11 brings out their present rejection, as having rejected John and Himself; the revelation of the Father by the Son being the result - the resource of the heavy-laden, the easy yoke in the midst of sorrow.

I may remark here, that Matthew having, in order to show the principles of the Kingdom, introduced the Sermon on the Mount, already as a great general feature of the Lord's teaching early in the Gospel, omits here the choosing of the twelve; on which, after coming down to a level place (English translation, " the plain "), a little lower down the mountain, the sermon seems to have followed (see Mark 3:13; and Luke 6). The case of Jairus' daughter, on the other hand, and of the woman who touched the hem of His garment, are introduced here; though this comes, I apprehend, historically, after the parables by the sea-shore, and Jesus' return from healing Legion; the last Matthew had, as we have seen already given, to complete his general picture of Jewish history.

The bearing of the two facts recorded in chap. 9, consequent on the teaching as to the new bottles and before the Jewish mission of chap. 10, on the course of the Messianic history as presented by Matthew, I shall now advert to. The real state of Israel was death. On the point of dying as seen by others, in God's estimate Israel was dead before Jesus came. He visited it as dying - He really found it dead. So it is treated here; but, come in life-giving power, Jesus will give it life. This will be accomplished when He comes again; but He was, at His first coming, on the way with Israel and the whole crowd around Him, and power in Him where faith was in exercise through grace, to arrest death, to give life where all else had failed. The poor woman thus represents the residue whose faith laid hold on Jesus in the midst of the crowd around, and thus-distinguished from it. These the Lord owned. They are healed and saved on the way. As regards the one for whom He set out, He must, when the time comes, not heal but raise from the dead. For God holds Israel yet as but asleep, though really morally dead. This will be at the close. Hence He acts in power with the blind in Israel, who own Him Son of David. On their faith, following Him even apart from the crowd, and assured He could do it, He gives them sight. The dumb, in like manner, receives his speech. Sight and a voice to praise are restored to them. It was never so seen in Israel. The Pharisees, blaspheming, ascribe it to Satan. But we have seen that the subject here is the persevering grace towards Israel, of which the two forms were shown in the woman and Jairus' daughter. Hence, in spite of the blasphemy of the Pharisees, which yet shews the condition of Israel as a nation, the Lord continues His course of patient grace (9:35), and seeing the shepherdless multitudes, is moved with compassion, and utters to His disciples His sense of the greatness of the harvest and the fewness of the laborers, urging them to pray to the harvest's Lord to send them out; and in this spirit sends the twelve forth. These are sent exclusively to the house of Israel - the lost sheep of the house of Israel in the midst of opposition and difficulty; but their mission continues after Christ's death, but still viewed as exclusively to Israel, and omitting all notice of the Church or Gentiles, and overleaps all the time in which the people are not as such in the land, and tells them to go through the cities, which they would not have done till the Son of Man was come. He was there, but the Lord goes on till He be come as such in power. It is, as I have said, the persevering grace to Israel distinguishing the remnant. - This mission, relatively to what immediately proceeds, is not out of its historical order in Matthew; but its exclusively Israelitish character is only in this Gospel. In chap. 11, the Lord returns to the present position of Israel in reference to Himself, and its results as to the place He was about to take, the real reason of His rejection. The preparatory message of John is closed, and he comes to have his own personal place according to his own faith. Great above all born of women, the least in the Kingdom is greater than he. The Lord bears witness to him, not he to the Lord. He is rejected; Christ is rejected by the Jews: warnings and grace alike. But the real truth of this rejection was, not his want of worthiness, but that Christ's person is too glorious to be known by any but the Father; or the Father whom He made known, by any but Him, and such as He revealed Him to; all were dependent on this, that is, on Christ's revelation of the Father to them. That is the glory of His person as Son-as Man on earth is brought out. Next in reward of perfect submission comes full joy. He had learned the sorrows of man; knew how hopeless to seek good there, and presents Himself in grace as the rest of the weary, and the spirit of submission as shown in Him for repose of soul on the way. This is historically the complete change of the dispensation. Mark has not this account, and the two parts of the discourse in Matthew (that is, the rejection of John and Christ, and the sheaving what His rejection by the Jews, while guilty as to what they did see, really came

from, that is, the divine glory of His person which none could fathom; and the blessed remedy in Christ's revealing the Father to the babes), belong historically to different times. The latter part is found in Luke 10, where it is, $\nu \alpha \tau \tau \rho \alpha$, "the same hour," which is precise; and it is found after the mission to the seventy, where its connection is beautifully evident on the joy of His disciples on their return. It is general here, $\nu \kappa \epsilon \nu \omega \tau \kappa \alpha \iota \rho$ "at that epoch" or "season"; and such it essentially was, when His rejection, now after His ministry, took a definite form and a decided character. Luke's statement in chap. 8 of what the Lord says as to John, has also a more moral character, i.e., more reference to the moral grounds of rejection, less to the dispensational. This change of dispensation is brought out in a very important point, in what follows in Matthew. The Sabbath was a formal seal of the Covenant, "I gave them my Sabbaths" (see Ez. 20:12). These were the intimation of, and based on the idea of rest in the first creation, and that by man's obedience under law, and the connection of Israel with God, as a people enjoying promise on the condition of obedience. Not only they had failed, but they had practically rejected the Great Repairer of Breaches - the Obedient One. The introduction of the facts relative to the Sabbath here, are only so far out of their chronological place as the introduction of other posterior events has pushed them forward. Their moral place, in connection with the object of the Gospel, the change of dispensation or ground of relationship with God, consequent on the rejection of Jehovah Messiah, is evident. Two great principles are presented; -the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath, and - grace - it is lawful to do good-mercy, not sacrifice, is what God delights in. Some interesting details are connected with it. David's rejection opened this liberty. Sacred things had become in a measure common. So now where David's Son was. The priests profaned it in the temple. The glory of Christ's person was above the temple, as the duties of that, because God was there, were above the Sabbath. Had they understood mercy, they would have had moral light, and not condemned those who through the glory of the Son of Man were entirely guiltless. His person was above the conventional bond He Himself had formed; His rejection (and Son of man, comp. Psa. 8 and 2, implies that), broke it on their part wholly, giving place to this higher and wider title. Thus the sign of the first covenant with Israel, and expression of God's rest in creation, had found the place in which the truth of man's and Israel's state set it. Only sovereign grace took up the hope of rest; and, blessed be His name, through the unchangeable title of His person, above the effect of responsibility in His creation.

The closing scene is then beautifully and solemnly brought out. The Pharisees seek to destroy Him. The judgment of their system, and the introduction of supreme grace was insupportable But Christ was not now to execute judgment. He would show judgment to the Gentiles, but personally, then, He would not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax till He sent forth judgment to victory. Blind and dumb, healed by His power, are a witness to the people that He is Son of David. The Pharisees, unable to deny it, ascribed the power they cannot deny to Satan; blaspheming the Holy Ghost. For this there was no forgiveness. Sovereign grace may re-create and thus restore Israel; but the tale of its responsible condition is now told. The tree was corrupt. It was an evil and adulterous generation; no sign would be given it but that of the Son of Man in the heart of the earth like Jonas, and all their hopes buried with it, to be founded by grace on Him they had rejected. Nineveh and the Queen of the South would judge them. The unclean spirit once gone out, would return with worse; their state and judgment would be worse than when they went to Babylon. The Lord then denies all His natural ties with flesh, i.e., with Israel, in the person of His mother and brethren, and accepts only the fruit of the Word in the residue, as that which belongs

to Him. In Luke, the circumstances of His mother and brethren's coming (Luke 8:19), is placed at the end of the parable of the Sower, bringing out the moral importance of the word without any reference to the rejection of Israel, or mark of date, though there be such found in the English; not in the Greek. The teaching as to Nineveh and Jonas, and the statement as to Beelzebub, is all given together in that part of the Gospel of Luke which is not chronologically arranged, but the events put together in their moral bearing and so applied (Luke 11:14, seq.). The message of John, and the internal change, connected with it, to the revelation of the Father by the Son, has no place in Mark. If Luke gives the moral change, and Matthew the governmental one, connected with the rejection of Jehovah-Jesus, Messiah, Mark, who shows us the service of the Lord in testimony, does not present this dispensational change in either form. The immediate facts leading to it are of course given by him historically in their place. We find, therefore, in our Gospel, before the parables (in which the essential service of Christ in the Word is given, and the subsequent forms of the Kingdom; and in Mark, what is peculiar to him, the entire absence of Christ's direct ministry when these forms arose), before this, I say, we find the blasphemy of the Pharisees, and Christ's preference of His disciples to all natural relationship. What follows the parables in Mark (save His being despised in His own country, which comes in its place in Matthew, and we will consider further on), we have already seen transposed in Matthew to an earlier part of the history, where we have seen its application to the subject he treats of. The facts I refer to are the crossing in a storm, and the history of Legion which follows; the raising of Jairus' daughter, which happened on his return; the woman with an issue of blood, which all go together; and the sending out the twelve, which, as we have seen, is given a peculiar importance in Matthew, and is introduced in connection with a most general statement of His ministry, so as to imply no date (Matt. 9:35,36). But Matthew introduces there, in their proper place relatively to what goes before the displaced series just mentioned, two facts, omitted in Luke and Mark, which bore upon his subject in a way already noticed (9:27, 34). On this follows the general statement of His ministry and sending out of the twelve. Luke, in the main, here follows the order of Mark, i.e., gives the history chronologically (Luke 8:22).

The parables we have frequently noticed as beginning a new scene, taking a wholly new ground for Christ as to His own ministry on earth, and as to the Kingdom. He comes to sow, not to seek fruit. He brings with him the only thing which can produce fruit; and the Kingdom is not His presence in power, at any rate until the harvest. We get the public result in the world while He is away, and then His aim and object, and the great result under His hand. But the result of His teaching in Israel was, to be reckoned the carpenter's son, and to prove, that in His own country and house the prophet has no honor. This, in Matthew, is in its place only by the transposition of other facts, above noticed, to a preceding part. It is thus brought into direct moral connection with His rejection, and the general effect of His sowing the Word. It is not in Luke as a distinct event. In what follows, we have a development by facts of the great change taking place, rather than the unfolding of it in figure or teaching, until He opens out the new thing, and then, after that, the closing history comes on. With the evidences of the change already fully taught, came the proofs to Israel of the character of Him who was rejected.

First we have the account (14:1-13) of John's imprisonment and death by the wicked and apostatizing King of Israel, identified with the Gentile power of the west. But this does not diminish (14:14-31), though taking his full part in the sorrow, Christ's interest in the shepherdless people.

He shows Himself to be that very One who in Israel's brightest days to come will satisfy the poor with bread (Psa. 132); but withal He dismisses Israel, and while His disciples are toiling in His absence, is on high to pray; He rejoins them, and all is calm (22-33). There is such a thing as walking on the water by night to meet Him; but the eye must be fixed on Him. It fails for the earth. He rejoins the ship (the remnant of Israel), and all is calm, and He is owned Son of God. In Gennesaret, where He had been once rejected, He is now received, and all are healed. The death Of John Baptist forms no part of Luke's history; he refers to His imprisonment in closing the account of His ministry quite early in the Gospel (chap. 3). The results follow in the same succession here as in Mark. The greater part of them are not in Luke at all; that is, from the feeding the five thousand to Peter's confessing Christ; the whole of which form one subject. The retiring into the desert, in Matthew, consequent on John's death, is, in Mark, connected with the rest given to the disciples on their return from their mission. In Matthew, this mission had been displaced to she, all God's dealings with Israel in this respect. It is found in chap. 10.

What I have spoken of just above (chap. 14), evidently forms a complete subject - a view of all His relationship with Israel from John's rejection to the Millennium.

In chap. 15, we find the question of a Pharisaic righteousness, and tradition opposed to God's law, and all Israel's worship as a nation, rejected on Isaiah's authority. God would have the heart right. To the disciples He denounces the true, character, of the Pharisees. They had only to leave them alone; with leaders in evil they were to have nothing to do. They were leading Israel into the ditch. The disciples were dull in apprehending this truth; but He explains that truth to them in grace, skewing what man, man's heart, is. Christ having judged thus the Pharisaic Israel, an important event presents itself. He does not go out of Israel, but goes to the borders of Tiro and Sidon, which He could take elsewhere as a pattern of evil and obduracy. There, a woman of the accursed race of Canaan meets Him. She appeals to Him in His character of Heir and Fulfiller of Promise: on this ground she has no title, no answer. Christ fully recognized the people in God's point of view. The bread was the children's; He is minister of the circumcision. The woman owns it; but alleges there was grace in God, out of pure goodness which could reach beyond to the dogs which had no title. Hence she receives the blessing on the ground of what God was; a principle of immense essential importance, and at this moment opening up a ground of God's dealings, which was to be the basis of all hope. Hence we see Jesus in the midst of Israel, and owning it, but a perspective of blessing which was founded on what God was in Himself, and applicable to the sorrows of one who had no title at all. In chap. 15:30, 31, the presence of persevering grace and goodness in Israel, so that every ear that could hear, and every heart that could feel, might be reached in spite of the Pharisees, is brought out in the power of Christ in grace, so that they glorified the God of Israel. Instead of this general statement, the force of which is evident as regards the place which Christ still held in respect of Israel, we find in Mark a special miracle of opening of ears, and loosing the tongue of the deaf and dumb man - Christ's personal power and its character (for He will do this for Israel as He does for us), hence it is not glorifying the God of Israel there, but Jesus has done all things well-- His service and its excellency. The second time the Lord feeds the multitude, the act is presented in another way from the first, though the power be the same, and its character confirms the view we have taken. This is the case in Mark, as well as in Matthew. The second instance of miraculous feeding is not found in Luke. In the first, it is the power of Messiah as King in Israel, and able to give this power to others. There is no need, says the Lord, to send them

away, " give ye them to eat." In the second, it is the patient and tender compassion towards Israel, of which we have spoken. The multitude had been long with Him, and He would not let them go fasting away. The number twelve, as elsewhere remarked, is indicative of divine governmental power exercised in man: seven of spiritual completeness; and such, I doubt not, are their bearings here. This patience of the Lord with Israel, though shown everywhere in fact, was not the subject of Luke's Gospel; it presents throughout, after the first two chapters, the morally new thing. The third chapter is transitional. The circumstances which followed the feeding the five thousand, in chap. 14, and subsequent rejection when He had been rejected before; His absence on high, while the disciples were toiling on the sea, referring to the change which should take place in His relationship with Israel, have no place here; for it is His patient grace where that change has been already witnessed of and shown. Indeed, what follows is the expression of the fact, that it is now already brought to light. The two great classes which composed the nation, desire a sign- He refuses it; they could discern the sky, but not this time; they should have none but Jonas, and He leaves them; and warning His disciples against them, brings out the witness of their dullness to profit by their teaching. This closes this part of the history, and introduces the witness as to the entirely new order of things, which a rejected Savior was going to set up -the Church, and administration of the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth. In Luke, the demand of a sign is found, with other similar statements; and the Ninevites and Queen of Sheba, in the general instructions of chap. 11. The prophetic doctrine as to the Church and the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, is found only in Matthew. The Father had revealed to Peter the person of Christ, and Christ gave him his place in the Kingdom. Here the disciples are forbidden to announce Christ any more as the Messiah; and the Lord henceforth tells them of His suffering, death, and resurrection; and next shows them the glory and character of the Kingdom in the world to come; the law and prophets disappearing and leaving Christ to be heard as Son of God. Thus we have Christ - no more to be announced - the future glory of the Son of Man - and the Son of God to be heard now, the law and prophets disappearing. All this is directly associated with the glory that was to take place on His rejection. They were not to tell of it till He was risen. His (as to the Jews) provisional but rejected coming is illustrated by that of Elias in John the Baptist. What is said here of Elias, forms no part of this instruction in Luke; for there it is more moral power which forms the subject, and not dispensational history. We find after the transfiguration, the anticipated display of the Kingdom in Heaven, the power of Satan manifested; the disciples were not able to cast him out. This marks the incapacity to avail themselves of Christ's presence here on earth as the reason of His departure; a solemn lesson in any dispensation of God. As yet, Christ Himself still exercises His patient power. The promise is given of displacing the most apparently solid seat of power if faith were there. This is remarkable after their incapacity to do the smallest thing when He was there. This is only in Matthew. In Luke, there follows the judgment of the various forms in which selfishness displays itself. In all the three Gospels, the cross is taught. In Matthew, there follows a circumstance which gives its character to all this part of the Gospel of Matthew only - blessedly associating the disciples with Christ. As children of the great King, they were free from the tribute paid to Him (the temple Didrachma), but which then, not to offend, He will pay. He shows divine knowledge, and divine power over creation, but He is subject; and He puts Peter into the same rank of children with Himself. Thus we have the Church and the Kingdom in administration and in glory. The matter of the didrachma had shown in what spirit the true children of the Kingdom were to walk till it came in power.

Thereon (chap. 18), follows a series of incidents opening out this walk, and with a good deal of detail. The principles which should govern this walk personally and collectively are taught, the assembly of disciples taking definitely the place of the synagogue as to being within and without. This is peculiar to Matthew, as introducing here the new institutions of God. Others are found dispersed in Luke, in their place, as general moral instructions, which character they also have. In particular, we have the unprofitableness of flesh, but the relationship God formed in it owned. These general instructions go to the end of chap. 20:28. As to the order of it in Matthew, there is no particular remark to make. It follows as in Mark. The general instruction of leaving all and taking up the cross, is also found in a similar way, put before the last part of the Lord's history at Jerusalem, which begins with His passing: through Jericho (Matt. 19:16, 20:19; Luke 18:15, and following). They naturally precede historically His own rejection; but in Luke, a mass of instruction comes in between the last chronologically-stated fact (10:17) and this, with much as to God's ways in grace peculiar to Him; with parts, however, of what we find here in Matthew, dispersed among other matter, according to the subject spoken of.

A few of the points in Matthew call for particular notice. The spirit of a child is the pattern of the Christian. God has His eyes on little children with special favor. They are to be received in Christ's name. It is not the Father's will they should perish: not that they are not lost in nature; but Christ came to save the lost sheep. The parable of the lost sheep is applied to them. This last part, as to God's dispensation as to them, is peculiar to Matthew. Next, extreme jealousy as to occasions of falling, in oneself; care not to stumble the weak; the means to be taken to preserve godly order as to wrongs done, are prescribed; and here the Church, i.e., two or three assembled in Christ's name, is introduced as taking its place. It thus becomes the new center - completely takes the place of the synagogue. What is there bound on earth is ratified in heaven, and what agreed thus to be sought on earth, given from heaven. The two or three assembled in Christ's name become a constituted institution, sealed, when real, by the sanction and authority of heaven, and the inside or outside of it takes the place of Jew and heathen. This is peculiar to Matthew; this is extended to the spirit of personal forgiveness as regards the individual (compare for both 1 Cor. 6) But the Kingdom of Heaven (not the Church), is hence like the King, who forgives, and afterward brings all on the guilty where the principles of His own conduct were not accepted and imitated. Thus the Jews, with whom on Christ's intercession, God dealt in grace, forgiving them the ten thousand talents, refusing grace towards the Gentiles, came under the full guilt of all as to God's ways with them as to the Kingdom. But the principle is now morally true, save the general principle stated elsewhere; this also is peculiar to Matthew.

The teaching of the Lord on marriage, is not in Luke, referring, as it does, to the peculiar instructions of Judaism. The latter part, which introduces the special power of the new thing, while sanctioning God's original and gracious institution, is in Matthew alone (1 Cor. 7 answers to this). The case of the children and of the young man, in which nature, as God created it, is held blessed:-the law, as applied to man (2nd table), shown to be the path of life, if nature could keep it, is found in all. Sovereign grace is needed for being saved, for flesh is fallen and evil; and seeks, if outwardly blameless, its delight elsewhere than in God. This is more briefly stated in Luke, as a great general principle. The answer to Peter on this point, in Matthew, has this also in particular, that it introduces the dispensational glory hereafter in the kingdom, and thereon adds the parable of the householder and laborers, to guard, by sovereign grace and goodness, against the

tendency to turn the encouragement afforded by reward, into a claim of self-righteousness. It is on the seizing of this, and through this, that the already stated principle of first last, and last first, depends. Only grace, and because it is 'grace, inverts it, and puts last first; while the former states the shortcoming of nature, that first shall be thus last.

The last events now approach, and Christ sets out on His way to Jerusalem. Here, all the three Gospels are together; only the request of Zebedee's children is not found in Luke. This connects itself with the cross of which he had been speaking; and the sovereignty of God, giving to whom he would. Christ's answer, is the manifestation of His perfect meekness in humiliation -His absolute subjection to the will of His Father- His perfectness, as put to the test, in motive, and obedience, and self-renunciation. He could lead His disciples into suffering with Him, and tell them it would be so; but the reward, as to their place, and glory in the kingdom, He must refer them to the Father for. But while the expression of perfectness in Jesus, it gave a moral character to the exaltation also. The least in self, would be the greatest there. He came in perfect love, not to be honored, and to give his life a ransom for many. Nor would there be thus merely Jews in the kingdom, according to their then hopes, and His presence on the earth. The redemption-work in love was now about to be accomplished. This closed up the full character of the change, and the real work He came to do. In what follows, the Lord takes again the Jewish character, because he was for the last time, and in order to suffer, presenting Himself to the people.

This last history is, in all the three Gospels, introduced by his healing the blind man on the roadside by Jericho. Jericho itself has a peculiar character in Jewish history. The first opposing power to Israel's taking possession of promise; marked with a curse as the seat of the power of evil when the power was overcome; visited by Elijah on his way to Jordan and glory; healed by Elisha on his return to Israel, when the glorifying of Elijah had been accomplished;-it had the stamp of a certain initiatory character in God's relationship with the land of promise, not the direct title of blessing, but the way of blessing, through the curse, and the meeting the power of evil. Here the Lord, just as He was called out of Egypt, begins his last presentation to Israel. He heals the blind under the name of the Son of David -heals them who called on Him, under that name, for mercy, in persevering faith, in spite of the multitude. He had compassion on them. Luke adds here, mercy to the chief publican, and the Jewish correction of the idea of the kingdom, announcing His departure, the responsibility of His servants, and the judgment upon His citizens, who, when He was gone, sent after Him, to say they would not have Him to reign over them.

The riding into Jerusalem on the ass's colt, follows, then, alike in all the three Gospels - His presentation to Zion as king, according to Zechariah. Some details are given in Mark; His survey of the temple, and going out Again, and returning the next day, when He cleanses it. The general fact merely is stated in Matthew; that is, the 'result of His royal visitation as Jehovah the king, without holding to the order, for the fig tree was cursed before He cleansed the temple. In Luke, He weeps over the city; that Evangelist again, as he is wont, presenting the Lord's moral grace and tenderness, the kindness of Jehovah. The cursing of the fig-tree is not in Luke. This is dispensational, the judgment of fruitless Judaism, as under the old covenant, adding with it the power that would accompany faith in God, in the new thing to be set up. The whole, apparently stable, power of that system would disappear. And so it has. What follows is common to the three Gospels; but there are characteristic traits. The question of authority in the priest is met by their avowed incompetency as to John. The parable of the two sons is peculiar to Matthew. It is the

Lord's judgment as to the fruit of His work among the Jews, His judgment of these last. The parable of the husbandman, and the revelation of the rejected stone, is next in all three Gospels; the various classes of persons in Israel come up for judgment. But this parable is general; referring to all that were active in the vineyard the Lord had planted. This was taken from the Jews. Broken now by stumbling on the stone, they would be ground to powder when He should fall on them, i.e. all on whom it should; for, indeed, they will not then be alone, as they were in the stumbling on the stone. But responsibility to bear fruit was not all. They had rejected gracious invitations to the marriage of the king's son. This is not in Mark. In Luke 14 there is a similar parable. I am not quite clear whether it is the same. It is, if so, introduced in Luke in its place, and its absence from Mark here accounted for. It is not introduced in Matthew, with any connection of time or circumstance, as having been spoken at this time. Its place, as to the judgment of the Jews, is evident. They are judged in it for the rejection of grace, as they are in the parable of the husbandman for failure in producing fruit. Some circumstances are added in Matthew, and which are important as to the judicial dealings of God, which are wholly omitted in Luke; while the moral tone and pursuit of grace, in spite of evil, is more largely delineated in Luke. The contrast of the dealings of God with Jews and Gentiles, with which last the house is filled, and the judgment, both of Jews and professing Christendom, is what characterizes Matthew. The difference of the two parables in Luke and Matthew, will make us sensible of the characteristic difference of what is given of God in the two Gospels. I will enter, therefore, into the details of each, sufficiently to show it. In Matthew it is a similitude of the kingdom of heaven. In Matthew, we have two messages, those, I doubt not, of the Apostles in the life time of Christ, and of the same after His death, when all was accomplished and ready. It is, in a general way, made light of. By others, the servants are ill-treated and slain. Thereupon, the murderers (the Jews) are slain, and their city destroyed. This is the judgment on the Jews and Jerusalem. Then the message is sent out to the highways (the Gentiles), and the wedding furnished. There a person is found (many called, but few chosen) not having personally what belonged to and suited the wedding, and he is cast out into outer darkness. This is, evidently, more than an earthly dispensational judgment. In Luke, a certain man makes a great supper; it is not for the king's son, nor the kingdom of heaven. The two first summons of Matthew come together, in general, or are absorbed in one; the moral details of excuse are given, and there is no slaying and ill-treating of servants. There the poor of the city (i.e. among the Jews) are sought out; but this does not fill the house, and the highways and hedges are sent to (the Gentiles), and the house filled. There is no judgment of the Jews, nor of the unworthy guests. The moral character in grace of the parable in Luke, is evident; the dispensational dealing in Matthew, equally so. Only the Jewish rejecters do not taste of the supper. We can well suppose it to be a different parable, though the Holy Ghost gives us but a very small part of what was done and said, and even of one and the same discourse, only what instructs on the point in hand.

Next, the Pharisees and Herodians are judged, the opposed classes among the Jews of strict and temporizing Jews. Christ puts the Jewish position (and, indeed, of everyone) on the true ground. I mean as to their real relationship to the Gentile power or empires. Next, the Sadducees are judged, and the true nature of the resurrection shown, and from Moses himself; only Luke, in addition, gives here a clear statement of the connection of the resurrection with the age to come; and, at the same time, affirms the abiding intermediate state of the soul. Next, the essence of the law is taught. The same instruction is found in the general teaching in Luke, not in the parallel place to this, and the parable of, the good Samaritan is annexed. But this, I apprehend, was

another statement to the same effect, as may easily be conceived. The true substance of the law being stated, the position the Christ was to take, unintelligible for the Pharisee, and consequent on His rejection, is then brought out, and silences the pretended wisdom of the Jewish teachers. The Lord's instruction is drawn from Psa. 110. It is easy to see how this closes, with the most perfect fitness, these remarkable interviews.

But, in Matthew's Gospel, which certainly goes over to the future hopes of Israel, while judging its present state, as we have seen (chap. 10), we have, with the general instruction to beware of scribes, a remarkable passage, recognizing their official status and authority. They sit in Moses' seat. Yet the actual, practical judgment is more full and terrible; and to this is added, that, as they excused themselves from the guilt of the prophet's death, such would be sent (apostles, prophets, etc.) to them, and they would be put to the test on this point also, that, the wickedness being come to its height, the blood of all righteous men, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias the prophet, might be demanded of this generation. This is peculiar to Matthew, and shows that a ministry was sent to the Jewish nation, as such, in the Apostles and Prophets of the New Testament, ending in the judgment of the nation. The connection of this with God's dealings with the Jews, as taught in this Gospel, is evident, and important for understanding other passages and dealings of God. In Mark, this warning as to the scribes is very generally and briefly given. The plaint over Jerusalem is not found in Mark. It is in Luke; but when Christ was in Galilee, and warned by the Pharisees, because of Herod. Its appositeness to Matthew's subject here, is evident. It is, word for word, the same as in Luke, save that Luke says, "till [the time] come that," instead of "till;" and Matthew adds "henceforth" after "ye shall not see me." I cannot doubt it is the same saying. I rather apprehend that it is introduced in Matthew in connection with the subject treated of, than in historical order of time. It is introduced without any verbal connection with the history whatever. However, I do not speak with any positiveness. It is in Luke, in the general, and, as to order of time, unhistorical part of the Gospel. Mark and Luke relate here an incident omitted by Matthew the widow's mite. It naturally belonged to Luke's Gospel to introduce it in its place, which is the same it has in Mark. It did not enter into the special teaching of Matthew here, as to the destruction and judgment of Jerusalem, and the dealings of God with the Jewish nation, as such. In the two following chapters of Matthew (24, 25), we have a complete view of the state of things consequent on the Lord's absence, and His judgment on His return, including general directions and warnings for the conduct of disciples during this period. In Matthew, it is much more complete, dispensationally, than in Mark and Luke. The four parables added in Matthew, instruct us in what relates to Christians, and to the gentiles, on the Lord's return to earth; so that the whole scene is opened- to us. Luke and Mark contain only the warnings to the disciples, viewed in connection with the Jews. In this part, also, there is a difference. Mark, in the main, resembles Matthew; but there is a less exact division into what is general, and what refers to the final state of Jerusalem. Much - though that final state is spoken of - might be applied generally; and it is much more personally addressed for service. Hence, there is found there (what Matthew omits) a direction as to what they are to trust to, when called up before governors, adding details as to evil and treachery, which, in Matthew, are found in the directions given, as we have seen, for the whole course of the disciples' ministry among the Jews, from beginning to end, in chap. 10 (comp. Mark 13:11, seq., and Matt. 9:19, seq.). Hence, the question also is different in Matthew. There is added to the inquiry, when the destruction of the temple should be, "What is the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?" Hence, the direct application of the answer in Mark and Luke,

is to the present. service of the disciples; though, in both, it goes on to the end. In Mark, similarly to Matthew; and in Luke, distinguishing, very clearly, the destruction by Titus, and the subsequent events. There are more than one difference in Mark. The tenth verse (of 13) does not end as Matt. 24:14: " then shall the end come " (the question went only to the destruction of Jerusalem). Comp. Mark 16:15, 20. Then the passage of Matt. 10 comes in. The abomination of desolation stands merely where it ought not. There is the absence of precision in the epoch of the signs: " in those days after that tribulation." These circumstances show, that though the close is certainly given, it is not the object. The Lord's exhortation closes with " What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." The present testimony is spoken of in Luke. There is no abomination of desolation; the days of vengeance come, no unequalled tribulation. Jerusalem is trodden down and led captive, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. There is no question of an end coming. The 25th verse, unconnected in period with what precedes introduces the coming of the Son of Man. The nearness, then, of the kingdom, and the exhortation to watch, closes the passage. In our Gospel (chap. 24), we have the general testimony of disciples among the Jews, with the fact of the Gospel of the Kingdom, which Christ had preached, going to all nations, bringing in the close. The bringing before kings and rulers, etc., belongs to chap. 10. Then the special last half week of Daniel is entered into in detail, the great tribulation with false Christs, etc., closing with the immediate coming of the Son of Man. The elect of Israel are gathered from all lands. To verse 44, practical warnings are given. In verses 45-51, we have the service of the disciples, in their own responsible relationship within, to the family (and, hence, practically Christendom) brought out. The result is, " the servant is made ruler of all," on the one hand; or hierarchical connection with the spirit of the world ends in his judgment as a hypocrite, on the other. The parable of the virgins (xxv.) gives the original ^c^1"-g of Christians,• and their return to it; the talents, the liberty of divinely. given ministry. The words " in which the Son of Man cometh," is omitted in all the best texts. The 31st verse of chap. xxv., continues from 31st verse of chap. xxiv., and gives the judgment of the nations who have heard the Gospel of the Kingdom. Thus, the whole scene, from the service of the disciples, consequent on Christ's death - that is, the testimony among the Jews; the responsibility of the disciples when things took the Christian form; the last testimony amongst, and judgment of the nations, with the special week of tribulation, and coming of the Son of Man - are all clearly brought out. The Lord's preparing for death then comes on. It was two days before the Passover. Luke is much more brief here. He leaves out the anointing by Mary; and the general fact of the priests consulting, Judas going and accepting money, Satan's influence over him, and his seeking to betray the Lord, are briefly stated altogether, as an introduction to the whole scene. The local scene is much less given. All the moral character, and incidents, and heavenly result, are much more fully stated; as the thief on the cross, with the intermediate state, and other circumstances. It is usual with Luke to give the historical facts briefly and synoptically, and enlarge on special moral details. Mark and Matthew go together in order and contents. The statement of Jesus, that He could have twelve legions of angels, and Judas going and hanging himself; Pilate's wife's message; His washing His hands, are all omitted by Mark; as are also the opening of the graves, and the resurrection of saints. Otherwise, the accounts are uniform. We find in both the council of priests, the woman's anointing Christ, Judas' going to the chief priests, the meeting to eat the Passover (His conversation at table), the Lord's supper (only remission of sins is not in Mark), the going to the Mount of Olives, the warning to Peter, Christ's prayer in Gethsemane, His appearing before Caiaphas, Peter's denial, Christ's appearing before Pilate, His mocking by soldiers, His

crucifixion and death, with its effect on the centurion, and His burial. Matthew adds, at the close, the account of sealing the stone, and setting a watch at the sepulcher.

In Luke, we have many moral circumstances added, giving a different character to several points. As regards the Passover, He speaks of its fulfilling in the Kingdom of God, giving a present character to the effect, instead of leading onward to the world to come. Matthew and Mark have not this at all. So of the fruit of the vine. In Luke, the Lord does not speak of drinking it new in the Kingdom, but says, previously, He will not drink of it till the Kingdom of God be come, the desire to partake of it with them, and the Nazarite character in connection with this (vers. 16--18) are added, and besides the institution itself, the inquiry who should betray Him, is just stated and no more; but the strife, who should be the greatest, is found here only, giving a peculiar insight into their state, and the moral position of Jesus and its consequences. The sifting of the disciples by Satan, and its connection with Simon's fall, is found also in Luke only; the change in their position as to the apparent care He would take of them also; His human dependence, and the extreme character of His sufferings in Gethsemane; that is, the angers strengthening Him and His agony and sweat as drops of blood, are carefully presented to us, while the circumstances are very briefly given, and are all much more fully in Matthew. The circumstances of His answer to the chief priests are quite summarily related in Luke 22:66-71. The coming in the clouds of heaven, the future Kingdom, is also omitted. It is the present position of Christ only which is noticed. (Note-Both in Matthew and Luke, instead of " Hereafter" must be read, " Henceforth shall the Son of Man sit," or " ye shall see the Son of Man sitting," i.e., He was taking now this new position). The answer before Pilate is related briefly in Luke, like the betrayal and His appealing before Caiaphas; and in its general effect; but the sending before Herod is found in his Gospel only. Royal apostate Judaism comes into the scene. The daughters of Jerusalem, and the Lord's answer to them, are found here only also. The intercession of Christ on the cross for the Jews, answered in Peter's sermon, the beautiful incident of the thief also, are found, both of them, in Luke only, as well as Jesus commending His spirit to His Father, that is, His confidence in His Father as a man. The centurion owns Him to be a righteous man. These are the chief peculiarities, and, as may have been seen, not unimportant ones, of Luke. We now arrive at the circumstances attending the resurrection, which are different in each Gospel; and evidently enough connected with the object of each. For instance, the ascension is left out in Matthew, and Christ is associated with His disciples in Galilee, the place of His visiting the remnant, the connection with which maintained all through Matthew, as in chaps. 10 and 24. The first verse of chap. 28, I apprehend, was Saturday evening when Sabbath was past; the second relates to an event not in immediate connection with their visit when they came in the morning. The stone was already rolled away. Indeed, Mary Magdalene seems to have been there before the others, while it was yet dark, and the stone was already gone.

Matthew puts with the women's visit, in a general way, yet in a distinct paragraph, the effect of the circumstances attending the rolling away the stone; how the keepers trembled at the visiting of the tomb by the angel to roll it away: whereas, when the women came, the angel answered and said, " Fear not ye." They are told to go and tell the disciples He would go into Galilee, and they would see Him there. Jesus meets them as they return, and tells them the same thing. We are then shown the final and willful obstinacy of the nation in rejecting the testimony of their own instruments, which they knew and believed to be true. Christ joins the disciples in Galilee. There, in virtue of all power being given him in heaven and earth, they receive their commission to go and

make disciples of all the nations: the mission is now extended to the nations, not confined to Israel; they were to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the great dispensational Christian revelation, to teach them to observe what Christ had commanded, and He would be with them to the end of the age. This mission rested on the fact of all power being Christ's in heaven and on earth, and extended the previous missions of the residue, instituting one which embraced the nations at large. These were to be made disciples of. The account is very general and brief, only adding how the stone was rolled away to the other accounts: the whole else is the meeting in Galilee and consequent mission. This is the more remarkable as Matthew must have been present at what John relates of Jesus appearing in their midst at Jerusalem.

Mark leads us at once to the morning of the first day, at the rising of the sun; and we have the details, as to the women, of what Matthew only gave the general result of. The same message is given; but it is not followed up farther. The meeting with Mary Magdalene, of which we have the details in John, is stated, and that of the two disciples going to Emmaus, of which Luke gives the details; also the general fact of His appearing to the twelve together at meat, of which we have details in Luke and John. We have, then, His resurrection having been recounted, the universal mission and continuation of service in the power of Christ Himself, the consequence of faith and public acknowledgment of Christ on one side, and of the refusal of the Gospel on the other. The fact of His ascension and session at the right hand of God; their going forth to preach everywhere, according to the mission and of the power which accompanied their service according to promise, are then recorded. This, while connecting the accounts of all the Gospels, as to the proofs of His resurrection, has the character of service and testimony, which we have seen belong to Mark. The commencement of the account in Luke is pretty much the same as in Mark and Matthew; the women go to the sepulcher, and are told by the angels that He is risen; but no details are given, only it is said in general that the women told the apostles and the rest, and that Peter ran to the sepulcher. But we have large and interesting details as to the two who go to Emmaus; there is nothing as to going into Galilee. But two very important points are brought out, not in the other Gospels. He opens their understandings to understand the Scriptures, and they are to wait at Jerusalem till they are endued with power from on high; the two essential and necessary means of Christian service, as it has always to go on. The apparition to Simon, mentioned by Paul, 1 Cor. 15, is also mentioned, and, briefly, the Lord's coming into their midst when assembled. The corporeal reality, though it was now a spiritual body of His human nature, is very prominently brought out; He was still a living man with flesh and bones. He explains the Old Testament as to Himself, both, on the way to Emmaus and here. His death and resurrection are shown as in the mind of God, and repentance and remission of sins were to be preached to all the nations, beginning, according to the dispensation of God, and in grace, with the "Jew first." All connection with Galilee is omitted. He begins afresh with Jerusalem as from heaven, and so with all nations. It is the Gospel as we know it has been preached, and (leaving out the Church) as Paul preached it; and the Acts present it to us. The account goes on as if Christ went out that same first day to Bethany, and that He then ascended thence - so entirely is Galilee left out. Yet Luke is he who in the Acts lets us know Christ rested forty days before He ascended; but he gives, by divine wisdom, like the others,

What the truth was he was given to teach. Christ leaves them for heaven, blessing as He leaves. As to the first effect, while full of joy, they are daily in the temple. There Christianity had its cradle

and its birthplace. The character of the close of the Gospel is evident. Bethany was the place Christ frequented the last week before He suffered; the home of His beloved ones in grace, where He was anointed for death where He sheaved Himself Son of God in resurrection. This He transfers to heaven, and blesses as He goes up. They associate all with the temple. This was more than tarrying in Jerusalem, or beginning with it. What a true picture of it all! How much more we learn here of the great truths of Christianity connected with His resurrection than in Matthew or Mark. It is not simply the fact, nor continuing the scene or connection in which he had been, or merely extending it. John has, as we know, while full in this part of the Lord's history, quite another character. Surely this comparison of the Gospels, and of the details of their contents, throws much light on the purpose of the Gospels, and of each of them distinctively, and abundantly confirms the divine inspiration of all, because the mind of God shines all through their structure.

I now turn to Luke. It is remarkable how this Gospel brings out the moral condition of things in their various phases, and first of Israel in the days in which the Lord came. We have first the whole status of Judaism most clearly and graphically presented. In the body of the Gospel, Luke gives us in general the Son of Man, and the great moral principles of relationship between man and God. But for this reason, before this begins, he pictures to us very fully the state of Judaism by itself, and all the blessings which remained to the faithful in it. Herod (an Edomite) King of Judea - the Jewish service going on in Davidical order. Angels, ministers of God, His messengers to a godly priest, prophecy, and more than prophecy brought in according to promise. The house of David entering on the scene, but in poverty and low estate. Note, the explanation of the name of "Jesus," as saving. His people, is not given, but He is the Son of the Highest. At the same time, He will have the throne of His father David. Next, as Haggai said, the Spirit remains among them, and acts in holy men and women according to ancient Jewish witness, such as Hannah in the desolations of Israel. Jewish hopes are prophetically sealed of God by prophecy (1:67-79). The Jews, at the same time, are under the dominion of the Gentiles, successors of those to whom Jerusalem had been delivered. They are disposed of at their will. Still the promise is sure, and its accomplishment announced by an angel to the poor of the flock. The heavens see further into this grace; there is goodwill toward, more exactly, God's good pleasure in man. But the Jewish order still is there; the faithful accomplish the ordinances of the law, but they await with desire the fulfillment of the promise, and see it in Jesus. They know each other as a remnant. Anna spake of Him to all them who waited for redemption in Israel. Yet prophecy in the remnant sees well the place the new-born child is to hold in Israel. He is for the fall and for the rising again of many. Such is the scene presented in the first two chapters of Luke, and of which the other Gospels say nothing, while this is silent on all the royal question and Herod's effort to destroy Christ, Jesus coming up out of Egypt, the coming of the Gentiles to Israel's King, all which referred to God's dealings with Israel. Further, Christ is a real man; grows bodily and mentally, and in favor with God and man, in His gracious ways. But, child or not, His person was not changed. He depended on no outward mission to have it. At twelve years old, full of the power of His relationship, He is, with comely fitness and marvelous competency, occupied with His Father's business, yet returns into the human child's obedient place. After that comes the service. In the third chapter, we enter on what is common to this Gospel and that of Matthew, but the form is very different. John's preaching in Matthew, is repentance for, the Kingdom; in Luke, for the remission of sins. One feels the difference. One is dispensational, the other moral. So in Luke, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." It is not merely the Pharisees and Sadducees, but the multitude, who are a generation of

vipers. So he gives the practically moral test to each class that comes to him. The result as to John, at least his imprisonment, is given at once. Christ is owned Son of God by the Father, and the Holy Ghost comes on Him. Here this part of the Gospel closes, and the Lord's genealogy comes in, not connected with these Jewish scenes, and the promises of Abraham's and David's, but traced up to Adam, Son of God; introducing the great and, to us, all-important character of Son of Man.

This makes us easily understand the reason why the genealogy is placed here, and the distinctive character of what precedes it. The whole Jewish condition is there, as we have seen, brought out with one little inlet into heaven, on Jesus coming into the world; and now we have His place as Son of Man, one who, as representative of man according to divine perfection and counsels, is come to begin the new thing, and become the center of the new creation. Only for that His death was needed for God's glory and our salvation (compare John 12:23,24). But in His own moral perfectness we have the new thing. The moment His being Son of Man, descended according to the flesh from Adam, has been shown, He is led to be put to the test by the energy who had deceived the first Adam. This scene we have had as a fact in Mark, and detailed in Matthew, with this difference, that there it is given in historical, and, I may add, dispensational order; here, in moral, the spiritual temptation by the Scriptures coming last. Hence Luke omits the sending away of Satan after the offer of the world, and Satan's proposal that He should worship him. After this, the moral power of work and victory in obedience is noted in His returning in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. None of that power was lost; indeed, Christ not having failed in subjective obedience, the strong man was bound. Hence the first thing is not, as in Matthew, the manifestation of power, and then attention being attracted, the description of the character suited to the Kingdom; but the presentation of Himself in grace, the Spirit of the Lord being upon Him, He being, therefore, man. The gracious words told in their hearts; but in His own country He was, for them, Joseph's son - such is the place of the Lord from heaven, the Son of Man (Second Adam) presented in grace to men and to Israel. Christ had already preached and acted in Capernaum; but the Spirit of God we see thus formally presents Him in Luke. And the Lord shows, that coming in sovereign grace sent from God, there was no limitation to Israel, as Elias went to 'Sarepta, and Naaman, the Syrian, was healed; while in either case many in Israel were left aside. Hence unbridled rage in His Jewish audience. But He was not subject to its power. This is all peculiar to Luke. With the exception of displacing the calling of Andrew and Simon, as we shall see, Luke now follows the same order as Mark. First, His power over the enemy is shown (4:30-37); next, over diseases, and all that sin had brought in. This is the power He had in the world as having bound the strong man - He could spoil all his goods, work an entire deliverance of man from Satan's power, and all its consequences in this world. But He seeks no witness to Himself, does not allow the devils to speak, and retires from the gaze and throng of men when His miracles had drawn their attention. He goes first into the desert, and then, when they would stay Him, pursues His work. This characterizes His presence in the world. He now begins to gather round Himself (ch. 5). In Matthew, this gathering round Himself is brought in immediately He appears as the Light in Galilee, according to promise, preaching the Kingdom; and then He goes round everywhere; and, when crowds follow Him, explains the character suited to the Kingdom. Here His mission and power as Son of Man on the earth being shown, He, though retiring from view, begins then to gather to Himself. It will be remarked, that we have a much fuller development of the way in which the disciples are called to follow Him in Luke. Simon hears the word in his ship. Christ works a miracle which reveals His person; the effect is

just and deep conviction of sin in connection with that person. Then they leave all and follow Him. It is, I apprehend, Luke who changes the place of this. In that which immediately follows, he takes the same order as Mark. In Matthew, we have the whole of this arranged according to subjects.

What characterizes these facts in Luke is, their being presented as the various displays of power in grace. First, Jesus heals that which Jehovah alone healed, the figure of sin as disease and defilement, which excluded from Jehovah's presence, and from communion with His people. He cleanses them from defilement. He charges the cleansed men to tell no man, but it is noised abroad. He heals all who come, but retires into the wilderness and prays. There is power and grace, but it is the Son of Man. Next, doctors of the law and Pharisees were then there, and (an expression so fully showing the situation), the power of the Lord (of Jehovah) was present to heal them - faith brings the paralytic man - Jesus goes to the root of evil in Israel (and everywhere), but here especially deals with it in respect of the government of God, and pardons the mans sins - Jesus brings forgiveness. The word is, "The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive." Yet it was the Jehovah of Psa. 103. Here "so seen in Israel" is omitted. Next, we find grace receiving the vile. He came to call sinners as a physician for their need. Grace was thus shown in the midst of Israel, but on principles which went necessarily beyond it. Jesus receives sinners in grace, making all new. These cases, indeed, are common to the Gospels, whatever the order may be, and prominent in them as stamping a plain character on Christ's mission. Only Matthew, introduces the centurion's case where he places it, as especially showing the bearing of the state of things on the extension of grace to the Gentiles. The fact that, though in connection with Israel, the presence of the Lord and the principles here brought into view, went necessarily further, and could not be confined to the Jews definitely, is brought out in the question as to John's disciples, and the new wine and old bottles, etc.; the vessels must be new for the new power. But Luke adds here a moral principle not noticed in the other two Gospels; that human nature will like the old thing best. This subject is pursued in two remarkable cases as to the Sabbath, the key-stone of Jewish ordinances - the case of David eating the shewbread- the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath; and the healing of the withered hand, - divine goodness rises above ordinances. Luke gives the facts more briefly than Mark. Matthew puts them much further on in the history, where they are connected with the rejection of Israel. The first of these cases presents the position of the rejected King whose need was above ordinances, and whose condition really abrogated them; adding, that as Son of Man, consequently, He was Lord of the Sabbath. The second is the title of grace to rise above them. For grace is of God.

Next, we find the nomination of the apostles. After the Lord's personal position and character had been brought out, this finds a natural place. He selects His instruments. This still follows the same order as Mark; who, after a general statement of the position of Jesus, continues his account with this same event. Matthew has not this choice of the twelve. He continues his full account of Jesus' mission in the midst of Israel till He sends them out to continue it. In Luke we find again here the dependent character of the Son of Man. He is all night in prayer before He chooses the twelve. Here comes in the sermon on the mountain in its place; and we have clear evidence of the intended omission by the Holy Ghost of this choice of the twelve in Matthew, for as a man he must have known it, for he was one of the twelve. We have seen Matthew bringing in the sermon on the mount much earlier, as the principles of the Kingdom. (In Luke, it should not be "the plain," but "a level place" still on the mountain). Luke gives the substance of the sermon in its great moral

principles. His power, note, was shown in the multitude (17-19). The Lord addresses Himself in Luke to His disciples, as being themselves in the place He speaks of, instead of stating the abstract principle. The woes, too, are added. It is an address to the heart and conscience of the persons present. He weaves in, too, as 39, 40, other general principles connected with the precepts he is giving. So 44, 45. Here we have left Mark, who does not give the sermon on the mount. He gives the choice of the apostles, and then passes on to the full blasphemy of the Pharisees, and Jesus' refusal to listen to His mother, preceding the parables from the ship, as in Matt. 12 and 13. But the order in Luke, in this particular case, helps us, as it does in Matthew, to identify the sermon on the mount in the two Gospels. From the mountain He enters into Capernaum, and heals the Centurion's servant. Here Christ's divine title and power is shown, but he does not use it to show the rejection of Israel, and the reception of the Gentiles as in Matthew. The widow of Nain, again, spews the divine power and compassion of Jesus in the place of death and sorrow; this circumstance is peculiar to Luke. The leper, and the healing of Peter's wife's mother, are introduced respectively before and after the centurion's servant, without reference to the order of time. After this, the relative positions of John and Christ are brought forward; which is not in Mark, and is much later in Matt. I apprehend its historical place is here. In Luke, we have the moral effect of both inquired into. The people and publicans justified Christ, having humbled themselves under John's baptism; the Pharisees not; having refused to do so. Matthew introduces here Jesus thanking the Father for His way of dealing with the wise, and with babes, and the real reason of the change taking place; taking it again, I apprehend out of its historical order to complete the picture of that change furnished by John's position and message. This justifying of wisdom of her children is then illustrated by the woman who was a sinner, in contrast with Simon, the Pharisee. This deep reaching moral picture is in Luke only, as are also the few words which follow; which cast so clear a light on the Lord's life; and give the double character of devotedness; - that of the apostles, and of the women who followed Him. One of the parables of Matt. 13 is then given, i.e., the present service in the word, and responsibility of man, his duty to maintain the light. The case of Jesus' mother and brethren is then introduced in Luke, as sheaving Christ's value for those who kept His word, and not as a witness of His breaking His ties with Israel in the flesh. None of the parables relative to the Kingdom are spoken of. Here we return to the historical order which is in Mark, until the feeding of the five thousand inclusive that is, the history of Legion, Jairus' daughter, the sending out of the twelve, and the feeding of the multitude. As regards Legion, the difference is remarkable. In Matthew, we have the display of Satan's power, as it would afterward work in the Jews, and the request for Jesus' departure; not any detail as to the poor man that was healed. In Luke, as in Mark, we have the details of the effects on him;- the Lord's real work in grace in the matter. In the cases of Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood, the same brevity may be remarked in Matthew. In Luke, all the moral circumstances are much more brought out in detail, as, indeed, in Mark also. What is shown in Luke, especially, is grace, divine power acting in the kindness and goodness of a man filled with charity. It is not, as in John, a divine person so much as a divine character; and that in the perfect sympathy of a man. What shows this, as the case of the widow of Nain, Simon and the woman that was a sinner, is constantly found in Luke and not in the other Gospels. It is grace in and towards man. On the other hand, the mission of the twelve, which comes in its place here, is given much more briefly, and with no special reference to Israel; nor the elaborate unfolding of the place which testimony would have among the people until Christ's return, which is found in Matthew. We have the fact, they are

to preach the Kingdom of God and heal the sick, and to go free from care and dependent on Himself. It is the same mission, but in its simple actual character. The effect on Herod is here introduced. Luke gives no account of John the Baptist's death; there is a short allusion to his imprisonment in chap. 3:19, when John's preaching is spoken of; but this part of Israel's sin formed no part of his subject. Otherwise, the same order as Mark's is still followed here. On the return of the twelve, the Lord goes into a desert place, is followed, and heals those who have need of healing. In these miracles, necessary to relate as great witnesses to Christ's power, Luke gives but the fact briefly, and, as so given, having more power in that respect. The connection of it with Israel, and His dismissal of the people, and taking Himself another position while His disciples were toiling alone, is all omitted. In Matthew and Mark, the closing circumstances of this miracle lead to a series of events and incidents, which refer all: of them to Christ's special relationship with the Jews, the moral position of these, and God's estimate of them; all of which are omitted in Luke (Matt. 14:22 - 15:12; Mark 6.47 - 8:26). All three Gospels then come to Peter's confession of Christ, and the transfiguration. Only in Luke the common opinions as to Christ connect themselves more directly with Herod's, and what is there said. For Luke 9:18 is directly connected with chap. 10, and that with what precedes. Still the transfiguration is a great central event in all, and that connected with the confession of Peter. In all, the rejection of Christ and the taking up the cross, are founded on Peter's owning Him to be the Christ, and precede the revelation of His glory. There are some differences to be noted; Matthew recounts Christ's instruction as to the Church, which was to take the place for the present of His Messiah glory; and the place Peter was to hold in the administration of the Kingdom. Here also in Luke, the matter is simply stated in its own moral force; and the details of Peter's dislike to the cross, and the Lord's rebuke, are omitted. The character of what they are about to see, is also more simply stated. In Matthew, for whom the change from Messiah to Son of Man is a main point, and the future coming of Christ in this character (see Matt. 24:30), the expression used in connection with this display of His glory, is the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom. In Mark, where service in the word forms the subject, it is, the Kingdom of God come with power. In Luke, simply till they see the Kingdom of God. There is a difference also in the details. The moral circumstances again appear in Luke. The disciples are asleep. The Lord is speaking of His decease. It is the entry of Moses and Elias into the cloud that alarmed them. All the ensuing conversation relative to John's being Elias, of which Matthew and Mark speak, is not found in Luke's account; but he returns after the casting out of a devil to the doctrine of the cross (vers. 44, 45). And, further, in the rest of this chap. 9 in Luke, we have all the forms which self takes, and which it would excuse and justify from the grossest to the most subtle; and the claim of Christ and the service of grace in the Kingdom, is shown to be paramount to everything. Two of the circumstances are given in Matthew and Mark; the second, that of the little child, as an example, with a large addition of instruction as to offenses; and with the addition, in Matthew, of the position which the Church takes, as in the place of Israel in respect of offenses. This passes off in Matthew to other questions relative to the Jews. We then find in Luke a mission not noticed in the other Gospels, that of the seventy. It is in principle the same as that of the twelve, only more urgent, but there is no limit as in Matt. 10. Those that rejected them were to be equally sure that the Kingdom of God had come nigh to them. Such was essentially the message, with proofs of the power of Him that sent it. From this onwards to the commencement of the closing scene, 18:31, what we read in Luke, is either not in Matthew and Mark, or is here connected with other subjects than the historical ones found in those Gospels; and the various

circumstances are introduced in their moral connection. On the return of the seventy, the great moral connection of the Gospel with eternal hopes comes out. The power of Christ's name over the demons, brings to Christ's mind the final overthrow of Satan. Still the subject of joy for them was not that they could cast out devils, but that they belonged themselves to heaven, their names were registered there. This gave a very clear and definite character to the Gospel. It is in this connection that the hiding these things from wise and prudent, and revealing them to babes, is introduced here; not in connection with the rejection of John Baptist and Christ, and the total change in God's dealings with man taking place, as in Matt. 11 Hence it is added here, that the Lord turned to the disciples to remark their blindness, for these things were brought to their eyes. It is the blessing of the heavenly people which is before us; what follows is in Luke alone. After the essence of the statement of the law, the Lord shows to him who would justify himself by a cavil on the terms, that grace, the new and blessed principle of God's dealings, makes us, by its own nature, the neighbor of every one that has need, and obliterates, by its divine nature, the divisions formed by ordinance which work no grace, but, with the heart such as it is, tend to nourish pride by distinguishing him to whom they belong. The bearing of this instruction, and its deep moral character, are evident. Next, we learn the value of hearing the Word-in contrast with cares-and that of prayer, its character and success. We have then the final hardness of the Pharisees shown, and the way in which Satan possesses the heart void of God, though it seem reformed; but without application to Israel's final state, as in Matthew. The Lord turns, on one speaking of the value of natural ties with Him, to the Word; that God owned those who heard and kept it, as the only true tie - the Ninevites and Queen of Sheba, as owning the Word from feebler lips than he who was there, would condemn that generation. We have then the judgment of the moral state of the Pharisees, but not here connected with the final judgment of Jerusalem, and the connection of the disciples with Israel, as in Matthew. Still the Lord shows, that all the blood shed would be required of them, as in Matthew. We have then a general warning as to their principles, and those on which the disciples were to act, taken, partly from a private warning to His disciples, partly from His instruction to the twelve when He sent them out, partly from His statement as to the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; but this is here employed to encourage the disciples in acting on the principles of the upright testimony He had spoken to them of; showing that the Holy Ghost who was spoken against, spoke in them, and would tell them what to say.

As the Lord had urged on His disciples, faithfulness, uprightness, and boldness in testimony, so now He goes on to press on them disinterestedness and absence of all carefulness. This, however, is introduced by one who looked to Him to order things rightly on earth. This He entirely disclaims, and turns to the multitude to press on them the folly of having their portion here, which death in a moment could snatch away. With His disciples He presses another motive, namely, their preciousness in the Father's eyes. Here some of the instructions of the sermon on the mount come in. But the Lord goes on to urge another motive, giving an additional character to their devotedness. Not only it was the Father's good pleasure to give them the Kingdom, so that they might well trust Him for all things; but He Himself was coming again. Christians were to be as those that waited for Him. He gives the beautiful picture of His love making them happy in glory, girding Himself and coming forth to serve them; till then they must watch with girded loins. The difference of the faithful and unfaithful professing servants is then brought out. One cannot but feel, that in all this and what follows, even though parts of what is recorded are found in Matthew and Mark, that we are in a wide sphere of moral instruction not entered on elsewhere; and that all

this is given with a moral purpose, not in reference to historical order. He is in Israel, but developing great principles which cannot be confined to Israel.

In what immediately follows, He shows that they must bow to the truth or be judged. He came in grace, and the power of divine love; but there was nothing to answer it. His death would open the flood-gates of this love to the chief of sinners, not wait till there was righteousness enough to receive it. But while this love was in Himself, He was straitened in its display and revelation, till this baptism of death was accomplished. This love, this incoming of God, would raise all the enmity of the human heart. It was not as prince of peace that His power would be shown. Not only so, but, by the present manifestation of the grace, though straitened, the fire it would light was already kindled.

The Jews ought to have discerned this time. Looked at, naturally, as under the law, they did not become reconciled on the way; they would go to prison till all was paid. Personally, if they did not repent, they would all perish, like those slain by Pilate at Jerusalem, whom they thought special objects of judgment. This instruction is closed by the parable of the fig tree in the garden, spared by the intercession of the gardener, i.e., for the painstaking service of Christ; then, if fruitless, to be cut down. It only spoiled the garden. In all this, and what follows, we have the judgment of the present state of Jerusalem and the people, in connection with the Lord's presence. Meanwhile, He asserts, while spewing their hypocrisy, His right to minister in grace, in divine power, blessing to Israel, in opposition to their legal ignorance of, and absence from God. The urgency of the acceptance of this ministry, is then pressed. He was going teaching through the cities and villages, and presses the entrance at the strait gate; for the time would come when they would seek to take credit from His having been among them, and He would, in glory, reject them; and they would see Gentiles with Abraham, and the fathers, and themselves, thrust out. Finally, on the Pharisees urging Herod's evil intentions, He shows that Jerusalem must fill up its guilt in rejecting Him, the Jehovah who would ever have gathered her children, and now mourned in tender grace over her who was henceforth to be desolate, till, according to Psa. 118, she saluted Him who came in the name of the Lord. In chap. 14, the Lord, on occasion of a dinner in the Pharisee's house, continues his instruction on the grace which characterized God's ways now, and that again in contrast with the sabbath; silencing them, with the same reasoning, as to their own conduct. He then unfolds the path of present grace, and its results with God; namely, first lowliness, taking the lowest place. God would exalt, in due time, those who did so. Such was His own course. Next, to act in grace, and not on the principles of worldly selfishness. The recompense would be in the resurrection of the just. In all this, He is bringing out the spirit and character of the new thing, into which He was leading men; the character of the new man in a world of evil. The reference of one of the company to the joy of eating bread in the Kingdom of God, perhaps a common place remark, perhaps felt, leads Him to apply the principles He is expounding, to the consequence of their rejection in Israel then. The kingdom was presented in grace; the Jews, in their national capacity, from temporal motives, were slighting it. The Lord would call the poor of the flock, glad to come; and the Jews, as such, be excluded. But the enjoyment of blessing, at the same time, would depend on unqualified decision in oneself, and against the much greater power, in flesh's judgment of it, exercised against those who sought it.

It will be remarked, that the parable of the great supper in Matthew, has a much more dispensational and judicial character. The city is burnt up. It is the king's son the marriage is for.

The king's turning to the poor of the flock in Israel, the judgment of those entered, the conduct of many towards the messengers, are not found in Luke; nor the fact of the house being filled with guests. That is, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the general Gentile body of professors are not brought out. The first invited are excluded from the supper in Luke, as unworthy. I am disposed to think it a different occasion. After insisting on decision, and counting the cost, the Lord concludes by saying, a man must forsake all that he has; and if the salt has lost its savor, it is good for nothing.

The fifteenth chapter begins a series of instruction, showing the character and effects of grace; and the change, dependent not on dispensation, but on the full revelation of the divine character, and the consequent judgment of the whole condition of man; though it was in Israel that condition was put to the test. The well-known fifteenth chapter brings out the whole scheme of God's ways in grace with the sinner in Christ, the Spirit, and the Father; and, in general, that it was the divine joy to save and act in grace. It shows the way in which Christ sought His sheep, and charged Himself with bringing it home; the way the Spirit sought diligently with the light, brought to bear on all; the path of man's ruin, and the way the Father received him on his return; and, finally, the self-righteous Jewish condition. Next, we find the way in which grace estimates this world, and man in it, with the use to be made of his forfeited position in it; i.e., of what he possessed, though he had forfeited all title to it. Of this, also, the Jews were the special illustration. When the human earthly place was lost, another future was to be the motive on which the use of present possessions was to be founded. Then the veil of the other world is removed, and we see that this world's being our portion, excludes from that. In the close of this parable, which points at the complete substitution of the heavenly blessing for the earthly, and the judging of all things, in their eternal character, by the letting in of that new light, the Lord shows that Moses and the prophets would have led the Jews to own Him, and be delivered; and that, if they did not hear them, His own resurrection would have no effect. The connection of great moral truths with the setting aside of the Jewish system, and the setting it aside by these moral truths, and the grace which belonged to God's nature, when He revealed Himself; both of them too wide for Judaism (the latter, contrasted with its spirit, as the former left all its ordinances necessarily behind), instead of setting it aside dispensationally, is very remarkable in all this part of Luke. In the beginning of chap. 17, are collected a number of passages found in Matthew and Mark, with additional matter, in which the principles on which the disciples had to walk, in their new service, are stated. Such are - care against giving occasions of stumbling to the little ones of Christ; forgiveness of what is personal; the power of faith; the recognition that, at best, we have only done our duty. The order and way in which these are introduced and used, is the only thing to be particularly noted here. In what follows, we have an interesting example of the way of deliverance from the legal ordinances. Ten lepers are cleansed. The Lord sends them - their cleansing was the fruit of Jehovah's power - to shew themselves to the priests, according to the law. They go, believing Him, and are cleansed. Nine pursue their course; one turns back. Outwardly farther from privileges which exalt flesh, he more easily discovers that Jehovah, whom he went to own in Jerusalem, is in Him who had cleansed him. He turns back to offer his thanks there. The Lord, since he had found the true place where God was, sets him entirely free from Jerusalem: "Go thy way," He says, "thy faith hath made thee whole." He was not only blessed, but free. The Kingdom of God was really in its power in His person, amongst them. And this was so true, that, rejected as He was going to be, the time would soon come, when the disciples would be glad to have such days as they then had with Him.

The Lord then, as in chap. 12, He had given the Church's place at His coming, gives the Jewish condition, and, in general, the world's. The same instructions are given, in connection with the judgment of Jerusalem, in Matthew, of which the prophetic announcement in Luke is further on. Here it is the unfolding the condition of the disciples and the Jews, flowing from His then presence, and the place His removal would give them. The condition of the wit, nesses in the final days of Jerusalem, is given here, not, as in Matthew, in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem. This last is directly and distinctly given by itself; and with plain reference to presently coming events, as a positive object of revelation in Luke. Here, the subject is the condition of the disciples; and the warnings are connected with his teaching on that point. Hence, the direction to pray, though having a peculiar parabolic application to the latter days in Jerusalem, has a universal one for men in every circumstance in which they are in difficulty and need. But this dependence upon God was hardly to be expected when the Lord returned. Except the comparison of the times of Noe and Lot, all this is found in Luke only; and the whole is general, and applicable to the coming of Christ, in its bearing on the world at large, though where the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

The characteristic traits, suited to the Kingdom, and approved of God, are next shown. Lowliness - because of our sinfulness - lowliness in the sense of our nothingness. Here we have some. of the account, given in Matthew, of the relationship and position of children, in a moral connection, as is usual with Luke. Then, entire' devotedness, and the heart purged; not simply the outward keeping of the commandments, however sincere. Goodness is denied to man. One only is good - God Himself. What seems blessing here below, is the greatest hindrance to entering into the Kingdom; but grace can do everything. Nor will devotedness lose its reward in this world, or the next. This closes the moral developments which compose all the middle part of Luke, and form instructions of the highest interest, connected with the present moral introduction of the Kingdom. They contrast with Matt. 13, where we have the dispensational earthly survey of it; and with 16, 17, when the great change of system and organization is brought out to light. Save two or three general principles, such as taking up the cross, the young ruler seeking the best commandment to have eternal life, and the exhortation to lowliness, all this part is omitted in Matthew and Mark. It characterizes Luke; and even the topics introduced, which are found in Matthew and Mark, are so in a different connection. On the other hand, a good deal that precedes the transfiguration in Matthew and Mark, is omitted in Luke. In this part of Luke, historical order is not generally to be sought. This is now again taken up, as it is in the other Gospels too, by telling the disciples that rejection awaited Him from the Jewish rulers. The prophecies were thus going to be accomplished. The disciples did not understand Him.

The history of the last events, begins, as we have seen in reading Matthew, with the entrance into Jericho, where the blind man owns Him as Son of David, and receives his sight. But here, also, the grace which receives the vile, in spite of Jewish prejudices, must be brought out in Luke. This is the more remarkable here, as connected with His character as Son of David, and His speedy entry into Jerusalem, according to Zechariah. Zacchaeus had been honestly faithful to his conscience; but that day salvation came to his house. His, heart had been drawn; but now salvation came to him. The Son of David, Messiah the King, would, in spite of Pharisees, meet the wants of the poor and despised in Israel, however false their position. And that of Zacchaeus was so; and no attempt to satisfy the exigencies of his conscience, changed its falseness; indeed, this creates them. But,

in a time of confusion, and who does not see such, grace reaches through the forms this confusion takes in individuals, to meet the need which lies at the bottom of the heart, and which grace had produced, and which shows itself in many a detail of which grace takes notice, and which grace can see (though selfishness cannot), as the Lord did here. Such grace as Jesus', draws them out, as it did here; but that grace, at the same time, passes by as well, all the efforts to quiet the conscience. It brings salvation. Zacchaeus was a son of Abraham, surely as much as the Pharisees. I am disposed to think, that the healing of the blind man is out of its place in Luke, and is introduced before the Lord's entry into Jericho, in order to give its true character to the reception of Zacchaeus.

Besides the very interesting history of Zacchaeus, Luke adds the parable of the traffic with the mina, referring to the way in which the Kingdom would be set up, and Jews' rejection of Him. It is evident that there are certain points of analogy between this and the parable addressed to the disciples in Matthew; but there are important points of distinction. Here, responsibility is much more distinctly brought out; God's sovereignty, though ever wise sovereignty, in gifts, less. In Matthew, one had five talents; another two; another one, according to his several ability. Here, each has one; all depends on the faithfulness of the servant. Hence, it is not, as in Matthew, one common joy, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord; " but " Be thou over ten, thou over five cities." It is reward in the kingdom, not common joy with Christ; each being faithful in what was entrusted, and having gained according to what was given him. But another point is brought in, not merely the faithfulness of the servants, in which the analogy, though not sameness, of the two parables lies. The question of the Jews receiving the Kingdom or not, is treated; they could not, for they would not receive the King. Christ was now near that place where this question was to be decided, the city of the great King; and men thought the Kingdom should immediately appear. He shows them that another order was to be followed. He was going to a far country, Heaven, to receive the Kingdom. Meanwhile, He left His servants to trade; not yet to be His partners in the glory of the Kingdom; that would come afterward. They would have their place in it according to their faithfulness in His absence; to them that had, more would be given. But there was another class of persons, His citizens - over whom he should have reigned -the Jews; but they, in their rejection of the Gospel, after His departure, declared they would not have Him to reign over them. They are, on His return, brought before Him and slain. It was not merely the rejection of Christ; - He interceded for them on the cross, for that as their ignorance, and the Spirit comes to tell them, He will return on their repentance;- but their opposition to this last, as a message sent after Him, that they will not have Him. This gave the full instructions as to the course the introduction of the Kingdom would take.

He rides into the city on an ass. Part of the cry recited here, not in the other Gospels, is worthy of remark: "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." That is, in Luke, they not merely raise the cry of Israel in the last day, according to Psa. 118, but the announcement is extended to heaven. There, peace is settled. The power of the enemy is gone; and that glory, which is above the heavens, fully established. Peace reigns there, so that the blessing on earth can follow. This additional and characteristic announcement naturally belongs to Him who reveals the Son of Man, and heavenly and eternal things. Further, we have still grace shown here; the other special part of Christ's character in Luke; -He weeps over the city on seeing it. The question of His authority is in all the three Gospels, as is also the seeking of fruit from the husbandmen; but Luke omits the

marriage of the king's son, which, in Matthew, gives the other part of God's dealing with the Jewish people. Luke had already given an analogous parable; but dealing with the subject morally as to the effect of Jesus' teaching, and calling men, and the result in its extension to the Gentiles, after He had shown His love to the poor of the flock in Israel. In Christ's reply to the Sadducees, an additional and important element is brought out in Luke - the first resurrection peculiar to the children of God. In Matthew, the present authority of scribes, etc., as in Moses' seat, is recognized; but they are denounced by the Lord in the most awful way. Here, after the manner of Luke, the true moral point of their character is stated; no authority is spoken of and they are left there. A few words suffice for this. Then comes the widow's mite, which is not in Matthew. In all this part, Luke's account tallies exactly with Mark's. The character of Jerusalem, as killing the prophets, and the Lord's patient grace, which would have so often assembled her children, found in Matthew immediately before the prophecy of chap. 24, is in Luke 13. I apprehend, as I expressed in speaking of Matt. 23, it is introduced by Matthew, in connection with his subject, somewhat out of its place, but not so far as to time as might be supposed. The journey mentioned in Luke 9, and in 17:11 (which, I suppose, are the same, if the sense of 9:51, is rightly given), was the last. The collection of moral instructions, which follows on chap. 9, leaves the chronological connection untouched. The transfiguration practically closed the Lord's ministry, as the Lord in the midst of Israel; and that, in all the three Gospels. In all the three, besides the account of the birth of the Lord, which is not in Mark, there are three parts: His ministry in Galilee, which closes with the transfiguration; then He specially announces that He is to suffer, and that as Son of Man; then we have a course of instruction, whether dispensational or moral. The latter character is largely developed in Luke, so that this second part, in which Christ has the place of Son of Man (the subject of Luke's Gospel), is very much longer; contains a great deal of additional matter, and draws out what is found in Matthew and Mark, in quite another connection. The third part begins with the blind man near Jericho. In the second part, in all three Gospels, there is, as to historical circumstances, merely the last journey, and what passed in it; so that the blind man at Jericho connects itself, through this journey, almost immediately with the transfiguration. He then finally left His service in Galilee, and set out -to suffer in Jerusalem; so that the Character of His service was changed, or rather it was closed, only that He continued to spew mercy, and to bear witness in grace, till it was actually and finally closed. But he had forbidden His disciples to say He was the Christ, for He was soon going to suffer as Son of Man, and could say now, " How long shall I be with you, how long shall I suffer you?"

John shows, I apprehend, that there was, after His leaving Galilee, a course of movements in detail, not found in the other Gospels. He goes up into the coast of Judaea from Galilee, the other side Jordan, and goes up to Jerusalem (Mark 11). Jesus was at Jerusalem in winter, at the feast of the dedication (John 10.22). They seek to kill Him, and He goes beyond Jordan again; comes up to raise Lazarus, and again departs to a country called Ephraim. Then He comes up for the last time (Luke 9 and 17) This, of course, was a little before Easter. The address to Jerusalem was thus, at any rate, on His last journey up to Jerusalem.

To come now to the prophetic warning of the Lord. The question recorded, as put by the disciples, shows at the outset, the difference of the object of the revelation: Christ, as in Matthew, had assured them, that the temple would be thrown down. The inquiry as to the sign of Christ's coming, and the end of the age, is not presented nor noticed in Luke. The question here put, relates solely

to the destruction the Lord had spoken of. Hence, while the early warnings referring to this epoch, are found here, more briefly, yet much as in Matthew, the prophetic account closes with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and says nothing of the abomination of desolation. The times of the Gentiles have then their course, till they are fulfilled, Jerusalem being trodden under foot. After this, come the signs, and the Son of man is seen coming in glory. The difference of this and Matthew is evident. The passage in Luke, while giving the subsequent events, and the coming of the Lord, is specially occupied with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, judicially ushering in the external Christian order of things; while Matthew is exclusively occupied with the time which is yet to come; and save the fact that the Gospel of the Kingdom was to be preached to all nations, confines himself to the testimony in Israel. We shall see something analogous in the Lord's supper. The close of the warning in Luke 21, is also peculiar. The warnings of Noe and Lot are not given here in Luke, but in chap. 17. Instead of that, we have verses 34-36, where the day is declared to come on the whole earth; but then the warning directed to the disciples, that they may escape and stand before the Son of Man, leaving it open to a full millennial accomplishment. Thus, while it deals with the remnant, it is much more large and general. In Luke 17, the Noe and Lot comparisons are given as a warning, in contrast to the present character of the Kingdom then, through Christ's presence. The Kingdom was there in His person; but His rejection would change all, and then He would come as a flash of lightning in the midst of the busy, selfish occupations of this world, like the deluge on the world, and the fire on Sodom. I do not think, from 17:22, the Gospel of Luke has a date, until the last events. What is narrated, is added to what precedes; and then, when the prophetic warnings are given, that is, when the residue are warned, the present change is brought forward, and the time of the Gentiles dispensationally stated. In what follows, in the main, the three Gospels are alike; only Luke, as he usually does, where not led out into moral development, gives a very brief and concentrated resume of the facts more distinctly stated elsewhere. I refer particularly now to Judas and the chief priests. The "then" of "then entered Satan," is not in the original. It was after the sop he entered in. Before that, he had put the betraying of Jesus into his heart. This is all put together, with the chief priests' counsel (22:1-6). A similar instance is as to John Baptist (3:15-19); as is also the visit of the women to the sepulcher. Then follows the choice of the room for the Passover. Here there are some important circumstances peculiar to Luke. First, the Lord's love and feeling about it (ver. 15); next, the reference to the eating the lamb for the last time, and the cup; besides the institution of the supper, the presence of Judas, and the strife among them who should be the greatest. The manner of expression, too, is according to the character of that Gospel; that is, opening the then next present order of God's dealings, instead of going on dispensationally to the renewal of God's relationship with the world. The Passover was to be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God; hence, he was glad to eat of it for the last time in His earthly association with His disciples. This is not in Matthew. It is the great moral fact of universal bearing of the death of Christ. Next, as to His drinking of the fruit of the vine. In Matthew, He takes His character of Nazarite separation from Israel, until He drinks it in a new way in the Father's Kingdom; the time of future blessedness spoken of, in this way, in Matthew (comp. chap. 13). Here, He takes the Nazarite place as a present thing, but closes, so to speak, every thought of this association in the present time, fixing the mind on the present setting up of the Kingdom. In Matthew, in connection with His death, and the founding of the new covenant thereon, he goes quite on to the establishment of the Father's Kingdom; only showing His separation from all on earth, till that establishment of the Kingdom came. The words of

institution differ, also, somewhat. In Matthew, He replaces the Passover; and the words, "this is my body," only are given. Here, the gift of grace is noticed. In Matthew, it is noticed as going out beyond the Jews, to whom Christ had presented Himself, as related in that Gospel - shed for many, for the remission of sins. In Luke, it is the simple, personal application of grace - "for you." The inquiry among the disciples, who should betray Him, is found in Luke in few words, as we have seen in other cases. On the other hand, an humbling moral circumstance is stated: that, even here, was a strife among them who should be greatest;-at such a moment! But it gives occasion to the perfect and patient grace of Christ, to teach them the true path of glory He had followed - that of humility, and being servant to all; and to own, in unspeakable grace, as if dependent on their kindness, their perseverance with Him. Also, He appointed to them a kingdom, as His Father had appointed to Him; so. that they should be at table in His Kingdom, and sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The very greatness of the glory and the blessing, ought to silence the dispute. In Matthew, the fact here revealed, is given (Matt. 19.16-30) in connection with the setting aside 'human righteousness, and riches as an 'advantage and reward connected. with it (i.e. the setting aside the Jewish system); and with the glory, in the time of the regeneration, consequent on the loss of all for faith; still showing, in chap. 20, that grace - sovereign grace -characterized God's dealings with men in the Kingdom.

To return to Luke 22, where the general application of Christ's death to faith is spoken of. The result of the present faithfulness of the disciples in connection with Christ before His death, would meet its reward in Jewish millennial glory. But into His death - which, while witnessing judgment of sin, was the means of salvation - they could not follow Him. To be saved by it was another thing. Their service in His suffering in the Kingdom, would be recompensed with glory in the. Kingdom; but death, as such, man could not stand in such as He was; that belonged to Christ only, a lesson they had not yet learned. They could not go into it, as death from the divine judgment of sin; but they could as a sifting from the enemy, to learn that they could not, but must be dependent on another's doing it. This is found only in Luke; and the ardor of nature is suffered to go further in Peter, to teach the entire incapacity of the energy of nature to do the work of God; its ardor only making its fall more apparent and terrible: so that by the experience of what it was worth, and grace meeting it, one should be better able to strengthen others with true strength. This done, the Lord shows the difference of their position during His life; and that induced by His death. He had served them as a living Savior. They must suffer, and, humanly speaking, shift for themselves, when He became a dying one. On the earth, He was reckoned among malefactors; for the things which concerned Him drew to a close. New ones would begin.

This contrast of Christ's life, and His disciples' connection with it; and his death, and the impossibility of their being connected with Him in it, is peculiar to Luke. Into the latter, that is, the scenes connected with His death, he now enters. This point is important. The human character of the blessed Lord's suffering in Gethsemane, is much more brought out in Luke; and circumstances of the deepest interest are added, while the details of the thrice repeated prayer are omitted, and all is brought together in its moral character. The chief Circumstances added, are these.

The Lord already on arriving at the place, Himself perfect in the sense of what it was, warns them of their need and how to meet it. " Pray that ye enter not into temptation." Further, an angel from heaven appeared to Him to strengthen Him. Here we find His human position clearly brought out. Further, we have the solemn sign of the conflict in which He was. His sweat as great drops of

blood falling down. All this is brought together without distinguishing His three prayers. Save the answer of the Lord to Judas as to his kiss, nothing distinctive, that I am aware of, is in what follows, only the healing of Malchus is more briefly noticed. Conflict through prayer in view of temptation, not to enter into it, characterizes Luke's account of Gethsemane, not the being sorrowful unto death. The forsaking of the disciples is not in Luke. The personal human conflict of Jesus is his subject. The trial of Peter follows in Luke. The Lord had closed His address to those that came, by saying that it was the hour of Satan's power. Alas! their hour also, but the time of the exercise of the power of darkness; happily for us for the light has shone there, and in that light, the power of darkness is gone for us. This Gospel brings in, in connection with this, Peter's history under temptation and the power of the enemy, before pursuing that of Christ's interrogatory. There is no difficulty in the details, as has been imagined. The maid spoke to the men, a man to Peter. The perfect grace of the Lord is brought out here in a circumstance omitted elsewhere - the Lord's looking at Peter. The personal sorrows of Christ are given as such in Luke. His being buffeted is given also before His interrogatory; and this last very briefly in the testimony of Christ Himself, who declares the uselessness of reply; that henceforth they would not see Him, but in glory. All the witness as to the destruction of the temple is omitted. The account of Luke is here also much more brief, but an important act added. Judas' death is not found (see Acts), nor the message of Pilate's wife, nor the Jews taking His blood upon their head, nor, subsequently, the crown of thorns and insults. On the other hand, the sending to Herod is brought before us, and thus the full uniting of all against the rightful Lord of the world - the Christ is presented to us; with the solemn but too natural picture of the opposition to Christ, uniting those who in their personal interests and passions were otherwise enemies. They can compliment each other in treating Christ thus. Pilate, doubtless, would have quieted thus a disturbed conscience, by throwing the matter over on Herod, or avoided the guilt. But thus it was to be. Nor can men thus escape the fruit of their own wickedness. He hoped to get rid of the matter. What is noticed in Luke is, He delivered Jesus to their will. The circumstances attending Christ's crucifixion give a very different character to the scene, though the great central truth is necessarily the same. He is all through now, indeed, the green tree. It is the Man, the Man dependent on the Father, the holy confiding Man, as full of grace now as when walking through a world enlightened (had it been possible) by His miracles. His sufferings, His death as King of the Jews, are recounted surely, the veil of the temple is rent; but the accomplishing so many prophecies, and the expression of His expiatory agony are not noticed. Nature wept at His sorrow, His loss, and the terrible act was felt; but it was over themselves these daughters of Jerusalem should weep. He was the green tree, and if this happened in Him, what should be done to the dry, the lifeless Jerusalem, whose sorrows He was bearing, whose state in judgment He had in grace stepped forward to take for the remnant, who would fain have seen Him received, and acknowledged the sad estate of Jerusalem. Still a nation's sin was there. Judgment was due, and He, the green tree, took it on Him. The remnant would thus escape, but the dry tree, what would be done in it? It is not simply salvation here, but judgment on the nation. This unfolds many Psalms, and the desire that the meek and righteous should not be ashamed for His sake. Verses 35-38 very briefly recount what the other two Evangelists relate in detail, and then we have the deeply interesting account of the malefactor, which as the weeping women drew out the judicial dealings with Jerusalem, and the place Christ took as to the judgment due to the people, unfolds the heavenly portion through faith in Jesus, in virtue of expiation and grace of one who leaves this earth, however great a sinner a man may be, be he who he may, before even the

Kingdom is set up at all. This we have constantly seen is in view in Luke, the eternal, moral, heavenly blessing, what we call Christianity, in contrast with the order of dispensations, while even owning these. Even the dispensational part (the weeping women) is treated morally. The poor thief, converted, justified, and cleansed, was to be that very day with Him in Paradise. The traits of His conversion and faith are admirable; the circumstance that the sun, the center of all natural light and life, and of the whole system of nature for us, was darkened, is added. Nature was put out, and its central sun darkened, as it were, but the way into the holiest laid open by the very same thing. But, on the other hand, there is no rising for the earthly witness (as in Matthew) of bodies of the Saints. Further; there is not the agony of rejection from the light of God's countenance- the opposite to all that every righteous man in Israel hitherto could say, for they had been heard. But we have the new man, the man that trusts in God. Having passed through it and drunk, in perfect obedience, the bitter cup, He can say, " Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." In death, He trusts His soul to His Father. So the centurion also here recognizes the Lord in this character; " Certainly this was a righteous man." Luke adds the moral effect on the people, now, as so often happens, under the effect of what their misguided passions had led to. That He was with the rich in His death is then related by all. In what follows, as we have so often found, Luke relates in a general way, bringing all together, the discovery by the women and by Peter of the resurrection of Jesus; but there is no apparition of Jesus here to any of them. Angels spoke to the women - they to the disciples. It was as idle tales to these; only Peter went to the sepulcher and found it was so, and departed wondering. But then Luke gives the details of the touching history of the journey to Emmaus, just noticed by Mark, where Jesus reveals Himself. And here it is by an allusion to His death, which, though no way the Lord's supper, intimated a part of the same truth as that. The Christ they had to know, was a Christ who had died, whose body had been broken for them, and who then disappeared, was to be known by faith. At the same time, He had expounded to them the Scriptures. This, and indeed something more, is again found after His personal revelation of Himself to Simon, and to the eleven, and others. We have His revelation of Himself first to Peter, and then the clear setting forth that He was really a risen man, having flesh and bones, and having even eaten with them. Two things, then, are presented, divinely-given intelligence of Scripture, and power given from on high. Such are the great bases of the Gospel here presented - the man risen - known in death, and gone away, Scripture understood by divinely-given spiritual intelligence and power from on high. Of this last we have little to boast. Next, all that passed in Galilee recorded by Matthew, is omitted. Matthew gives his last glimpse of Jesus there, and does not speak of the ascension. What is recorded also by John as passing in Galilee, is also omitted. He closes with the respective positions of Peter and John (representing the Jewish and Gentile parts of the Christian Church), without historically mentioning the ascension. All this part of the history is omitted in Luke, and the link of the Lord's departure is with Bethany, His home when rejected of Jerusalem, the heavenly family. There He blesses them, and, as he does so, is taken up to heaven. The mission they receive is according to this. It is not going forth to the Gentiles, assuming the acceptance of, at any rate, the remnant of Israel: nor simply enlarging the service to all creation, but as from outside all, as from heaven, to preach to all the Gentiles, beginning at Jerusalem, which for heavenly things needed it as much as Gentiles, and as to dispensation, had the first place as object of promise. They were to go to all, but " to the Jew first." The apostles were witnesses, but the Holy Ghost also would be given. Though their blessing and mission were from heaven, they find their way to the temple, there praising God.

The Confession of a Very Aged Pilgrim

"I have been weaker ever since that illness. You remember the long, long deep slumber into which I sank, out of which none could rouse me; out of which none thought I ever should rouse -until you came: that was a wonderful sleep! As I lay there, I saw the vast bundle of my sins; too large for me to lay hole of, or to carry. I was troubled and uneasy; but One said to me 'Never fear! the scape-goat with his strong, broad back, has carried them all away into a land not inhabited.' This calmed me. The Lord Jesus Christ is the scape-goat, is He not?"

Deuteronomy 8

THIS chapter gives us an outline of the resources by means of which God supplied the need of His people, while passing through the wilderness; they were resources unknown to the flesh, and such as the flesh could not picture to itself. God often puts his children in positions where every human resource fails: His object is two-fold -1st, that they may know themselves; 2ndly, that they may learn God's ways towards them.

God never varies in His government; that is to say, He never acts on a different principle in one case from that which guides Him in another-e.g., He hates sin, and always acts consistently. Thus, a spiritual Christian may often know beforehand, what line of conduct God will take in a given case. It is most important for us to remember this truth that God changes not. His ways may change: thus; He had put His people under the Law; now, He has put the Church under grace, and hereafter He will place her in glory. Yet there are principles which never change; and therefore the prophets could say that it was not for themselves but for us that they ministered those things (1 Peter 1.12).

Circumstances may vary: Israel may have been driven out of their land, etc.; but, after all, God does not change; and if the means vary, the end (that is, His own glory) is ever the same. As to salvation, for instance; God has always saved upon one principle. For Abraham and every saint, to the most distant ages, is only saved, as we, by blood.

God takes knowledge of everything, and judges us according to the light we have received. He says to His people, "Ye shall surely perish, as the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face " (Deut. 8.19, 20). This is God's principle of government: when sin has come to its height, then He punishes it. It was thus He had dealt with the Amorites and other nations; and it was thus He would deal with His own people. Thus we see that God acts evenly in His government here below; He cares for His own glory, and acts so as to show it forth. Not one action is unimportant; for the most insignificant may deprive us of blessing, on account of the government of God which is at all times in action. It is true, that often one who walks unfaithfully receives many blessings, because God loves to show forth His mercy; nevertheless, everything bears its fruit, either inwardly in the soul, or outwardly in chastisements.

That which strikes me as most precious in this chapter, is God's desire that Israel should not forget their wilderness-Position, which was a state of entire dependance, for Israel had no resources in itself, and received the supply of every need by means of a miracle. We are saved, and led into the wilderness; and there we are surrounded with blessings, as, for instance, the enjoyment of brotherly communion, instead of being in a position of isolation. But, as with Israel, God's blessings might lead to two-fold evil, in separating them from Him, and making them forget their dependance upon Him (ver. 17); so we have to take care lest the blessings we enjoy should produce the same effects on us. This world must needs be to the Christian a land of drought -a thirsty land, where no water is-and he should seek all his enjoyment in heavenly places; if he find any here below, it is because his flesh is not mortified • he is in a bad state, and ought not to

remain in it. Surely God has given us enough spiritual blessings to satisfy our hearts! We may rejoice in that word of God which opens out to the spiritual man the thoughts and counsels of God towards us. If only we draw from this treasure, our souls will have enjoyment enough, and will be able to do without that which the world offers. Let Christ become our all, and let us strip ourselves of all that is not Christ, that He may reign alone in our hearts. This is real progress, and here is true enjoyment for the Christian.

Ver. 11-15. Israel was not to stop short in the enjoyment of the gifts of God, nor to take occasion from them to forget God himself. The Christian, too, must watch, lest, in the enjoyment of the blessing, he should forget Him who has given it, and lose sight of his own dependence upon God. The heart may depart from God, long before God's blessings are withdrawn; and we may still enjoy them when far from Him. But if we ask ourselves, "Have I the enjoyment of such and such blessings? But is my heart really in communion with Jesus? Is it in Him I find my joy? Do I realize my own weakness? etc., etc." How often would the soul answer, "No!" Let my outward circumstances be as favorable as they may, if my heart is not in communion with God, I shall be unable to meet temptation. This is an important truth, for the consequences are immense.

We see, in the history of Israel, the proof that the heart may backslide from God, long before He withdraws His blessings. How long it was, after Israel had forgotten the Lord, ere God came in in judgment, to show what was their state! How often do we enjoy brotherly communion, and the word of God, long after we have forgotten our own weakness and dependence! It is by walking in communion with God, that we can be preserved. This is what Moses expresses to the people (ver. 11-19); it is-"Take heed!"

How often have we been made to feel that the object of our daily journeyings is to humble us! How much that is painful have we learned of ourselves! And how often have we discovered our unbelief when brought into trial! God has led us through the wilderness, to humble us, prove us, and to know what is in our hearts, whether we would keep his commandments, or no.

See ver. 3. Manna was a thing unknown to Israel, when they went into the wilderness; neither had their fathers known it, and they themselves could do nothing towards producing it. -They were dependent. Had God omitted to send it, even for one or two mornings, they must have perished. The water from the rock was equally miraculous. There was no water in the desert, and God gave it by a miracle. There was no path marked out in the wilderness, and they might have wandered from the way; but God performs another miracle, for a cloudy pillar is their leader. But it was not only in great things that God took care of them, or that He does so of us in the wilderness; we have to admire His precious care in the smallest things, and in our tiniest wants. There is a particular, as well as a general providence (ver. 4). "Thy raiment waxed not old." It is true that the Israelites had taken but little notice of the fact, and so it is with us. How many details of God's care for us pass unobserved by us!

We find in Isa. 40, immediately after the description of the greatness of God, and the wonderful effects of his power, the expression of this care in small things. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?" (ver. 27). God does not forget us, and that we might know how dear we are to him, the Lord Jesus said-"Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. 6:26). The Lord would have us remember these two things in the wilderness;-first, that it is He who has redeemed us from the world, as He

did His people out of Egypt; secondly, that it is He who sustains, moment by moment, in the wilderness. It is when we realize this direct dependance upon God, that we are strong to resist the devil; but when we lose sight of it, we feel less the necessity of communion with God; we neglect it, and soon attribute our blessings to ourselves. "Lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth" (ver. 17).

Ver. 11. "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping His commandments.' When in the presence of God, the conscience keeps His commandments, for in His presence they are neither hard nor forgotten. How can we forget the desires of one who is dear to us, when with that person? Let us remember, that apart from communion with God, even His blessings become a snare to pride. We are in the desert, but we are there under the care of a tender Father.

Ephesians

The Epistle to the Ephesians gives us the richest exposition of the blessings of the Church, and of the saints who compose it, setting forth at the same time the counsels of God with regard to the glory of Christ; Christ Himself is viewed as holding all things united in. one under His hand, as Head of the Church. We see the Church placed in the most intimate relationship with Him, as those who compose it are with the Father Him. self, and in the heavenly position dispensed to her by the sovereign grace of God. Now these ways of grace to her, reveal God Himself, and in two distinct characters; as well in connection with Christ as with Christians. He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the God of Christ, when Christ is looked at as the glorious man; the Father of Christ, when Christ is looked at as the Son of His love. In the first character, the nature of God is revealed; in the second, we see the intimate relationship which we enjoy to Him who bears this character of Father, and that, according to the excellence of Christ's own relationship to Him. It is this relationship to the Father, as well as that in which we stand to Christ as His Bride; that is the source of blessing to the Church of God, of which grace has made us members. The form even of the Epistle, shows how much the Apostle's mind was filled with the sense of the blessing that belongs to the Church. After having wished grace and peace to the saints and the faithful at Ephesus, from God, the Father of true Christians, and from Jesus Christ their Lord, he begins at once to speak of the blessings in which all the members of Christ participate. His heart was full of the immensity of grace; and nothing in the state of the Ephesian Christians required any particular remarks adapted to that state. It is nearness of heart to God that produces simplicity, and that enables us in simplicity to enjoy the blessings of God, as God Himself bestows them, as they flow from His heart, in all their own excellence; to enjoy them in connection with Him who imparts them, and not merely in a mode adapted to the state of those to whom they are imparted; or through a communication that only reveals a part of these blessings, because the soul would not be able to receive more. Yes, when near to God, we are in simplicity, and the whole extent of His grace and of our blessings unfolds itself as it is found in Him.

It is important to remark two things here in passing: 1st. That moral nearness to God, and communion with Him, is the only means of any true enlargement in the knowledge of His ways and of the blessings which He imparts to His children, because it is the only position in which we can perceive them, or be morally capable of so doing. And, also, that all conduct which is not suitable to this nearness to God, all levity of thought, which His presence does not admit of, makes us lose these communications from Him and renders us' incapable of receiving them (compare John 14:21-23). 2ndly. It is not that the Lord forsakes us on account of these faults or this carelessness; He intercedes for us, and we experience His grace, but it is no longer communion, or intelligent progress in the riches of the revelation of Himself, of the fullness which is in Christ. It is grace adapted to our wants, an answer to our misery; Jesus stretches out His hand to us according to the need that we feel, need produced in our hearts by the operation of the Holy Ghost. This is infinitely precious grace, a sweet experience of His faithfulness and love; we learn by this means to discern good and evil, by judging self; but the grace had to be adapted to our wants, and to

receive a character according to those wants, as an answer made to them: we have had to think of ourselves. In a case like this, the Holy Ghost occupies us with ourselves (in grace, no doubt), and when we have lost communion with God, we cannot neglect this turning back upon ourselves without deceiving and hardening ourselves. Alas, the dealings of many souls with Christ hardly go beyond this character. It is with all, too often the case. In a word, when this happens, the thought of sin having been admitted into the heart, our dealings with the Lord, to be true, must be on the ground of this sad admission of sin, in thought at least. It is grace alone which allows us again to have to do with God. The fact that He restores us, enhances His grace in our eyes; but this is not communion. When we walk with God, when we walk after the Spirit without grieving Him, He 'maintains us in communion, in the enjoyment of God, the positive source of joy, of an everlasting joy. This is a position in which He can occupy us - as being ourselves interested in all that interests Him - with all the development of His counsels, His glory, and His goodness, in the person of Jesus the Christ, Jesus the Son of His love; and the heart is enlarged in the measure of the objects that occupy it. This is our normal condition. This, in the main, was the case with the Ephesians.

We have already remarked, that Paul was specially gifted of God to communicate His counsels and His ways in Christ; as John was gifted to reveal His character and life as it was manifested in Jesus. The result of this particular gift in our Apostle, is naturally found in the Epistle we are considering. Nevertheless, we, as being ourselves in Christ, find in it a remarkable development of our relationship with God, of the intimacy of those relationships, and of the effect of that intimacy. Christ is the foundation on which our blessings are built. It is as being in Him, that we enjoy them. We thus become the actual and present object of the favor of God the Father, even as Christ Himself is its object. The Father has given us to Him, Christ has died for us, has redeemed, washed, and quickened us, and presents us according to the efficacy of His work, and according to the acceptance of His person, before God His Father. The secret of all the Church's blessing is, that it is blessed with Jesus Himself; and thus - like Him, viewed as a man - is accepted before God; for the Church is His body, and enjoys in Him and by Him all that His Father has bestowed on Him. Individually, the Christian is loved as Christ on earth was loved; he will hereafter share in the glory of Christ before the eyes of the world, as a proof that he was so loved, in connection with the name of Father, which God maintains in regard to this (see John 17:23-26).

Now, Christ stands in two relationships with God, His Father. He is a perfect man before His God, He is a Son with His Father. We are to share both these relationships. This He announced to His disciples ere He went back to heaven: it is unfolded in all its extent by the words he spoke, " I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." This precious, this inappreciable truth, is the foundation of the apostle's teaching in this place. He considered God in this double aspect, as the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and our blessings are in connection with these two titles. But, before attempting to set forth in detail the apostle's thought, let us remark, that he begins here entirely with God, His thoughts and His counsels, not with what man is. We may lay hold of the truth, so to speak, by one or the other of two ends, by that of the sinner's condition in connection with man's responsibility, or by that of the thoughts and eternal counsels of God, in view of His own glory. The latter is that side of the truth on which the Spirit here makes us look. Even redemption, all glorious as it is in itself, is consigned to the second place, as the means by which we enjoy the effect of God's counsels.

It was necessary that the ways of God should be considered on this side, that is, His own thoughts, not merely the means of bringing man into the enjoyment of the fruit of them: it is the Epistle to the Ephesians which thus presents them to us.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ, having chosen us in Him. Chapter 1 unfolds (vers. 4-7) these blessings, and the means of sharing them; (ver. 8-10) the settled purpose of God for the glory of Christ, in whom we possess them. Next (ver. 11-14), sets before us the inheritance, and the Holy Ghost given as a seal to our persons, and as the earnest of our inheritance. Then follows a prayer, in which the apostle asks that his dear children in the faith --let us say that we may know our privileges and the power that has brought us into them, the same as that by which Christ was raised from the dead and set at the right hand of God to possess them; as the Head of the Church, which is His body, which, with Him, shall be established over all things, that were created by its Head as God, and that He inherits, as man, filling all things with His divine and redeeming glory.

But we must examine these things more closely. We have seen the establishment of the two relationships between man and God, relationships in which Christ Himself stands. He ascended to His God and our God, to His Father and our Father. We share all the blessings that flow from these two relationships. He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings, not one is lacking, and they are of the highest order; they are not temporal, as was the case with the Jews. It is in the most exalted capacity of the renewed man that we enjoy these blessings, and they are adapted to that capacity; they are spiritual. They are also in the highest sphere, it is not in Canaan or Emmanuel's land, these blessings are granted us in the heavenly places; they are granted us in the most excellent way, one which leaves room for no comparison, it is in Christ. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places, in Christ. But this flows from the heart of God Himself, from a thought outside the circumstances in which He finds us in time. Before the world was, this was our place in His heart. He purposed to give us a place in Christ. He chose us in Him. What blessing, what a source of joy, what grace, to be thus the objects of God's favor, according to His sovereign love! If we would measure it, it is by Christ we must attempt to do so; or, at least, it is thus that we must feel what this love is. Take especial notice here of the way in which the Holy Ghost keeps it continually before our eyes, that all is in Christ--in the heavenly places in Christ, He has chosen us in Him, unto the adoption by Jesus Christ, made acceptable in the Beloved. This is one of the fundamental principles of the Spirit's instruction in this place. The other is that the blessing has its origin in God Himself. He is its source and author. His own heart, if we may so express it, His own mind, are it, origin and its measure. Therefore, it is in Christ alone that we can have any measure of that which cannot be measured. For He is, completely and adequately, the delight of God. The heart of God finds in Him a sufficient object on which to pour itself out entirely, towards which His infinite love can all be exercised.

The blessing, then, is of God; but, moreover, it is with Himself and before Him, to gratify Himself, to satisfy His love. It is He who has chosen us, He who has predestined us, He who has blessed us--but it is that we should be before Him, adopted as children unto Himself. Such is grace, in these great foundations. This, consequently, is what grace was pleased to do for us.

We have said that God reveals Himself in two characters, even in His relationship to Christ; He is God, and He is Father: and our blessings are connected with this, i.e., with His perfect nature as

God, and with the intimacy of a positive relationship with Him as Father. The apostle does not yet touch on the inheritance, nor on the counsels of God, with regard to the glory of which Christ is to be the center as a whole; but he speaks of our own relationship with God, of that which we are with God and before Him, and not of our inheritance; of that which He has made us to be, and not of that which He has given us. In vers. 4-6, our own portion in Christ before God is developed. Ver. 4 depends on the name of God, ver. 5 on that of Father. The character of God Himself is depicted in that which is ascribed to the saints, ver. 4. God could find His moral delight only in Himself and in that which morally resembles him. Indeed, this is a universal principle. An honest man can find no satisfaction in a man who does not resemble him in this respect. With still greater reason, God could not endure that which is in opposition to His holiness, since, in the activity of His nature, He must surround Himself with that which He loves and delights in. But, before all, Christ is this in Himself. He is personally the image of the invisible God. Love, holiness, perfection in all His ways, are united in Him. And God has chosen us in Him. In ver. 4, we find our position in this respect. 1st. We are before Him, He brings us into His presence. The love of God must do this in order to satisfy itself. The love which is in us must be found in this position, to have its perfect object. It is there only that perfect happiness can be found. But this being so, it is needful that we should be like God. He could not bring us into His presence in order to take delight in us, and yet admit us there such as He could not find pleasure in. He has, therefore, chosen us in Christ, that we should be holy, without blame, before Him, in love. He Himself is holy in His character, unblameable in all His ways, love in His nature. It is a position of perfect happiness. In the presence of God, like God; and that, in Christ, the object and the measure of divine affection; so that God takes delight in us, and we, possessing a nature like His own, as to its moral qualities, are capable of enjoying this nature fully and without hindrance, and of enjoying it in its perfection in Him. It is also His own choice, His own affection which has placed us there; and which has placed us there in Him who, being His eternal delight, is worthy of it, so that the heart finds its rest in this position, for there is agreement in our nature with that of God, and we were also chosen to it, which shows the personal affection that God has for us. There is also a perfect and supreme object with which we are occupied.

Remark here, that in the relationship of which we here speak, the blessing is in connection with the nature of God; therefore it is not said that we are predestined to this according to the good pleasure of His will. We are chosen in Christ to be blessed in His presence, it is His infinite grace, but the joy of His nature could not (nor could ours in Him) be other than it is, because such is His nature; happiness could not be found elsewhere or with another.

But in the 5th verse we come to particular privileges, and we are predestined to those privileges. " He has predestined us unto the adoption, according to the good pleasure of His will." This verse sets before us not the nature of God, but the intimacy, as we have said, of a positive relationship. Thence it is according to the good pleasure of His will. He may have angels before Him as servants: it was His will to have sons.

Perhaps it might be said, that if admitted to take delight in the nature of God, one could hardly not be in an intimate relationship; but the form, the character, of this relationship depends certainly on the sovereign will of God. Moreover, since we possess these things in Christ, the reflection of this Divine nature and the relationship of son go together, for the two are united in us. Still, we must remember that our participation in these things depends on the sovereign will. of God our Father;

even as the means of sharing them, and the manner in which we share them, is that we are in Christ. God our Father, in His sovereign goodness, according to His counsels of love, chooses to have us near Himself. This purpose, which links us to Christ in grace, is strongly expressed in this verse, as well as that which precedes it. It is not only our position which it characterizes, but the Father introduces Him. self in a peculiar way with regard to this relationship. The Holy Ghost is not satisfied with saying, " He has predestined us unto the adoption," but He adds, " unto Himself." One might say this is implied in the word "adoption." But the Spirit would particularize this thought

to our hearts, that the Father chooses to have us in an intimate relationship with Himself as sons. We are sons to Himself by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will. If Christ is the image of the invisible God, we bear that image, being chosen in Him. If Christ is a Son, we enter into that relationship. These, then, are our relationships, so precious, so marvelous, with God our Father, in Christ. These are the counsels of God. We find nothing yet of the previous condition of those who were to be called into this blessing. It is a heavenly people, a heavenly family, according to the purposes and counsels of God, the fruit of His eternal thoughts, and of His nature of love - that which is here called the glory of His grace." We cannot glorify God by adding anything to Him. He glorifies Himself when He reveals Himself. All this is, therefore, to the praise of the glory of His grace, according to which [grace] He has acted towards us in grace, in Christ; according to which, Christ is the measure of this grace, its form towards us, He in whom we share it. All the fullness of this grace reveals itself in His ways towards us: the original thoughts, so to speak, of God, which have no other source than Himself, and in and by which He reveals Himself, and by the accomplishment of which in Christ, He glorifies Himself. And observe here, that the Spirit does not say " the Christ " at the end of ver. 6, when He speaks of Him, He would put emphasis on the thoughts of God. He has acted towards us in grace in the Beloved, in Him who is peculiarly the object of His affections. He brings this characteristic of Christ out into relief, when He speaks of the grace bestowed upon us in Him. Was there an especial object of the love, of the affection of God? He has blessed us in that object.

And where is it that He found us when He would bring us into this glorious position? Who is it that He chooses to bless in this way? Poor sinners, dead in their trespasses and sins, the slaves of Satan and of the flesh.

If it is in Christ that we see our position according to the counsels of God, it is in Him also that we find the redemption that sets us in it. We have redemption through His blood, the remission of our sins. Those whom He would bless were poor and miserable, through sin. He has acted towards them according to the riches of His grace. We have already observed, that the Spirit brings out in this passage the eternal counsels of God with regard to the saints in Christ, before He enters on the subject of the state from which He drew them, when He found them in their condition of sinners here below. Now the whole mind of God respecting them, is revealed in His counsels, in which He glorifies Himself. Therefore it is said, that that which He saw good to do with the saints, was according to the glory of His grace. He makes Himself known in it. That which He has done for poor sinners, is according to the riches of His grace. In His counsels He has revealed Himself; He is glorious in grace. In His work, He thinks of our misery, of our wants, according to the riches of His grace; we share in them, as being their object in our poverty, in our need.. He is rich in grace. Thus our position is ordered and established according to the counsels of God, and by the efficacy of His work in Christ: our position, that is, in reference to Him. But there is more, God, having

placed us in this intimacy, reveals to us His thoughts respecting the glory of Christ Himself. This same grace has made us the depositories of the settled purpose of His counsels, with regard to the universal glory of Christ, for the administration of the fullness of times. This is an immense favor granted us. God our Father has given to us to enjoy all blessings in heavenly places ourselves; but He would unite all things in heaven and on the earth under Christ as Head, and our relationship with all that is put under Him, as well as our relationship with God His Father, depends on our position in it is in Him that we have our inheritance.

The good pleasure of God was to unite all that is 'created, under the hand of Christ. This is His purpose for the administration of the times in which the result of all His ways shall be manifested. In Christ we inherit our part, heirs of God, as it is said elsewhere, joint heirs with Christ. Here, however, the Spirit sets before us the position, in virtue of which the inheritance has fallen to us, rather than the inheritance itself. He ascribes it also to the sovereign will of God, as He did before with regard to the special relationship of sons unto God. Remark also here, that in the inheritance, we shall be to the praise of His glory; as in our relationship to Him, we are to the praise of the glory of His grace. Manifested in possession of the inheritance, we shall be the display of His glory made visible and seen in us; but our relationships with Him are the fruit, for our own souls, with Him and before Him, of the infinite grace that has placed us in these relationships, and made us capable of them.

(b It will be a grand spectacle, as the result of the ways of God, to see all things united in perfect peace and union under the authority of man, of the second Adam, the Son of God; ourselves associated with Him in the same glory with Himself, His companions in the heavenly glory, as the objects of the eternal counsels of God. I do not enlarge here upon this scene, because the chapter we are considering directs our attention to the communication of the counsels of God respecting it, and not to the scene itself. The eternal state, in which God is all in all, is again another thing. The administration of the fullness of times, is the result of the ways of God in government; the eternal state, that of the perfection of His nature.)

Such, then, with regard to the glory bestowed on Him, are the counsels of God our Father, with respect to Christ. He shall gather together in one, all things in Himself as their Head. And as it is in Him that we have our true position, as to our relationship with God the Father, so also is it with regard to the inheritance bestowed upon us. We are united to Christ in connection with that which is above us; we are so likewise with regard to that which is below. Now, He is speaking here of Christians, of those who have believed in Christ before He is manifested; this is the force of "we, who have first trusted in Christ." If I may venture to use a new word, " who have pre-trusted in Christ," trusted in Him before He appears. The remnant of the Jews, in the last days, will believe (like Thomas) when they shall see Him. Blessed is he who shall have believed without seeing. The Apostle speaks of those among the Jews who had already believed in Him. In ver. 13, he extends the same blessing to the Gentiles; which gives occasion for another precious truth with regard to us, a thing that is true of every believer, but that had special force with regard to those from among the Gentiles. God had put his seal on them by the gift of the Holy Ghost. They were not according to the flesh - heirs of the promises; but, when they believed, God sealed them with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the earnest of the inheritance both of the one and the other' Jews and Gentiles, until the possession acquired by Christ should be delivered to Him, until He should, in fact, take possession of it by His power, a power which will allow no adversary to subsist. Remark here, that

the subject is not regeneration, but a seal put on believers, a demonstration and earnest of their future full participation in the heritage that belongs to Christ. An inheritance to which He has a right through redemption, whereby He has purchased all things to Himself, but which He will only appropriate by His power when He shall have gathered together all the co-heirs to enjoy it with Him.

The Holy Ghost is not the earnest of love. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given unto us. God loves us, as He will love us in heaven. Of the inheritance, the Holy Ghost is but an earnest. We do not yet possess anything of the inheritance.

Thus we have here - the grace which ordered the position of the children of God - the counsels of God respecting the glory of Christ as Head over all - the part which we have in Him as Heir- and the gift of the Holy Ghost to believers, as the earnest and seal, until they are put in possession, with Christ, of the inheritance that He has won.

From ver. 15 to the end, we have the Apostle's prayer for the saints, flowing from this revelation, a prayer founded on the exposition of the whole truth respecting the union of Christ and the Church, and the place which Christ takes in the universe that He created, as Son, and which He resumes as man; and on the power displayed in placing us, as well as Christ Himself, at the height of this position which God has given us in His counsels. This prayer is founded on the title of " God of our Lord Jesus Christ;" that of chap. iii. on the title of " Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." God is called the Father of Glory here, as being its Source and Author. But not only is it said, " the God of our Lord Jesus Christ," but we shall see also that Christ is viewed as man. God has wrought in Christ (ver. 20), He has raised Him from among the dead - has made Him sit at His right hand. In a word, all that happened to Christ is considered as • the effect of the power of God who has accomplished it. Christ could say, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up again in three days," for He was God; but here He is viewed as man; it is God who raises Him up again.

There are two parts in this prayer: 1st, that they may understand what the calling and the inheritance of God are; and, 2ndly, what the power is that puts them in possession of that which this calling confers upon them -the same power which set Christ at the right hand of God, having raised Him from among the dead.

1st. The understanding of the things given us. We find, it appears to me, the two things which in the previous part of the chapter we have seen to be the saint's portion = the hope of the calling of God, and the glory of His inheritance in the saints: the first is connected with ver. 3-5; the second with ver. 11. In the former, we have found grace, i.e., God acting towards us because He is love; in the latter the glory; man manifested as enjoying in His person and inheritance. the fruits of the power and the counsels of God. God calls us to be before Him, holy and unblameable in love, and at the same time to be His children. The glory of His inheritance is ours. Take notice that the Apostle does not say "our calling," although we are called. He characterizes this calling by connecting it with Him who calls in order that we may understand it according to its excellence, according to its true character. The calling is according to God Himself. All the blessedness and character of this calling, are according to the fullness of His grace -are worthy of Himself. It is this which we hope for. It is also His inheritance, as the land of Canaan was His, as He had said in the law, and which, nevertheless, He inherited in Israel. Even so, the inheritance of the whole universe when it shall be filled with glory, belongs to Him, but He inherits it in the saints. It is the

riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. He will fill all things with His glory, and it is in the saints that He will inherit them. These are the two parts of the first thing to which the eyes of the saints were to be opened. By the calling of God, we are called to enjoy the blessedness of His presence near to Himself, to enjoy that which is above us. The inheritance of God applies to that which is below us, to created things, which are all made subject to Christ, with whom and in whom we enjoy the light of the presence of God near to Him. The Apostle's desire is, that the Ephesians may understand these two things.

The second thing that the apostle asks for them, is that they may know the power already manifested, which had already wrought to give them part in this blessed and glorious position. For, even as they were introduced by the sovereign grace of God, into the position of Christ before God His Father; so, also, the work which has been wrought in Christ, and the display of the power of God, which took place in raising him from the grave to the right hand of God the Father, above every name that is named, are the expression and the model of the action of the same power which works in us who believe, which has raised us from our state of death in sin, to have part in the glory of this same Christ. This power is the basis of the Church's position in her union with Him, and of the development of the mystery, according to the purposes of God. In person, Christ raised up from among the dead, is set at the right hand of God far above all power and authority, and above every name that is named, among the hierarchies by which God administers the government of the world that now is, or among those of the world to come. And this superiority exists not only with regard to His divinity, the glory of which changes not, but with regard to the place given Him as man; for we speak here-as we have seen-of the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is He who has raised Him from the dead, and who has given Him glory and a place above all; a place of which, no doubt, He was personally worthy, but which He receives and ought to receive, as man, from the hand of God, who has established Him as Head over all things, uniting the Church to Him as His body; and raising up the members from the dead, by the same power as that which raised up and exalted the Head; quickening them together with Christ, and seating them in the heavenly places in Him, by the same power that exalted Him. Thus, the Church, His body, is His fullness. It is, indeed, He who fills all in all, but the body forms the complement of the Head. It is He, because He is God as well as man, who fills all things,-and that, inasmuch as He is man-according to the power of redemption, and of the glory which He has acquired; so that the universe which He fills with His glory, enjoys it according to the stability of that redemption, from the power and effect of which nothing can withdraw it. It is He, I repeat, who fills the universe with His glory, but the Head is not isolated, left, so to speak, incomplete as such, without its body. It is the body that completes it in that glory, as a natural body completes the head; but not to be the head, or to direct, but to be the body of the head, and that the head should be the head of its body. Christ is the Head of the body over all things. He fills all in all, and the Church is His fullness when He does so. This is the mystery in all its parts. Accordingly, we shall observe, that it is when Christ (having accomplished redemption) was exalted to the right hand of God, that He takes the place in which He can be the Head of the body.

Marvelous portion of the saints, in virtue of their redemption, and of the divine power that wrought in the resurrection of Christ when He had died under our trespasses and sins, and set Him at the right hand of God; a portion which is ours also, through our union with Him

In chap. 2, the operation of the power of God on earth, for the purpose of bringing souls into the enjoyment of their heavenly privileges, and thus of forming the Church here below, is presented, rather than the unfolding of the privileges themselves, and, consequently, that of the counsels of God. It is not even these counsels, it is the grace and the power which work for their fulfillment, by leading souls to the result which this power will produce, according to those counsels. Christ had died, God had raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand. We were dead in our trespasses and sins, He has quickened us together with Him, raised us up together. But as it is the earth that is in question, and the operation of power and grace on the earth, the Spirit naturally speaks of the condition of those in whom this grace works. In fact, of the condition of all: at the same time, in the earthly forms of religion, in the systems that existed on earth, there were those who were nigh and those who were far off. Now, we have seen that in the full blessing, of which the apostle speaks, the nature of God Himself is concerned; in view of which, and to glorify which, all His counsels were settled. Therefore, outward forms, although some of them had been established provisionally on the earth by God's own authority, could now have no value. They had served for the manifestation of the ways of God, as shadows of things to come; and had been connected with the display of God's authority on earth among men; important things in their place-but these figures could do nothing as to bringing souls into relationship with God, in order to enjoy the eternal manifestation of His nature, in hearts made capable of it by grace, through their participation in that nature and reflecting it. For this, these figures were utterly worthless; they were not the manifestation of these eternal principles. But the two classes of men, Jews and Gentiles, were there; and the apostle speaks of them both. Grace takes up persons from both, to form one body, one new man, by a new creation in Christ.

In the two first verses of this chapter, he speaks of those who were brought out from among the nations that knew not God; Gentiles, as they are usually called. Ver. 3, he speaks of the Jews, "We all also," he says. He does not here enter into the dreadful details contained in Rom. 3, because his object is not to convince the individual, in order to show him the means of justification, but to set forth the counsels of God in grace. Here, then, he speaks of the distance from God in which man is found, under the power of darkness. With regard to the nations, he speaks of the universal condition of the world. The whole course of the world, the entire system, was according to the prince of the power of the air; the world itself was under the government of him who worked in the hearts of the children of disobedience, who, in self-will, evaded the government of God, although they could not evade His judgment.

If the Jews had external privileges, if they were not in a direct way under the government of the prince of this world (as was the case with the nations that were plunged in idolatry, and sunk in all the degradation of that system in which man wallowed in the licentiousness into which demons delighted to plunge him, in derision of his wisdom), if the Jews were not, like the Gentiles, under the government of demons, nevertheless, in their nature, they were led by the same desires as those by which demons influenced the poor heathen. The Jews led the same life, as to the desires of the flesh; they were children of wrath, even as others, for that is the condition of men, they are, in their nature, the children of wrath. In their outward privileges, the Israelites were the people of God; by nature, they were men as others. And, remark here these words, "by nature." The Spirit is not speaking here of a judgment pronounced on the part of God, nor of sins committed, nor of Israel having failed in their relationship to God through falling into idolatry and rebellion, nor even

of their having rejected the Messiah, and so deprived themselves of all resource - all of which Israel had done. Neither does he speak of a positive judgment from God, pronounced on the manifestation of sin. They were, even as all men, in their nature the children of wrath. This wrath was the natural consequence of the state in which they were. Man as he was, Jew or Gentile, and wrath, naturally went together, even as there is a natural link between good and righteousness. Now, God, in His own nature, was above all that to those who are worthy of wrath He can be rich in mercy, for He is so in Himself. The apostle therefore presents Him here as acting according, to His own nature towards the objects of His grace. We were dead, says the apostle, dead in our trespasses and sins. God comes, in His love, to deliver us by His power; " God, who is rich in mercy, according to His great love wherewith He loved us." There was no good working in us, we were dead in our trespasses and sins; the movement came from Him, praised be His name! He has quickened us-nor that only-He has quickened us together with Christ. He had not said in a direct way that Christ had been quickened, although it may be said, where the power of the Spirit in Himself is spoken of. He was, however, raised from the dead, and when we are in question, we are told that all the energy by which He came forth from death is employed also for our quickening; and not only that, even in being quickened we are associated with Him. He comes forth from death-we come forth with Him. God has imparted this life to us. It is His pure grace, and a grace that has saved us; that found us dead in sin, and brought us out of death even as Christ came out of it; and brought us out with Him, by the power of His life in resurrection; with Christ, who left behind Him the sins which were connected with the old man, and which He had taken on Himself, in order to set us in the light and in the favor of God, according to divine righteousness, even as He Himself is there. All that belonged to the old man is left behind. Jews and Gentiles are found together in the same new position in Christ. Death has shut the door on all those distinctions. They have no place in a risen Christ. God has quickened the one and the other with Christ.

Now, Christ having done this, Jews and Gentiles, without the differences which death had abolished, are found together in the risen Christ, are sitting together in Him in a new condition common to them both, a condition which is described by that of Christ Himself. These poor sinners from among the Gentiles, and from among the disobedient and gainsaying Jews, are brought into the position where Christ is, by the power which raised Him from the dead; in order to skew forth, in the ages to come, the immense riches of the grace which had accomplished it. A Mary Magdalene, a crucified thief, companions in glory with the Son of God, will bear witness to it. For it is by grace that we are saved. Now, we are not yet in the glory, it is by faith (would any one say that, at least, the faith is of man? No. It is not of ourselves in this respect either. All is the gift of God), not of works, in order that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship: In how powerful a way the Spirit puts God Himself forward, as the source and operator of the whole of a result which is in accordance with His own character. Now, it is in us that this is done. He takes up poor sinners to display His glory in them. If it is the operation of God, assuredly it will be for good works: He has created us in Christ for them. And, observe here, that if God has created us for good works, these must in their nature be characterized by Him who has wrought in us, creating us according to His own thoughts. It is not man who seeks to draw nigh to God, or to satisfy Him by doing works that are pleasing to Him according to the law - the measure of that which man ought to be; it is God who takes us up in our sins, when there is not one moral movement in our hearts, and creates us anew for works in accordance with this new creation. It is an entirely new position that we are placed in, according to this new creation of God; a new character that we are invested

with, according to the pre-determination of God. The works are pre-determined also, according to the character which we put on by this new creation. All is absolutely according to the mind of God Himself. It is not duty according to the old creation. All is the fruit of God's own thoughts in the new creation. The law disappears, with regard to us, even as to its works, together with the nature to which it applied. Man, obedient to the law, was man as he ought to be, according to the first Adam; the man in Christ must walk according to the heavenly life of the second Adam, and walk worthy of Him as the Head of a new creation, being raised up with Him, and being the fruit of the new creation - worthy of Him who has formed him for this very thing. 2 Cor. 5:6.

The Gentiles, therefore, enjoying this ineffable privilege,-although the apostle does not recognize Judaism as a true circumcision,-were to remember from whence they had been taken; without God and without hope, as they were in the world, strangers to all the promises. But however far off they had been, now, in Christ, they were brought nigh by His blood. He had broken down the middle wall, having annulled the law of commandments by which the Jew, who was distinguished by these ordinances, was separated from the Gentiles. These ordinances had their sphere of action in the flesh. But Christ (as living in connection with all that) being dead, has abolished the enmity, to form in Himself of the two - Jew and Gentile- one new man. He has made peace, as to sin, by the propitiatory sacrifice which He has offered to God, in order to reconcile the one and the other to God in one body; having, by the cross, not only made peace, but destroyed, by grace that was common to both (and to which one could make no more claim than the other, since it was for sin), the enmity that existed till then, between the privileged Jew and the idolatrous Gentile far from God.

Having made peace, He proclaimed it with this object to the one and the other, whether far off or nigh. For by Christ, we all - whether Jews or Gentiles have access by one Spirit to the Father. It is not the Jehovah of the Jews (whose name was not called upon the Gentiles), it is the Father of Christians, of the redeemed by Christ Jesus, who are adopted to form part of the family of God. Thus, albeit a Gentile, one is no longer a stranger or foreigner, one is of the Christian and heavenly citizenship, of the true house of God Himself. Such is grace. As to this world, being thus incorporated in Christ, this is our position. All - Jew or Gentile - thus gathered together in one body, constitute the Church on earth. The apostles and prophets of the New Testament) form the foundation of the building, Christ himself being the chief corner stone. In Him the whole building rises to be a temple; the Gentiles having their place, and forming with the others the dwelling-place on earth of God, who is present by His Spirit. First, he looks at the progressive work which was being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the whole Church, according to the mind of God; and, secondly, he looks at the union which existed between the Ephesians and other believing Gentiles and the Jews, as forming God's house on the earth at that moment. God dwelt in it by the Holy Ghost.

Chapter 1 had set before us the counsels and purposes of God; and, consequently, the Church as the body of Christ, united to Him who is Head over all things. Chapter 2, treating of the work which calls out the Church, which creates it here below by grace, sets before us this Church growing up on earth, and the habitation of God here below by the Spirit.

The whole of chap. 3 is a parenthesis, unfolding the mystery; and presenting, at the same time, in the prayer that concludes it, the second character of God set before us at the beginning of the

Epistle, namely, that of Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ; and this is the way in which it is here introduced. Chapter 1 gives the counsels of God as they are in themselves; chap. 2, His work in forming the whole assembly of those who are risen in Christ, taken by grace from among Jews and Gentiles; chap. 3 speaks especially of the bringing in of the Gentiles on the same footing as the Jews. This was the entirely new part of the ways of God.

Paul was a prisoner, for having preached the gospel to the Gentiles, a circumstance that brought out his particular ministry very clearly. This ministry, in the main, is presented as in the 1 Col.; only, in the latter epistle, the whole subject is treated more briefly, and the essential principle and character of the mystery, according to its place in the counsels of God, is less explained. Here, the apostle assures us, that he had received it by a special revelation, as he had already taught them in words which, though few, were suited to give a clear understanding of his knowledge of the mystery of Christ: a mystery never made known in the past ages, but now revealed by the spirit to the apostles and prophets. Here, it will be observed, that the prophets are most evidently those of the New Testament, since the communications made to them are put in contrast with the degree of light granted in the previous ages. Now the mystery had been hidden in all former times; and, in fact, it needed so to be; for to have put the Gentiles on the same footing as the Jews, would have been to demolish Judaism, such as God had himself established it. In it He had carefully raised a middle wall of partition. The duty of the Jew was to respect this separation; he sinned, if he did not strictly observe it. The mystery set it aside. The Old Testament prophets, and Moses himself, had indeed shown that the Gentiles should one day rejoice with the people; but the people remained a separate people. That they should be co-heirs, and of the same body, all distinction being lost, had indeed been in the counsels of God before the world was, but formed 'no part of the history of the world, nor of the ways of God respecting it.

It was a marvelous counsel of God which, uniting redeemed ones to Christ in heaven, as a body to its head, gave them a place in heaven. For although we are journeying on the earth, and although we are the habitation of God, by the spirit, on the earth, yet, in the mind of God, our place is in heaven.

In the age to come, the Gentiles will be blessed; but Israel will be a special and separate people.

In the church which has its origin in the counsels of God in Christ before the world was, all earthly distinction is lost: we are all one in Christ, as risen with Him.

Thus the Gospel of the Apostle was addressed to the Gentiles, to announce this good news to them, according to the gift of God, which had been granted to Paul by the operation of His power, to proclaim to them not merely a Messiah according to the promises made to the fathers, but a Christ whose riches were unsearchable. No one could trace to the end, and in all its development in Him, the accomplishment of the counsels, and the revelation of the nature, of God. They are the incomprehensible riches of a Christ, in whom God reveals himself. The counsels of God, with regard to a Christ, the head of His body the Church, head over all things in heaven and earth; Christ, the second Adam; Christ, God manifest in the flesh, were now being accomplished, and making themselves known. Saul, the inveterate enemy of Jesus, proclaimed as Messiah-the worst, therefore, of all men-becomes, by grace, Paul the instrument and witness of that grace, to announce these incomprehensible riches to the Gentiles. This was His apostolic function with regard to the Gentiles. There was also another-it was to enlighten all with regard to this mystery,

which, from the beginning of the world, had been hidden in God. This answers to the two parts of the apostle's ministry, pointed out in Col. 1:23, 24, 25; even as ver. 27 in that chapter, corresponds with ver. 17 here. God, who created all things, had this thought, this counsel, before creation, in order that when He should subject all creation to His Son, become a man and glorified, that Son should have companions in His glory, who should be like Himself, members of His body, spiritual, living of His life.

He made known to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, which gave them a portion in the counsels of God in grace. He enlightened all with regard, not precisely to the mystery, but to the administration of the mystery; that is to say, not only the counsel of God, but the accomplishment in time of that counsel, by bringing the Church together under Christ, its Head. He who had created all things, as the sphere of the development of His glory, had kept this secret in His own possession, in order that the administration of the mystery, now revealed by the establishment of the Church on earth, should be the means, in its time, of making known to the most exalted of created beings, the manifold and various wisdom of God. They had seen creation arise and expand before their eyes; they had seen the government of God, His providence, His judgment, His intervention in loving-kindness on the earth, in Christ; but here was a kind of wisdom altogether new; a thing outside the world, shut up in the counsels of God, as the special object of his delight; connected in a peculiar way with the one who is the center and the fullness of the mystery of piety, which had its own place in union with Him; which, although it was manifested on earth, and set with Christ at the head of creation, formed no part of it. It was a new creation, and a separate manifestation of the wisdom of God; a part of His thoughts which, until then, had been reserved in the secret of His counsels; the actual administration of which, on the earth, in time, by the apostle's work, made known the wisdom of God according to His settled purpose, according to His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. In whom, the apostle adds, we draw nigh with all boldness by faith in Him: and it is according to this relationship that we do so.

Therefore, these Gentile believers were not to be discouraged on account of the imprisonment of him who had proclaimed to them this mystery, for it was the proof and the fruit of the glorious position which God had granted them, and of which the Jews were jealous.

This revelation of the ways of God does not, as the first chapter, present Christ to us as man, raised up by God from the dead, in order that we should be raised up also, to have part with Him, and that the administration of the counsels of God should thus be accomplished. It presents Him as the Center of all the ways of God, the Son of the Father, the Heir of all things as the Creator Son, and the Center of the counsels of God. It is to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that the apostle now addresses himself; as in chap. 1, it was to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. Every family (not the whole family) ranges itself under this name of Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Under the name of Jehovah, there were only the Jews. "Thee only have I known of all the families of the earth;" had Jehovah said to the Jews, in Amos, "therefore will I punish thee for thine iniquities;" but under the name of Father of Jesus Christ, all families, the Church, angels, Jews, Gentiles, all range themselves. All the ways of God, in that -which he had arranged for His glory, were co-ordained under this name, and were in relation with it: and that which the apostle asked for the saints to whom he addressed himself was, that they should be enabled to apprehend the whole import of those counsels, and the love of Christ which formed the assured center for their hearts. For this purpose, he desires that they should be strengthened with all might by the Spirit of

the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the Christ who is the center of all these things in the counsels of God the Father, should dwell also in their hearts, and thus be the intelligent center of affection to all their knowledge—a center which found no circle to limit the view that lost itself in space, which God alone filled: length, breadth, height, depth. But this center gave them, at the same time, a sure place, a support immovable and well-known, in a love which was as infinite as the unknown extent of the glory of God in its display around Himself. That Christ, says the apostle, may dwell in your hearts. Thus He, who fills all things with His glory, fills the heart, Himself, with a love more powerful than all the glory with which He has outwardly surrounded Himself. He gives us, for our support, that which He is Himself, to enable us, in peace and love, to contemplate all that He has done, and all the wisdom of His ways. I repeat it; he who fills all things, fills, above all, our hearts. He strengthens us according to the riches of that glory which He displays before our wondering eyes, as rightly belonging to Christ. He does it, in that Christ dwells in us, with tenderest affection, and He is the strength of our heart. It is as rooted and grounded in love; and thus embracing, as the first circle of our affections and thoughts, those who are so to Christ, all the saints the objects of his love: it is as being filled with Him, and ourselves at the center of all His affections, and thinking His thoughts, that we throw ourselves into the whole extent of His glory; for it is the glory of Him whom we love. And what is its limit? It has none. It is the fullness of God. We find it in this revelation of Himself. In Christ, He is in all His glory. He is God over all things, blessed for ever. We are thus in God, and God in us; and that, in connection with the display of His glory, as He develops it in all that He has formed around Himself, to exhibit himself in it, in order that Christ, and Christ in the Church His body, should be the center of it, and the whole, the manifestation of God himself in His entire glory. We are filled unto all the fullness of God: and it is in the Church that He dwells for this purpose. He works in us by His Spirit, with this object. Therefore, Paul's desire and prayer is, that glory may be unto God in the Church, throughout all ages, by Jesus Christ. Amen.

Observe, here, that the apostle does not now ask that God should act by a power, as it is often expressed, which works for us; but by a power that works in us.. He is able to do above all that we can ask or think, according to His power that works in us. What a portion for us! What a place is this which is given us in Christ! But he returns thus to the thesis proposed at the end of chap. 2, God dwelling in the Church by the Spirit, and Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, united in one body. He desires that the Ephesian Christians (and all of us) should walk worthy of this vocation. Their vocation was to be one, the body of Christ; but this body, in fact, manifested on earth, in its true unity, by the presence of the Holy Ghost. We have seen the Christian brought into the presence of God Himself; but the fact that these Christians formed the body of Christ, and that consequently they were the dwelling-place of God here below, the house of God on the earth—in a word, their whole position (verified by the fact that they are the dwelling-place of God) is comprised in the expression, " their vocation."

4. Now, the apostle was in prison for the testimony which he had borne to this truth, for having maintained and preached the privileges that God had granted to the Gentiles, and in particular that of forming by faith, together with the believing Jews, one body united to Christ. In his exhortation, he makes use of this fact as a touching motive. Now, the first thing that he looked for on the part of his beloved children in the faith, as befitting this unity, and as a means of maintaining it in practice, was the spirit of humility and meekness, forbearance with one another in love. This is the

individual state which he desired to be realized among, the Ephesians. It is the true fruit of nearness to God; and of the possession of privileges, if they are enjoyed in His presence.

At the end of chap. 2, the apostle had unfolded the result of the work of Christ in uniting the Jew and the Gentile, in making peace, and in thus forming the dwelling-place of God on the earth. Jew and Gentile having access to God by one spirit, through the mediation of Christ; both being reconciled to God in one body. To have access to God; to be the dwelling-place of God, through His presence by the Holy Ghost; to be one body reconciled to God; such is the vocation of Christians. Chapter 3 had developed this in its whole extent. The apostle applies it in the fourth.

The faithful were to seek - in the dispositions mentioned above - to maintain this unity of the Spirit, by the bond of peace. There are three things in this exhortation; 1st, to walk worthy of their calling; 2nd., the spirit in which they were to do so; 3rd., diligence in maintaining the unity of the Spirit, by the bond of peace. It is important to observe, that this unity of the Spirit is not similarity of sentiment, but the oneness of the members of the body of Christ, established by the Holy Ghost. It is evident that the diligence required for the maintenance of the unity of the Spirit, relates to the earth, and to the manifestation of this unity on the earth.

The apostle now founds his exhortation on the different points of view under which this unity may be considered,-in connection with the Holy Ghost, with the Lord, and with God.

There is one body and one Spirit; not merely an effect produced in the heart of individuals, in order that they might mutually understand each other, but one body. The hope was one, of which this Spirit was the source and the power.

There is also one Lord. With Him was connected one faith and one baptism.

Finally, there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all. What mighty links of unity! All the religious relationships of the soul, all the points by which we are in contact with God, agree to form all believers into one body in this world, and in such a manner that no man can be a Christian without being one with all those who are so. We cannot exercise faith, nor enjoy hope, nor express Christian life in any form whatever, without having the same faith and the same hope as the rest, without giving expression to that which exists in the rest.

We may remark, that the three spheres of unity presented in these three verses, have not the same extent. The circle of unity enlarges each time. With the Spirit we find linked the unity of the body, the essential and real unity produced by the power of the Spirit, uniting to Christ all His members. With the Lord, that of faith and of baptism. Here, each individual has the same faith, the same baptism, it is the outward profession, true and real perhaps, but a profession, in reference to Him who has rights over those that call themselves by His name. With regard to the third character of unity, it relates to claims that extend to all things, although to the believer it is a closer bond, because He who has a right over all things dwells in believers.* Observe here, that it is not only a unity of sentiment, of desire, and of heart. That unity is pressed upon them; but it is in order to maintain the realization, and the manifestation here below, of a unity that belongs to the existence and to the eternal position of the Church in Christ. There is one Spirit, but there is one body. The union of hearts in the bond of peace, which the • apostle desires, is for the maintenance of this public unity; not that there might be patience with one another when that has disappeared, Christians contenting themselves with its absence. One does not accept that which is contrary to

the word, although, in certain cases, those who are in it, ought to be borne with. The consideration of the community of position, and of privilege, enjoyed by all the - children of God, in the relationships of which we have now been speaking, served to unite them with each other in the sweet enjoyment of this most precious position, leading them also, each one, to rejoice in love at the part which every other member of the body had in this happiness. But, on the other hand, the fact that Christ was exalted to be in heaven the Head over all things, brought in a difference which appertained to this supremacy of Christ -a supremacy exercised with divine sovereignty and wisdom.

"Unto every one of us is given grace (gift) according to the measure of the gift of Christ;" that is to say, as Christ sees fit to bestow. With regard to our position of joy and blessing in Christ, we are 'one. With regard to our service, we have each a place according to His divine wisdom, and according to His sovereign rights in the work. The foundation of this title, whatever may be the divine power that is exercised in it, is this. Man Was under the power of Satan-miserable condition-the fruit of his sin; a condition to which his self-will had reduced him, but in which (according to the judgment of God, who had pronounced on him the sentence of death), he was a slave in body and mind to the enemy Who had the power of death -with the reservation of the sovereign rights and sovereign grace of God (see chap. 2:2). Now, Christ had made Himself man, and began by going as man, led by the Spirit, to meet Satan. He overcame him. As to His personal power, He was able to drive him out everywhere, and to deliver man. Man would not have God with him; nor was it possible for men, in their sinful condition, to be united to Christ without redemption. The Lord, however, carrying on His perfect work of love, suffered death, and overcame Satan in His last stronghold, which the judgment of God maintained, a judgment which Christ therefore underwent, accomplishing a redemption that was complete, final, and eternal in its value: so that neither Satan, the prince of death and accuser of the children of God on earth, nor even the judgment of God, had anything more to say to the redeemed. The kingdom of Satan was taken from him, the just judgment of God was, undergone, and completely satisfied. All judgment is committed to the Son, and power over all men, because He is the Son of Man. These two results are not yet manifested, although the Lord possesses all power in heaven and in earth: the thing here spoken of is another result which is accomplished meanwhile. The victory is complete. He has led the adversary captive. In ascending to heaven, He has placed victorious man' above all things, and has led captive all the power that previously had dominion over man.

Now, before manifesting in person the power He had gained as man by binding Satan, before displaying it in the blessing of man on earth, He exhibits it in the Church, His body, by imparting, as He had promised, to men delivered from the enemy's dominion, gifts which are the proof of that power.

Chapter 1 had laid open to us the thoughts of God; chap. 2, the fulfillment, in power, of His thoughts, with regard to the redeemed-Jews or Gentiles, all dead in their sins-to form them into the Church; chap. 3 is the especial development of the mystery, in that which concerned the Gentiles. Here (chap. 4), the Church is presented in its unity as a body, and in the varied functions of its members; that is to say, the positive effect of those counsels in the Church here below. But this is founded on the exaltation of Christ, who, the conqueror of the enemy, has ascended to heaven as man.

Thus exalted, He has received gifts in man, i.e., in His human character: (compare Acts 2.33). It is thus "in man" that it is expressed-in Psa. 68, from whence the quotation is taken. Here, having received these gifts as the Head of the body, Christ is the channel of their communication to others.

Three things here characterize Him. A man ascended on high -a man who has led captive him who held man in captivity - a man who has received for men delivered from that enemy, the gifts of God which bear witness to this exaltation of man in Christ, and serve as a means for the deliverance of others. For this chapter does not speak of the more direct signs of the exercise of the Lord's power, such as tongues, miracles,-such as are usually termed miraculous gifts.

But let us pause here for a moment, to contemplate the import of that which we have been considering.

What a complete and glorious work is that which the Lord has accomplished for us, and of which the communication of these gifts is the precious testimony. When we were the slaves of Satan, and consequently of death, as well as the slaves of sin, we have seen that He was pleased to undergo, for the glory of God, that which hung over us. He went down into death, of which Satan had the power. And so complete was the victory of man in Him, so entire our deliverance, that (exalted Himself as man to the right hand of God's throne-He who had been under death) He has rescued us from the enemy's yoke, and uses the privileges which His position and His glory give Him, to make those who were captives before, the vessels of His power for the deliverance of others also. He gives us the right, as under His jurisdiction, of acting in His holy war, moved by the same principles of love as Himself. Such is our deliverance that we are the instruments of His power against the enemy, His fellow-laborers in love, through His power. Hence the connection between practical godliness and the complete subjugation of the flesh, and the capacity to serve Christ as instruments in the hand of the Holy Ghost, and vessels of His power.

Now, the Lord's ascension has immense significancy, in connection with His person. He ascended, indeed, as man, but He first descended as man, even into the darkness of the grave and of death; and from thence-victorious over the power of the enemy who had the power of death, and having blotted out the sins of His redeemed ones, and accomplished the glory of God in righteousness - He takes His place as man above the heavens, in order that He may fill all things; not only as being God; but according to the glory and the power of a position in which He was placed by the accomplishment of the work of redemption. A work which led Him into the depths of the power of the enemy, and placed Him on the throne of God. A position that He holds not only by the title of Creator, which was already His, but by that of Redeemer, which shelters from evil all that is found within the sphere of the mighty efficacy of His work. A sphere filled with blessing, with grace, and with Himself. Glorious truth, which belongs, at the same time, to the union of the divine and human in the person of Christ, and to the work of redemption accomplished by suffering on the Cross.

Love brought Him down from the throne of God, and being found as man, through the same grace, into the darkness of death; and having died, bearing our sins, He has gone up again to that throne, as man, filling all things.

But while filling all things by virtue of His glorious person, and in connection with the work He had accomplished, He is also in immediate relation with that which in the counsels of God is closely united to Him who thus unites all things, with that which has been especially the object of His work of redemption. It is His body, His Church, united to Him by the link of the Holy Ghost to complete this mystical man, to be the bride of this second Adam, who fills all in all. A body which, as manifested here below, is set in the midst of a creation that is not yet delivered, and in the presence of enemies that are in the heavenly places, until Christ shall exercise on the part of God His Father, the power that has been committed to Him as man. When Christ shall thus exercise His power, He will take vengeance on those who have defiled His creation, by seducing man, who had been its head down here, and the image of Him who was to be its Head everywhere, He will also deliver creation from its subjection to evil. Meanwhile, personally exalted as the glorious man, and seated at God's right hand until God shall make His enemies His footstool, He communicates the gifts necessary for the gathering together of those who are to be the companions of His glory, who are the members of His body, and who shall be manifested with Him when His glory shines forth in the midst of this world of darkness.

The apostle shows us here an assembly already delivered, and exercising the power of the Spirit; which, on the one side, delivers souls, and on the other, builds them up in Christ, that they may grow up to the measure of their Head, in spite of all the power of Satan, which still subsists.

But an important truth is connected with this fact. This spiritual power is not exercised in a manner simply divine. It is Christ ascended (He, however, who had previously descended into the lowest parts of the earth) who, as man, has received these gifts of power. It is thus that Psa. 68 speaks, as well as Acts 2:23. The latter passage speaks also of the gifts bestowed on His members. In our chapter, it is only in the latter way that they are mentioned. He has given gifts unto men. I would also remark, that these gifts are not here presented as gifts bestowed by the Holy Ghost come down to earth, and distributing to every one according to His will; nor are those gifts spoken of which are tokens of spiritual power, suited to act upon those that are outside; but they are ministrations for gathering together, and for edification, established by Christ as Head of the body, by means of gifts with which He endows persons at His choice. Ascended on high, and having taken His place as man at the right hand of God, and filling all things; whatever may be the extent of His glory, Christ has first, for his object, to fulfill the ways of God in love towards men, and in particular towards the Church; to establish the manifestation of the divine nature, and to communicate to the Church the riches of that grace, which the ways of God display, and of which the divine nature is the source. It is in the Church that the nature of God, the counsels of grace, and the efficacious work of Christ, concentrate in their object: and these gifts are the means of ministering in the communication of these in blessing to man.

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Apostles and prophets laying, or rather being laid, as the foundations of the heavenly building, and acting as coming directly from the Lord, in an extraordinary manner. The two other classes (the last being subdivided into two gifts, connected in their nature) belonging to ordinary ministry in all ages. It is important to remark, also, that the apostle sees nothing existing before the exaltation of Christ, save man, the child of wrath, the power of Satan, the power which raised us up (dead in sin as we were) with Christ, and the efficacy of the cross, which has reconciled us to God, and abolished the distinction between Jew and Gentile in the Church, to unite them in one body before God, the cross in which wrath was

poured out on Christ, and has passed away for the believer, and in which a God of love, a Savior God, is fully manifested.

The existence of the apostles, dates here only from the gift that followed the exaltation of Jesus. The twelve, as sent out by Jesus on earth, have no place in the instruction of this epistle, which treats of the body of Christ, of the unity and the members of this body; and the body could not exist before the Head existed, and had taken its place as such. Thus, also, we have seen, that when the apostle speaks of the apostles and prophets, the latter are, to him, those exclusively of the New Testament. It is the new heavenly man who, being the exalted Head in heaven, forms his body on the earth. He does it for heaven, putting the individuals who compose it spiritually and intelligently in connection with the Head, by the power of the Holy Ghost, acting in this body on the earth. The gifts, of which the apostle here speaks, being the channels by which His graces are communicated, according to the links which the Holy Ghost forms with the Head. The proper and immediate effect, is the perfecting of individuals according to the grace that dwells in the Head. The shape which this divine action takes, is the work of the ministry, and the formation of the body of Christ, until all the members are grown up into the measure of the stature of Christ their Head. Christ has been revealed in all His fullness: it is according to this revelation that the members of the body are to be formed in the likeness of Christ, known as filling all things, and as the Head of His body; the revelation of the perfect love of God, of the excellency of man before Him, according to His counsels, of man the vessel of all His grace, all His power, and all His gifts. Thus the Church, and each one of the members of Christ, should be filled with the thoughts and the riches of a well-known Christ, instead of being tossed to and fro by all sorts of doctrines, brought forward by the enemy to deceive souls.

The Christian was to grow up according to all that was revealed in Christ, and to be ever increasing in likeness to His Head; using love and truth for his own soul -the two things of which Christ is the perfect expression. Truth displays the real relation of all things with each other, in connection with the center of all things which is God. Love is that which God is, in the midst of all this. Now Christ, as the light, puts everything precisely in its place-man, Satan, sin, righteousness, holiness, all things, and that in every detail, and in connection with God. And Christ was love, the expression of the love of God, in the midst of all this. And this is our pattern: and our pattern as having overcome, and as having ascended into heaven, our Head, to which we are united as the members of His body.

There flows, from this Head, by means of its members, the grace needed to accomplish the work of assimilation to Himself. His body, compacted together increases by the working of His grace in each member, and edifies itself in love. This is the position of the Church according to God, until all the members of the body attain to the stature of Christ. The manifestation, alas, of this unity, is marred; but the grace, and the operation of the grace, of its Head, to nourish and cause its members to grow, is never impaired, any more than the love in the Lord's heart, from which this grace springs. We do not glorify Him; we have not the joy of being ministers of joy to each other, as we might be; but the Head does not cease to work for the good of His body. The wolf, indeed, comes and scatters the sheep, but he cannot pluck them out of the Shepherd's bands. His faithfulness is glorified in our unfaithfulness, without excusing it.

With this precious object of the ministration of grace, namely, for the growth of each member individually, unto the measure of the stature of the Head Himself, ends this development of the counsels of God in the union of Christ and the Church, in its double character of the body of Christ in heaven, and the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost on earth; truths which cannot be separated, but each of which has its distinctive importance, and which reconcile the certain immutable operations of grace in the Head, with the failures of the Church responsible on the earth.

Exhortations follow, to a walk befitting such a position, in order that the glory of God in us, and by us, and His grace towards us, may be identified in our full blessing. We will notice the great principles of these exhortations.

The first, as the contrast between the ignorance of a heart that is blind, and a stranger to the life of God, and consequently walking in the vanity of its own understanding, i.e., according to the desires of a heart given up to the impulses of the flesh without God, the contrast, I would say, between this state, and that of having learned Christ, as the truth is in Jesus-which is the expression of the life of God in man, God Himself manifested in the flesh-the having put off this old man, which is corrupt, according to its deceitful lusts, and put on this new man, Christ. It is not an amelioration of the old man; it is a putting it off, and a putting on of Christ.

Even here the apostle does not lose sight of the oneness of the body; we are in the truth, and we speak the truth, because we are members one of another. "Truth," the expression of simplicity and integrity of heart, is in connection with "the truth as it is in Jesus," whose life is transparent as the light, as falsehood is in connection with deceitful lusts. Moreover, the old man is without. God, alienated from the life of God. The new man is created, he is a new creation, and a creation after the model of that which is the character of God, righteousness and holiness of truth. The first Adam was not in that manner created after the image of God. By the fall, the knowledge of good and evil entered into man. He can no longer be innocent. When innocent, he was ignorant of evil in itself. Now, fallen, he is a stranger to the life of God, in his ignorance; but the knowledge of good and evil which he has acquired, the moral distinction between good and evil in itself, is a divine principle. "The man," said God, "is become as one of us, to know good and evil." But in order to possess this knowledge, and subsist in what is good before God, there must be divine energy, divine life.

Everything has its true nature, its true character, in the eyes of God. That is the truth-it is not that He is

the truth. The truth is the right and perfect expression of that which a thing is (and, in an absolute way, of

that which all things are), and of the relations in which it stands to other things, or in which all things stand towards each other. Thus God could not be the truth. He is not the expression of some other thing. Everything relates to Him. He is the Center of all true relationship, and of all moral obligation. Neither is God the measure of other things, for He is above all things; and nothing else can be so, or He would not be so. It is God become man; it is Christ, who is the truth, and the measure of all things. But all things have their true character in the eyes of God: and He judges righteously of all, whether morally, or in power. He acts according to that judgment. He is just. He also knows evil perfectly, being Himself goodness, that it may be perfectly an abomination

to Him, that He may repel it by His own nature. He is holy. Now the new man, created after the divine nature, is so in righteousness and holiness of truth. What a privilege! What a blessing! It is, as another apostle has said, to be a partaker of the divine nature. Adam had nothing of this.

Adam was perfect, as an innocent man. The breath of life in his nostrils was breathed into him by God, and he was responsible for obedience to God, in a thing wherein neither good nor evil was to be known, but simply a commandment. The trial was that of obedience only, not the knowledge of good or evil in itself. At present, in Christ, it is a participation in the divine nature itself, in a being who knows good and evil, and who vitally participates in the sovereign good, in the nature of God Himself, although always thereby dependent on Him. It is our evil nature which is not so, or at least which refuses to be dependent on Him.

Now there is a prince of this world, a stranger to God; and besides participation in the divine nature, there is the Spirit Himself who has been given to us. These solemn truths enter, also, as principles, into these exhortations. "Give no place to the devil," on the one hand, give him no room to come in and act on the flesh; and on the other hand, grieve not the Holy Spirit who dwells in you. The redemption of the creature has not yet taken place, but ye have been sealed unto that day: respect and cherish this mighty and holy guest who graciously dwells in you. Let all bitterness and malice, therefore, cease, even in word, and let meekness and kindness reign in you, according to the pattern you have in the ways of God in Christ towards you. Be imitators of God: beautiful and magnificent privilege, but which flows naturally from the truth that we are made part takers of His nature.

But there is another point, already alluded to, which it is important again to notice here, with a little more development. It is, that this life in which we participate, and of which we live as partaking in the divine nature, has been objectively presented to us in Christ in all its perfection, and in all its fullness, in man, and in man now brought to perfection on high, according to the counsels of God respecting him. It is Christ, this eternal life, who was with the Father, and has been manifested unto us. He who, having descended, has ascended again into heaven, to carry humanity thither, and display it in the glory—the glory of God—according to His eternal counsels. We have seen this life, here, in its earthly development. God manifest in the flesh. Man, perfectly heavenly, and obedient in all things to his Father; moved, in his conduct to others, by the motives that characterize God Himself in grace. Hereafter, He will be manifested in judgment: and already, here below, He has one through all the experiences of a man, understanding thus how grace adapts itself to our wants, and displaying it now, according to that knowledge, even as hereafter He will exercise judgment with a knowledge of man, not only divine, but which, having gone through this world in holiness, will leave the hearts of men without excuse, and without escape.

But it is the image of God in Him, of which we are now speaking. It is in Him that the nature which we have, to imitate is presented to us, and presented in man, as it ought to be developed in us here below, in the circumstances through which we are passing. We see in Him the manifestation of God, and that in contrast with the old man. There we see "the truth as it is in Jesus." Thus, in order to attract, and to lead on our hearts, to give us the model on which they are to be formed, the aim to which they should tend, God has given us an object in which He manifests Himself, and which is the object of all His own delight. But this object is He who delights in us, He whose life (when He was thus God's delight) was wholly dedicated to us, in order that we might know the love

of God the Father, and that He might bring us to God, so that we ourselves might be His eternal delight. Nevertheless, devoted as Christ was to us as a servant here below, we find in Him the object which our hearts desire to exalt supremely, even as He is this to the Father, and as the Father Himself exalts Him.

The reproduction of God in man, is the object that God proposed to himself in the new man; and that the new man proposes to himself, as he is himself the reproduction of the nature and character of God; in order that we should enjoy this infinite object, namely, Christ, who suffices for, and who, in fact, is the delight of God the Father Himself; so that we possess, by His grace and by His Spirit, a common object with the Father.

We are not created anew according to that which the first Adam was, but according to that which God is. Christ is its manifestation. And He is the second Adam.

In detail, we shall find these characteristic features, - truthfulness, the absence of all anger that has the nature of hatred (lying and hatred are the two characteristics of the enemy), righteousness, connected with labor according to the will of God (man's true position), and the absence of corruption. It is man under the rule of God, since the fall, delivered from the effect of the deceitful lusts. But it is more than this. A divine principle brings in the desire of doing good to others, to their body and their soul. I need not say, how truly we find here the picture of the life of Christ, as in the preceding remarks, it was the putting off of the spirit of the enemy and of the old man. The spirit of peace and love, and that, in spite of evil in others and the wrongs they may do us, completes the picture, adding that which will be easily understood after what has been said, that, in "forgiving one another," we are to be imitators of God, and to walk in love as Christ has loved us, and has given Himself for us. Beautiful picture, precious privilege! May God grant us so to look at Jesus as to have His image stamped upon us, and in some sort to walk like Him.

Moreover, let us remark here; and it is an important feature in this picture of the fruits of grace and of the new man, that when the grace and love, which come down from God, act in man, they always go up again to God in devotedness. Walk, he says, in love, even as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. We see it in Christ: He is this love which comes down in grace, but this grace, acting in man, makes Him devote Himself to God, although it is on behalf of others. So it is in us; it is the touch-stone for the Christian heart's activity.

The apostle then speaks plainly as to sin, in order that no one may deceive himself; nor be occupied with deep truths, using them intellectually, to the neglect of ordinary morality one of the signs of heresy, properly so called. He has connected the profoundest doctrines in his teaching with daily practice: Christ glorified, the Head of the Church, the model of the new man, the second Adam; the Church being one with Him on high, and the habitation of God on earth by the Spirit, with whom every Christian is sealed; therefore, every Christian must put on the new man, created after God in righteousness and holiness (of which Christ is the model, according to the counsels of God in glory), must grow up unto the measure of the stature of Christ, who is the Head, and not grieve the Holy Spirit wherewith he is sealed. But all this did not weaken the immutable truth that God had a character proper to Himself; it developed that character by means of the most precious revelations of the gospel, and of the closest relationships with God, which were formed by these revelations: but this character could not alter, nor could the kingdom of God allow of any

characters contrary to it. The wrath of God, therefore, against evil, and against those who commit it, is plainly set forth.

Now, we were that which is contrary to His character, we were darkness; not only in the dark, but darkness, in our nature, the opposite of God who is light. No one ray of that which He is: was found in our will, our desires, our understanding. We were morally destitute of it. There was the corruptness of the first Adam, but no share in any feature of the divine character. We are now partakers of the divine nature, we have the same desires, we know what it is that He loves, and we love what He loves, we enjoy that which He enjoys, we are light; poor and weak, indeed, yet such by nature in the Lord, looked at as in Christ. They are the fruits of light that are developed in the Christian; he is to avoid all association with the unfruitful works of darkness.

But in speaking of motives, the apostle returns to the great subjects that pre-occupied him, and he returns to them, not only that we should put on the character set forth by that of which he speaks, but that we should realize all its extent, that we should experience all its force. He had told us to put on the new man, in contrast with the old man, and not to grieve the Holy Spirit. Now he exhorts those that sleep to awake, and Christ should be their light. Light makes all things manifest; but he who sleeps, although not dead, does not profit by it. Alas, how often this sleep overtakes us! but in awaking, it was not that they should see the light dimly, but Christ Himself should be the light of the soul, they should have all the full revelation of that which is well-pleasing to God, that which He loves; they should have divine wisdom in Christ, they should be able to profit by opportunities, should find them, being thus enlightened, in the difficulties of a world governed by the enemy, and should act according to spiritual understanding in every case that presented itself. Further, if they were not to lose their senses through means of excitement used in the world, they were to be filled with the Spirit, i.e., that He should take such possession of our affections, our thoughts, our understanding, that He should be their only source according to His "proper and mighty energy, to the exclusion of all else. Thus, full of joy, we should praise, we should sing for

h We should read "fruits of the light," not "fruits of the,spirit."

joy; and we should give thanks for all that happened, because a God of love is the true source of all. We should be full of joy in the spiritual realization of the objects of faith, and the heart continuing to be filled with the Spirit and sustained by this grace, the experience of the hand of God in everything here below

will give rise only to thanksgiving.

In entering into the details of relationships and par-

ticular duties, the apostle cannot give up the subject that is so dear to him. The command which he addresses to wives, that they are to submit themselves to their husbands, immediately suggests the relationship

between Christ and the Church, not now as a subject for

knowledge but to unfold His affection and tender care.

We have seen that the apostle, having established the great principles displayed in the revelation of the Church, then deduces their practical consequences with regard to the life and conduct of

Christians;-they were to put on the new man, to have Christ for their light, not to grieve the Spirit, to be filled with the Spirit. Now, all this, while being the fruit of grace, was either knowledge or practical responsibility. But here the subject is viewed in another aspect. It is the grace that acts in Christ Himself, His affections, His guardian care, His devotedness to the Church. Nothing can be more precious, more tender, more intimate. He loved the Church - that is the source of all. And there are three steps in the work of this love. He gave Himself for it, He washes it, He presents it all glorious to Himself. This is not precisely the sovereign election of the individual by God; but the affection that displays itself in the relationship which Christ maintains with the Church. See also the extent of the gift, and how marvelous the ground of confidence that it contains. He gives Himself: it is not only His life, true as that is, but Himself. All that is in Christ is given, and given by Himself; it is the entire devotedness of all that He is. All that is in Him, His grace, His righteousness, His acceptancy with the Father, His wisdom, the excellent glory of His person, the energy of divine love that can give itself, all is consecrated to the welfare of the Church. There are no qualities, no excellencies in Christ, which are not mine in the gift of Himself. He has already given them, and consecrated them to the redemption and the blessing of the Church. Not only are they given, but He has given them; His love has accomplished it.

We know well that it is on the cross that this was accomplished, it is there that the consecration of Himself to the good of the Church was complete. But here that glorious work is not exactly viewed on the side of its atoning efficacy, but on that of the devotedness and love to the Church which Christ manifested in it. Now, we can always reckon upon this love which was perfectly displayed in it. It is not altered. Jesus - blessed and praised be His name for it!-is all mine, according to the energy of His love, in all that He is, in all circumstances, and forever, and in the activity of that love according to which He gave Himself. He loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. This is the source of all our blessings, as members of the Church.

But this love of Christ is inexhaustible and unchangeable. It effects the blessing of its cherished object, by preparing it for a happiness of which His heart is alike the measure and the source, the happiness of perfect purity, the excellence of which He knows in heaven.; purity suited to the presence of God, and to her who shall be in that presence forever, the Bride of the Lamb; purity which renders capable of enjoying perfect love and glory;-even as that love tends to purify the soul by making itself known to it, and attracting it, divesting it of self, and filling it with God as the center of blessing and joy.

Now, Christ who loves the Church, as being His own, and who has already made it His own by giving Himself for it, and who chooses to have it such as His heart desires, occupies Himself with it, when He has won it, to render it such. He gave Himself for it, that He might wash it by the washing of water by the Word. Here we find the moral effect produced by the care of Christ, the object which He proposes to Himself in His work accomplished in time, and the means He uses to attain it. He appropriates the Church morally, sets it morally apart for Himself; for He can only desire holy things, holy according to the knowledge He has of purity, by virtue of His eternal and natural abode in heaven. He thus puts the Church in connection with heaven, from whence He is, and into which He will introduce it. He gave Himself in order to sanctify it. For this purpose He uses the Word, which is the divine expression of the mind of God, of heavenly order and holiness, of truth itself (that is to say, of the true relations of all things with God; and that, according to His love in Christ), and which, consequently, judges all that deviates from it as to purity or love.

He forms the Church for an eternal habitation, in which all is according to the glory and the love of God, by the revelation, through the Word, which comes from thence, of these things as they exist in heaven. Now, Christ Himself is the full expression of these things, the image of the invisible God; thus, in communicating them to the Church, He prepares it for Himself. When speaking, therefore, in this sense, of His own testimony,

He says, " We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." And this, in view even of the inferior part of God's dealings, that which He calls earthly things, but always necessarily in connection with Him who alone can bless.

But it is this which the Word is, as we have received it from Jesus; and more especially as speaking from heaven, with the character of the new commandment, the darkness passing away, and the true light now shining; and, consequently, the things being true, not only in Him, but in us. (The ministry of chap. i. is occupied with this, ordaining things on earth-hearts at least-in fellowship with the Head, from which the grace and the light descended.) In this manner, then, Christ sanctifies the Church for which He gave Himself. He has formed it for heavenly things, by the communication of heavenly things, of which He is Himself the fullness and the glory. But this Word finds the Church mixed up with things that are contrary to this heavenly purity and love. Alas its affections-as to the old man at least-mixed up with these earthly things, which are contrary to the will of God, and to His nature. Thus, in sanctifying the Church, He must needs cleanse it. This is, therefore, the work of the love of Christ, during the time present, but for the eternal and essential happiness of the Church.

He sanctifies the Church, but He does it by the Word, communicating heavenly things, all that belongs to the nature, to the majesty, and to the glory of God; in love, but at the same time applying them to judge everything in her present affections, which is at variance with that which He communicates. Precious work of love, which not only loves us, but labors to make us fit to enjoy that love; fit to be with Christ Himself in the Father's house.

How deeply is He interested in us! He not only accomplishes the glorious work of our redemption, by giving Himself for us, but He acts continually with perfect love and patience, to make us such as He would have us to be in His own presence; fit for the heavenly places, and heavenly things. What a character this shows to belong, also, to the Word, and what grace in His use of it. It is the communication of divine things, according to their own perfection; and now, as God Himself is in the light. It is the revelation of God Himself, as we know Him in a glorified Christ, in perfect love, to form us, also, according to that perfection for the enjoyment of Him: and yet it is addressed to us, down here, to impart these things to us, by bringing in light amid the darkness; thus necessarily judging all that is in the darkness, but in order to purify us in love.

Observe, also, the order in which this work of Christ is presented to us, beginning with love. He loved the Church; this, as we have already said, is the source of all. All that follows, is the result of that love, and cannot gainsay it. The perfect proof of it is then stated: He gave Himself for the Church. He could not give more. It was to the glory of the Father, no doubt, but it was for the Church. Had He reserved anything, the love, in giving Himself, would not have been perfect, not absolute; it would not have been a devotedness that left nothing for the awakened heart to desire. It would not have been Christ, for He could but be perfect. We know love and perfection in knowing Him. But He has won the heart of the Church, by giving Himself for it. He has won her

thus. She is His, according to that love. Yes; it is there that we have learned what love is. Hereby know we love, in that He gave Himself for us. All was for the glory of the Father; without that, it would not have been perfection; and the revelation of the heavenly things would not have taken place, for that depended on the Father's being perfectly glorified. In this, the things to be revealed were manifested and verified, so to speak, in spite of evil; but all is entirely for us.

If we have learned to know love, we have learned to know Jesus, such as he is for us; and He is wholly for us.

Thus, the entire work of cleansing, and of sanctification, is the result of perfect love. It is not the means of obtaining the love, or of being its object. It is, indeed, the means of enabling us to enjoy it; but it is the love itself which, in its exercise, works this sanctification. Christ wins the Church first. He, then, in His perfect love, makes it such as He would have it to be. A truth that is precious to us in every way: and first, in order to free the soul from all servile fear, to give sanctification its true character of grace, and its true extent here. It is joy of heart to know that Christ Himself will make us all that he desires us to be.

We have considered two effects of the love of Christ for the Church. The first, was the gift of Himself; which, in a certain sense, comprises the whole: it is love, perfect in itself. He gave Himself. The second, is the moral formation of the object of His love, that it may be with Him; according, we may add, to the perfections of God Himself, for that, indeed, is what the Word is—the expression of the nature, the ways, and the thoughts of God.

There is yet a third effect of this love of Christ's, which completes it. He presents it to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle. If He gave Himself for the Church, it was in order to have it with Him; but if He would have it with Him, He must render it fit to be in His glorious presence; and He has sanctified it, by cleansing it according to the revelation of God Himself, and the heavenly things of which He is Himself the center in glory. The Holy Ghost has taken the things of Christ, and has revealed them to the Church; and all that the Father has is Christ's. Thus perfected, according to the perfection of heaven, He presents it to Himself a glorious Church. Morally, the work was done; the elements of heavenly glory had been communicated to her who was to stand in that glory, had entered into her moral being, and thus formed her to participate in it. The power of the Lord is needed to make her participate in it; in fact, to make her glorious, to destroy every trace of her earthly abode, save the excellent fruit that results from it. He presents her, glorious, to Himself—this is the result of all. He took her for Himself, He presents her to Himself, the fruit and the proof of His perfect love; and for her it is the perfect enjoyment of that same love. But there is yet more. That sentence discloses to us all the import of this admirable display of grace. The Spirit carries us back to the case of Adam and Eve, in which God, having formed Eve, presents her to Adam, all complete, according to His own divine thoughts; and, at the same time, suited to be the delight of Adam, as a helpmeet adapted to his nature and condition. Now Christ is God. He has formed the Church; but with this additional right over her heart, that he has given Himself for her; but He is also the second Adam in glory; and He presents her, glorified, to Himself, such as he had formed her for Himself. What a sphere for the development of spiritual affections is this revelation! What infinite grace is that which has given place for such an exercise of these affections!

We cannot fail to notice the connection between the cleansing and the glory-presented in glory, she has neither spot nor wrinkle; she is holy and unblameable. Compare 2 Cor. 3:18, and Phil. 3, from ver. 11 to the end.

This, then, is the purpose, the mind of the Lord, with regard to the Church; and this the sanctifying work which prepares her for Himself and for heaven. But these are not all the effects of His love. He watches tenderly over her during all the time of her sojourn here below.

The apostle who did not lose sight of the thesis which gave rise to this digression that is so instructive to us, says that the husband ought to love his wife as his own body; that it was loving himself. He was naturally led to this, by the allusion to Genesis; but he immediately returns to the subject that occupies him. No one, he says, ever hated his own flesh; he nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the Church. This is the precious aspect, during time, of Christ's love, which the apostle here presents. Not only has Christ a heavenly aim, but His love performs the work which, so to speak, is natural to it. He tenderly cares for the Church here below; He nourishes, He cherishes it. The wants, the weaknesses, the difficulties, the anxieties of the Church, are only opportunities to Christ for the exercise of His love. The Church needs to be nourished, as do our bodies; and He nourishes her. She is the object of His tender affections; He cherishes her. If the end is heaven, the Church is not left desolate here. She learns His love, where her heart needs it. She will enjoy it fully when need has passed away forever. Moreover, it is precious to know that Christ cares for the Church, as a man cares for his own flesh. For we are members of His own body. We are of His flesh, and of His bones. Eve is here alluded to. We are, as it were, a part of Himself, having our existence, and our being from Him, as Eve from Adam. He can say, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Our position is, on the one hand, to be members of His body; on the other hand, we have our existence as Christians from Him. Therefore it is that a man is to leave his natural relations, in order to be united to his wife. It is a great mystery. Now it was just this that Christ did as man, in a certain sense, divinely. Nevertheless, everyone ought thus to love his own wife, and the wife to reverence her husband.

There remain, yet, certain relationships in life, with which the doctrine of the Spirit of God is connected: those of children and parents, of fathers and children, and of servants and masters. It is interesting to see the children of believers introduced as objects of the Holy Spirit's care, and even slaves (for servants were such), raised by Christianity, to a position which the circumstances of their social degradation could not affect.

All the children of Christians are viewed as subjects of the exhortations in the Lord, which belong to those who are within, who are no longer in this world, of which Satan is the prince. Sweet and precious comfort to the parent, that he may look upon them as having a right to this position, and a part in those tender cares which the Holy Ghost lavishes on all who are in the house of God. The apostle marks the importance which God attached, under the law, to this duty. It is the first command with which He linked a promise. Ver. 3 is only the quotation of that which he alludes to in ver. 2.

The exhortation to fathers is also remarkable: that they should not provoke their children, that their hearts should be turned towards them; that they should not repel them, nor destroy that influence which is the strongest guard against the evil of the world. God forms the hearts of children around this happy center: the father should watch over this. But there is more. The Christian father (for it is

always those within to whom he speaks) ought to recognize the position in which, as we have seen, the children are placed, and to bring them up under the yoke of Christ, in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. Christian position is to be the measure and the form of the influences which the father exercises, and of the education which he gives his children. He treats them as brought up for the Lord, and as the Lord would bring them up.

It will be remarked, that in the two relationships we are considering, as well as in that of wives with their husbands, it is on the side from which submission is due, that the exhortations begin. This is the genius of Christianity in our evil world, in which man's will is the source of all the evil, expressing his departure from God, to whom all submission is due. The principle of submission and of obedience, is the healing principle of humanity; only God must be brought into it, in order that the will of man be not the guide after all. But the principle that governs the heart of man in good, is always and everywhere obedience. I may have to say that God must be obeyed rather than man; but to depart from obedience, is to enter into sin. A man may have, as a father, to command and direct, but he does it ill if he do it not in obedience to God and to His Word. This was the essence of the life of Christ: "I come to do Thy will, O my God." Accordingly, the apostle begins his exhortations here, with regard to relationships, by giving the general precept: "Submit yourselves one to another." This renders order easy, even when the order of institutions, and of authority, may fail. Submission, moral obedience, can never, in principle, be wanting to the true Christian. It is the starting point of his whole life. He is sanctified unto the obedience of Christ. 1 Peter 1:2.

In the case which has led to these remarks, it is striking to see how this principle elevates the slave in his condition: he obeys by an inward divine principle, as though it were Christ Himself whom he obeyed. However wicked his master may be, he obeys, as Christ Himself obeyed. Three times the apostle repeats this principle of obedience to Christ, or the service of Christ; adding, "doing the will of God from the heart. What a difference this made in the poor slave's condition! Moreover, whether bond or free, each should receive his reward from the Lord. The master, himself, had the same master in heaven, with whom there was no respect of persons. Still it is to masters that he says this, not to the slave, for Christianity is delicate in its propriety, and never falsifies its principles. The master was also to treat the slave with perfect equity-even as he expected it from the slave-and was not to threaten.

It is beautiful to see the way in which divine doctrine enters into the details of life, and throws the fragrance of its perfection into every duty and every relationship; how it acknowledges existing things, as far as they can be owned and directed by its principles, but exalts and enhances the value of everything, according to the perfection of those principles; not by touching the relationships, but the man's heart who walks in them; taking the moral side and that of submission, in love, and in the exercise of authority, which the divine doctrine can regulate, bringing in the grace which governs the use of the authority of God.

But it is not only that there is a line of conduct to follow, a model to imitate, a Spirit with whom one may be filled, it is not only relationships between oneself and God, and those in which we stand here below; this is not all that must occupy the Christian. He has enemies to fight. The people of Israel, under Joshua, in the land of Canaan, were, indeed, in the promised land, but they were in conflict there with enemies, who were in it before them, although not according to the rights by

which Israel possessed the land through the gift of God. God had set it apart for Israel (see Deut. 32:8). Ham had taken possession of it.

Now, with regard to us, it is not with flesh and blood that we have to fight, as was the case with Israel. Our

blessings are spiritual, in the heavenly places. We are sitting, in Christ, in the heavenlies. We are a testimony to principalities and powers in the heavenlies, we have to wrestle with spiritual wickednesses in the heavenlies. Israel had passed through the wilderness, had crossed the Jordan, the manna had ceased, they ate the growth of the land. They were settled on the land of Canaan as though it were all their own, without striking a blow. They ate the produce of this good land in the plains of Jericho. So it is with regard to the Christian. Although we are in the wilderness, we are also in the heavenly places, in Christ. We have crossed the Jordan, we have died and are risen again with Him. We are sitting in the heavenly places in Him, that we may enjoy the things of heaven as the fruit of our own country. But conflict is before us, if we desire to enjoy them practically. For this, we need the Lord's strength, and of that the apostle now speaks. " Be strong," he says, " in the Lord." The enemy is subtle. We have to withstand his stratagems, even more than his power. Neither the strength nor even the wisdom of man can do anything here. We must be armed with the panoply, i.e., the whole armor, of God.

But observe first, that the Spirit turns our thoughts upon God Himself, before speaking of that which has to be overcome. " Be strong in the Lord." It is not a refuge from the face of the enemy; we are in it for ourselves before we use it against the wiles of the enemy. It is in the intimacy of the counsels and the grace of God, that man fortifies himself for the warfare from which he cannot escape, if he would enjoy his Christian privileges. And he must have the whole armor. To be wanting in one piece, exposes us to Satan on that side. The armor must be that of God - divine in its nature. Human armor will not ward off the attacks of Satan, confidence in that armor will engage us in the battle only to make us fall in combat with a spirit who is more mighty and more crafty than we are.

These enemies are thus characterized: they are principalities and powers - beings possessing an energy of evil, which has its source in a will that has mastery over those who do not know how to resist it; they have also strength to carry it out. Their energy they have from God, the will that uses it comes from themselves; they have forsaken God, the spring of their actions is in their own will. In this respect it is a source of action independent of God, and the energy and the qualities which they have from God, are the instruments of that will - a will which has no bridle except from outside itself. They are principalities and powers; there are good ones, but in them the will is only to do that which God wills, and to employ in His service the strength they have received from Him.

These rebellious principalities and powers rule over the darkness of this world. Light is the atmosphere in which God dwells, which He diffuses all around Himself. Wicked spirits deceive and reign in darkness. Now this world, not having the light of God, is entirely in darkness, and demons reign in it, for God is not there except in supreme power after all, turning everything to His glory, and, in the end, to the good of His children.

But if these principalities rule in the darkness of this world, they do not possess merely an outward force; they are in the heavenlies, and are occupied with spiritual wickedness there. They exercise

a spiritual influence, as having the place of gods. There is, then, 1st., their intrinsic character, their mode of being, and the state in which they are found; 2nd., their power in the world, as governing it; and 3rd., their religious and delusive ascendancy, as lodging in the heavens. They have also as a sphere for the exercise of their power, the lusts of man, and even the terrors of his conscience.

To resist enemies like these, we need the armor of God. The manifestations of this power, when God permits it, constitute the evil days. All this present period of Christ's absence, is in a certain sense, the evil day. Christ has been rejected by the world, of which, while in it, He was the light, and is hidden in God. This power, which the enemy displayed when he led the world to reject Christ, he still exercises; we oppose it by the action and the power of the Holy Ghost, who is here during the Lord's absence. But there are moments when this power is allowed to show itself in a more especial manner, when the enemy uses the world against the saints, darkening the light which shines in it from God, troubling and leading astray the minds of professors, and even of believers;- days, in a word, in which his power makes itself felt. We have to wrestle with this power, to resist it all; to stand, against everything, in the confession of Christ, of the light; we have to do all that the confession of His name requires, in spite of all and at whatever cost; and be found standing when the storm and the evil day are past.

Thus, we have not only to enjoy God and the counsels of God and their effect, in peace; but, since these very counsels introduce us into heavenly places, and make us the light of God on earth, we have also to encounter the spiritual wickednesses which are in the heavenly places, and which seek to make us falsify our high position, to mislead us, and to darken the light of Christ in us on the earth. We have to escape the snares of heavenly spiritual wickedness, for ourselves; and to maintain the testimony here below incorrupt and pure.

Now, by the power of the Holy Ghost, who has been given to us for this purpose, we shall find that the armor of God relates, first, to that which, by setting the flesh aside, and by maintaining the existence of a good conscience, takes all hold from the enemy; then, to the preservation of complete objective trust in God; and next, to the active energy which stands with confidence in the presence of the enemy, and uses the weapons of the Holy Ghost against him. The whole ends with the expression of the entire and continual dependence on God in which the Christian warrior stands.

We will examine this armor of God, that we may know it. It is all practical - founded on that which has been accomplished, but in itself practical. For it is not a question here of appearing before the bar of God, but of resisting the enemy, and of maintaining our ground against him.

Before God, our righteousness is perfect; it is Christ Himself, and we are the righteousness of God in Him, but we do not need armor there: we are sitting in the heavenly places; all is peace, all is perfect. But here we need armor, real practical armor - and first of all, to have the loins girt about with truth. The loins are the place of strength when duly girt; but represent the intimate affections and movements of the heart. If we allow our hearts to wander where they will, instead of abiding in communion with God, Satan has easy hold upon us. This piece of armor is then the application of truth to the most intimate movements, the first movements of the heart. We gird up the loins. This is done not when Satan is present, it is a work with God, which is done by applying the truth to our souls in His presence, judging everything in us by this means, and putting a bridle on the heart, that it may only move under His eye. This is true liberty and true joy, because the new man enjoys

God in uninterrupted communion; but here the Spirit speaks of it with respect to the safeguard which it will be to us against the attacks of the enemy. At the same time, it is not merely the repression of evil thoughts - that is its consequence - it is the action of the truth, of the power of God, acting by the revelation of everything as it is, of all that He Himself teaches, bringing the conscience into His presence, keeping it thus in His thoughts; all that God has said in His Word, and the unseen realities having their true force and their application to the heart that stirs in us, so that its movements should have their character from God's own Word, and not from its own desires; everything going on in the presence of God.

Satan has no hold on a heart thus kept in the truth, as revealed by God, there is nothing in its desires that answers to the suggestions of Satan. Take Jesus as an example. His safeguard was not in judging all that Satan said, except in the last temptation, it was in the perfect application of the Word, for Himself, for that which concerned His own conduct, to the circumstances around Him. The truth governed His heart, so that it only moved according to that truth in the circumstance that presented itself. " Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." No word has come forth - He does nothing. There was no motive for acting. It would have been to act of His own accord, His own will. That truth kept His heart in connection with God, in the circumstance that met Him. When the circumstance arose, His heart was already in intercourse with God, so that it had no other impulse than that which the Word of truth suggested. His conduct was purely negative, but it flowed from the light which truth threw upon the circumstance, because His heart was under the absolute government of the truth. The suggestion of Satan would -have brought Him out of this position. That was enough. He will have nothing to do with it. He does not yet cast out Satan: it was only a matter of conduct, not of flagrant opposition to the glory of God. In the latter case, He casts him out; in the former, He acts according to God, without concerning Himself with anything further. Satan's device totally failed of its effect. It simply produced nothing. It is absolutely powerless against the truth, because it is not the truth; and the heart has truth for its rule. Wiles are not the truth, that is quite enough to prevent our being caught by them: that is, if the heart be thus governed.

In the second place, there is the breastplate of righteousness - a conscience that has nothing to reproach itself with. The natural man knows how a bad conscience robs him of strength before men. There is only to be added here, the way in which Satan uses it to entrap man in his snares. By maintaining the truth, we have Satan for our enemy. If we yield ourselves up to error, he will leave us, in that respect, at peace, except in using our faults and crimes to enslave us more, to bind us hand and foot in that which is false. A man who has the truth, who has, perhaps, even escaped error, how, if his conduct were bad, would he bear to have it, exposed to the eyes of all? He is silent before the enemy. His own conscience even will make him silent, if he is upright, without thinking of consequences; unless a confession be necessary. Besides this, the strength of God and spiritual understanding will fail him: where could he have gained them in a wrong walk? We go forward boldly when we have a good conscience. But it is when we are walking with God, for the love of God, for the love of righteousness itself, that we have this breastplate on, and thus we are fearless when called to go forward and face the enemy. We gain a good conscience before God, by the blood of the Lamb. By walking with God, we maintain it before men, and for communion with God, in order to have strength and spiritual understanding, and to have them increasingly. This is the practical strength of good conduct, of a conscience without rebuke. I

exercise myself to this, said the apostle, day and night. What integrity in such a walk, what truthfulness of heart when no eye sees us! We are peremptory with ourselves, with our own hearts, and with regard to our conduct; we can, therefore, be peaceful in our ways. If the fruits of righteousness are sown in peace, the path of peace is found in righteousness. If I have a bad conscience, I am vexed with myself, I grow angry with others. When the heart is at peace with God, and has nothing to reproach itself with, when the will is held in check peace reigns in the soul, we walk on the earth but the heart is above it in intercourse with better things; we walk in a peaceful spirit with others, and nothing troubles our relations with God. He is the God of peace. Peace, the peace of Jesus, fills the heart. The feet are shod with it: we walk in the spirit of peace.

But, together with all this, a piece of defensive armor is needed, over all the rest, that we may be able to stand, in spite of all the wiles of the enemy; an armor, however, which is practically maintained in its soundness by the use of the preceding ones, so that if the latter is essential, the others have the first place in practice. This is the shield-Faith, that is to say, full and entire trust in God; the consciousness of grace, and of His favor maintained in the heart. Here, faith is not simply the reception of God's testimony (although it is founded on that testimony), but the present assurance of the heart with regard to that which God is for us, founded, as we have just said, on the testimony which He has given of Himself; trust in His love, and in His faithfulness, as well as in His power. "If our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence towards God." The work of the Spirit in us, is to inspire this confidence. When it exists, all the attacks of the enemy, who seeks to make us believe that the goodness of God is not so sure, all his efforts to destroy, or to weaken, in our hearts, this confidence in God, and to hide Him from us, prove fruitless. His arrows fall to the ground, without reaching us. We stand fast, in the consciousness that God is for us; our communion is not interrupted. The fiery darts of the enemy are not the desires of the flesh, but spiritual attacks.

Thus we can hold up our heads: moral courage, the energy which goes forward, is maintained. Not that we have anything to boast of in ourselves, but the salvation, and the deliverance of God, are fresh in our minds. God has been for us; He is for us; who shall be against us? He was for us when we had no strength; it was salvation, when we could do nothing. This is our confidence-God Himself-not looking at ourselves. The former parts of the armor give us freedom to enjoy the two latter.

Thus furnished with that which protects us in our walk, and in the practical confidence in God, and the knowledge of God that flows from it, we are in a state to use offensive weapons. We have but one against the enemy, but it is one which we cannot resist, if we know how to handle it-witness the Lord's conflict in the wilderness with Satan. It is the Word of God. There, Jesus always answered with the Word, by the power of the Spirit. It sets man in his true position, according to God, as obedient man, in the circumstances around him. Satan can do nothing there-we have but to maintain that position. If Satan openly tempts us to disobedience, there is no wile in that. Not being able to do anything else, Satan acted thus with the Lord, and manifested himself as he is. The Lord drove him away by the Word. Satan has no power, when he is manifested as Satan. We have to resist the wiles of the devil. Our business is to act according to the Word, come what may, the result will show that the wisdom of God was in it. But, observe here, this sword, is the sword of the Spirit. It is not the intelligence, or the capacity of man, although it is man who uses the Word. His sword is highly tempered, but he can neither draw it, nor strike with it, if the Holy Ghost is not

acting in him. The weapons are spiritual; they are used by the power of the Spirit. God must speak, however weak the instrument may be.

The sword is also used actively in the spiritual warfare, in which it judges all that is opposed to us. In this sense, it is both defensive and offensive. But, behind all this armor, there is a state, a disposition, a means of strength, which quickens and gives them their power. And this is a complete dependence on God united to trust in Him, which expresses itself in prayer. "Praying always." This dependence must be constant. When it is real, and I feel that I can do nothing without God, and that He wills my good in all things, it expresses itself. It seeks the strength which it has not: it seeks it from Him in whom it trusts. It is the motion of the Spirit in our hearts, in their intercourse with God, so that our battles are fought in the communion of His strength and His favor, and in the consciousness that we can do nothing, and that He is all. "At all times." "With supplication." This prayer is the expression of the man's need, of the heart's desire, in the strength that the Spirit gives him, as well as in confidence in God. Also, since it is the Spirit's act, it embraces all saints, not one of whom can be forgotten by Jesus (and the Spirit in us answers the affections of Christ, and reproduces them). We must be watchful and diligent, in order to use this weapon; avoiding all that would turn us away from God, availing ourselves of every opportunity, and finding, by the grace of the Spirit, in everything that arises, an occasion (by means of this diligence) for prayer, and not for distraction.

The apostle asks, from his heart, for this intercession on their part, in the sense of his own need, and of that which he desired to be for Christ.

The mission of Tychicus, expressed Paul's assurance of the interest which the love of the Ephesians made them take in having tidings of him, and that which he himself felt in ascertaining their welfare, and spiritual state in Christ. It is a touching expression of his confidence in their affection—an affection which his own devoted heart led him to expect in others.

He presents the Ephesians as enjoying the highest privileges in Christ, and as being able to appreciate them. He blames them in nothing. The armor of God, by which to repel the assaults of the enemy, and to grow up in peace unto the Head in all things, the preservative armor of God, was naturally the last thing that he had to set before them. It is to be noticed that he does not speak to them in this epistle of the Lord's coming. He supposes believers in the heavenly places, in Christ; and not as on earth, going through the world, waiting till He should come to take them to Himself, and restore happiness to the world. That which is waited for in this epistle, is the gathering together of all things under Christ, their true Head, according to the counsels of God. The blessings are in the heavens, the testimony is in the heavens, the Church is sitting in the heavens, the warfare is in the heavens.

The apostle repeats his desire for them, of peace, love, and faith; and concludes his epistle with the usual salutation by his own hand.

This epistle sets forth the position and the privileges of the Church, in its union with Christ.

Ephesians

I send the following thoughts to the Present Testimony, rather to lay the subject seriously before your readers, than to teach upon it. Not that I have not in the main-while willing to have any

thought corrected-a clear and decided judgment on that of which it speaks. But the subject is new to many; and all I wish at present, is to direct their thoughts to it, that they may weigh it before the Lord. Hence I have added a signature, that the responsibility may rest with the individual who sends the paper.

The exhortations in the Epistle to the Ephesians have a large scope and a higher aim than those of most of the Epistles, though nothing can surpass the importance of details of godly practice in their place; that, in walking according to them, God may be glorified, the Spirit ungrieved, and the heart free to receive and enjoy all His communications from the Word. These exhortations are founded on, and refer to - as, indeed, in every Epistle-the doctrine which forms the subject of the first part of the Epistle. But there is an exceptional subject in this Epistle: the unity which flows from the full revelation of God, the necessary Center of all; and, more especially, from the exaltation of Christ, in whom, according to the mystery, all things are to be headed up; and the presence of the Holy Ghost on earth, uniting the saints to Christ, the Head of the body on high, and assembling men by His power, to the confession of His name upon the earth. I have called this an exceptional subject, because it is not the first and proper doctrine of the Epistle, but is introduced as an extraordinary revelation of an especial state and relationship into which the saints are brought. The primary relationships spoken of, are individual ones with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: we are chosen in Christ to be holy and without blame before God in love, and predestinated to the adoption of children. The exhortations founded on this doctrine, begin with the 17th verse of the fourth chapter, and are first and mainly referred to the name of God, passing into the relationship of children in the first verse of chapter v. It is natural they should; because, while special affections are drawn out by the name of Father, the character of God Himself is that after which we are to be formed. Definite relationships are entered on in chap. 5:22; and there again the relationship of the Church with Christ is introduced. It is not to be passed over, that, whatever the corporate blessings of the Church- and they are very great and eminent -the individual relationship of the saint holds the first place, and that the action of the members of the body as such, is for the perfecting of the saints individually. Indeed, seeing the place that God must have, and the unutterable obligation and relationship in which we stand to Him, - we may add, the very place Christ Himself has with God as man, this could not be otherwise, whatever peculiar privileges the counsel of God gave to us in union with Christ. Thus, in the first chapter of Ephesians, we find saints presented in relationship to the names and nature of God, as revealed in that He bears towards Christ, as denoting our proper calling, and what characterizes us as saints - our relationship to that which is above us. And then all things being centered up in and gathered into one under Christ, we become joint-heirs, so as to have the glorious place due to God's children towards that which is below us. It is only at the close of the chapter, where he speaks of the power exercised towards those that believe, that he introduces, after the exaltation of Christ, Himself raised from the dead, the union of saints with Him, their identification with Him as objects of the operation of the same power by which He was raised and exalted. They are not merely morally and gloriously like Him; they are raised up together with Him, His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. The general purpose of God had been stated in the tenth verse of the first chapter. This especial part of it, the union of the body with the head, and the unity of the body itself, and the forming of a dwelling-place of God on the earth, by the Holy Ghost, with its various consequences and aspects, and the obligations that flow from this great fact, are unfolded from the 22nd verse of the first chapter to the end of the 16th verse of the fourth. The whole of the second and third

chapters, and the fourth down to the end of verse 16, may be considered as a kind of parenthesis, in which the doctrine of the Church is richly developed with the exhortations which flow from it; not separated, of course, from the doctrine of the whole Epistle, but forming a special body of teaching within it, we are not viewed as the fruit of Christ's redemption individually before God, but as the associates of Christ's position in union with Him. It is at the same time remarkable, how, through the vastness of the place and counsel of God, these truths are interwoven. It is the name, in reference to which we are individually children, which forms the groundwork of the prayer in this part of the Epistle, which generally treats of the Church; and it is the name of God with whom we are individually in relationship, because it is in grace, which lays the foundation for the union of the Church with Christ, because of that divine power which has raised Christ, and us with Christ, from the dead, to form one new body in a heavenly condition before Him - a condition in which no middle walls of partition could arise; for what barriers of ordinances to exclude, shall be found in heaven? The name of the Father, in which we are brought into nearness of communion and relationship, gives its character to the prayer of the 3rd chapter. (Compare John 17:26). But under the name of Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, every family in heaven and earth comes, and we are heirs of all. And the Apostle seeks our blessing according to the riches of glory individually of Him who possesses all. In order to the present enjoyment of this, Christ, who fills all things, must dwell in our hearts by faith, through the strengthening of the spirit in the inner man, (Compare-as regards hope, which is the form in which it is enjoyed in Colossians; for they were not holding the Head firm-Col. 1:27) and this is what the Apostle seeks here. All things depend on the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and form the sphere of His glory. With the name Jehovah Israel alone, of all the families of the earth, was in relationship. It alone was thus known by God (Amos 3:2). On this name every family in heaven and earth depends; but then, according to the whole wide extent of His glory, in which He has given us a place, and as Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, He strengthens us by His Spirit, so that Christ should dwell in our hearts by faith, and that as rooted and grounded in love. This is the power of realization, that we may comprehend the extent of glory in the sphere of creation on the one hand, and have the intimate knowledge of Christ's love in us, which passes knowledge, on the other; so as to be filled to all the fullness of God, whether in the display of His glory, or the blessedness of His nature. Now it is the exercise in us of power, which surpasses all our thoughts, which produces the great result, and binds all together for His glory in the Church by Christ Jesus. It is power in us which fills us to all the fullness of God; but this power necessarily binds us together in a nearer and closer sphere - the Church of God; and hence, while setting us to look out to the whole sphere of His glory in Christ, and binding us in the intimacy of knowledge to the love of Christ Himself, the Spirit brings us to God's glory in the Church. Indeed, it could not be otherwise; because, Christ the Head of the body, fills all things; and the body, as associated with the Head, is placed in connection with the whole scene; and He dwells in us, so as to give the power of going out unto it all as His, under the Father; and to know His love, too, by His dwelling in us. Hence the previous part of the chapter, and the admission of the Gentiles as one of the families, leads to this prayer. Now, the Church has a double aspect and character, both of which are presented to us in this Epistle. It is looked at, also, in two ways; as indeed is the case in every dealing of God with man and this lower creation, with this peculiar difference, that the Church is the nearest and most immediate object of His thoughts next to Christ, forms no part of the ages and dispensations of this world, has no existence but by the full display of God, as he is the true light now shining; and of man to God, according to His glorious counsels in the person of

Christ in glory on high, and the consequent presence of God on the earth in the person of the Holy Ghost dwelling in men, and in the habitation God has formed for Himself here below, amongst men.

Notwithstanding this difference, however, the same great general principle is in play as to the Church, as in the case of other dispensations of God; because, though not of the world, and the object of God's counsels before the world was, the Church is displayed, and has her place and service in time in the world.

Now, the double aspect of all the objects of God's dealings here below, is the display of God's power and perfect wisdom in results, and the placing of the realization of it in man's hands under man's responsibility, before God's bringing it about by power according to His own mind. The very creation has been subjected to this principle. There will be a new heaven and new earth, where righteousness will dwell according to the thoughts and counsels of God; whereas that which now is, groans under the bondage of corruption which sin has brought in.

I do not go further than the earth, though my subject partly leads there, because the higher part of creation above, is the proof of God's preserving care and grace; as we, of His restoring power by redemption and reconciliation.

But, as to this earth, everything trusted to man, and for which he has been responsible, will be accomplished finally according to the mind and purpose of God. Man himself failed in Adam, and will be perfect and glorified in the Second Adam. Man was entrusted with the law: it will hereafter be written in his heart, and he will be made to walk in God's statutes. David's royalty failed: it will be perfected in Christ. Man, entrusted with sovereign power, failed in ruling over all: but Christ will reign over the whole earth in equity and truth, and glorify Jehovah. The very promises were presented in Christ, and man would have none of them. They will all be shown to be Yea and Amen in Him. The Church and the individual saint ought to glorify the Lord: they, too, have failed. But Christ will be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe, and the Church itself be fully glorified with Him.

So with the Church. It will be presented perfect, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, as the Bride of Christ, by Him to Himself; as God did Eve to Adam. But it is set in the world, as responsible to display by the Holy Ghost His character and glory now. There must be this difference, which I have already alluded to, that the Church knows its own perfectness already in its Head, to whom it is already united by the Spirit; whereas Adam was the first man, and the Jew evidently never had Christ in the promised kingdom. It knows the perfect love of God, which has been revealed in all its fullness, and is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. It has the knowledge of its present union with Christ, and knows of the character of its existing relationship with Him, as His body and Bride. Israel could not know, as a present thing, the reign of Christ in any sense. Love being perfectly revealed, the work of redemption accomplished, and our union with Christ a present truth, this difference must necessarily exist, though the great, full result, is yet to come, and we have the treasure in earthen vessels.

But, having noticed this, I turn now to the distinctive characters in which the Church is set before us in the Ephesians. No doubt, responsibility attaches to us as to both; but the failure of man is displayed more particularly in one, as being the proper sphere of his responsibility; while, though

he may fail as to the other, its proper nature is in itself unalterable. The two characters of the Church of which I speak, are found in the close of chapter 1, and of chapter 2 of the Epistle the body united to the Head on high, by Divine power; and the building on the earth, the habitation of God through the Spirit. The body, as united to the Head, cannot fail, nor can any form part of it, but true members of Christ. But it implies unity on earth amongst those who are there: and here there may be failure: that is, in maintaining the manifestation of unity on the earth as a witness. But the body itself cannot, and never will fail. God has given Christ to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who filleth all in all. That of course is necessarily made good. It would otherwise be as if something should fail of Christ's fullness. But the aspect of the Church presented to us at the end of the second chapter, is a different one. It is viewed as formed on earth. Jews and Gentiles are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Now, of course the thought of God, and the proper work according to God, as far as He has wrought, is to put right stones in this building. The house is a real thing; but there is no such statement as in the end of the first chapter; there the essence of the truth was a glorious Head and living members of a living Head, God had given Christ to be Head over the body. Here the Divine point was, God in the Spirit dwelling in a house. He is Himself joined to no body. It is a mere dwelling-place which is formed, and in which He is found. The fact is stated: the principle on which it is formed, namely, Jews and Gentiles both received and built on the apostles and prophets of Christianity, Jesus Christ Himself being the Corner-stone; but who did it is not said, and though, naturally, it is supposed to be real, the qualities of the stones are not in question; but the principles on which they are received, and the object-the dwelling of God there - not in Israel. Now, I see no reason to doubt, that, at first, the body and the house were the same, but not necessarily so. If, of the three thousand added in the day of Pentecost, one had been the victim of his imagination, or a hypocrite, he clearly would not have been a member of Christ's body, save in a mere nominal way; but the Holy Ghost would have dwelt just as really in the house formed, as if all had been true saints. When Simon Magus was received, when false brethren came in unawares, they were no members of Christ; their baptism did not in any way constitute them such. It is not its office in any way. But the Holy Ghost did not cease to dwell in the house of which they formed a part. It is not, be it so, the theory of God. But we are on earth, and the result there is mixed up with the responsibility of man. No one can be a member of Christ unawares; because that is in its nature a living, real, divinely-wrought thing: whereas the formation of the assembly or house on the earth, in which the Holy Ghost dwells, is partly the work of man, though God may operate therein. The theory was, living stones built up on the Living Stone a spiritual house. The practice soon diverged from this; but the Holy Ghost did not for that reason forsake the house. This fact, I suppose, can hardly be denied - that is, the presence of the Holy Ghost where false brethren and unconverted persons already formed part of the public assembly of Christians, where the Holy Ghost dwelt. This, indeed, was so truly the case, that, in Heb. 6, an unconverted person is supposed to have come under His influence, and to have been made a partaker of Him. So we find in 1 Cor. 10, the apostle suggests that many who partook of baptism and the Lord's Supper, God might judge and reject. That which the house is responsible for, for which it is placed in the world, is to be the pillar and ground of the truth: that is, to maintain and hold it up in its public profession before the world. A true member of Christ may be in error, without ceasing to be a member of Christ; but the house, as such, is called to be the public professor of the truth. The Church does not teach. The teacher does that. The Church is taught. But it professes the truth. The Providence of God will preserve

this till the great apostasy in the main; but it is connected with the responsibility of man, so that all has to be judged. There is another passage in which the house is spoken of (Heb. 3), which I ought not to pass over: " Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." This speaks of the house as the ultimate result, " the end." Of course, if any one abandoned this hope in Christ, he had no part in the matter. This was the danger of the Hebrews. I do not think, if the object of the epistle be understood, the passage offers much difficulty. In result, the house, at first, not necessarily absolutely, but in fact, was composed of living members of Christ. In the end it will be, according to God's own purpose and heart, the tabernacle of God. Meanwhile, like every dealing of God, it has been left under the responsibility of man. The result, without its ceasing to be the house as to its place and responsibility, has been what it always has where the creature is in question. I think, in Eph. 4 (and, therefore, it was I dwelt on what preceded), we have, in connection with this, three characters of unity to which the Spirit draws our attention. The exhortation of the special part to which I have alluded, in which the Church is treated of (1:22; 4:16), refers to the fact of the dwelling of the Holy Ghost in the Church looked at as formed on earth, her activity and energy of gifts; the body is referred to 4:7-16, but, in its individual members. Christ is viewed as the Giver; and gift and blessing is spoken of, not responsibility; nor is even the working, consequently of the Spirit present on earth, but of Christ the Head in heaven. The work is complete in power in the person of Christ; and in virtue of that He confers gifts for the perfecting of the saints first of all, and to the edifying of the body. There is an effectual working in the measure of every part, according to the measure of the gift of Christ; but it is somewhat different in verses 1-6. There responsibility and duty are spoken of, an endeavor through grace, and that in connection with the Spirit of God, whose presence gives power to and characterizes our unity here below. The exhortation, as all exhortations must do, applies individually. God had brought them into His presence in peace, and dwelt among them, and Jew and Gentile bound to have towards each other, for very different reasons, yea, every saint one to ward another, that bearing which the presence of God would surely produce. The unity was by the Spirit, not in flesh, there the enmity had been, and they were to strive to maintain practically, in the bond of peace, the unity in which they stood in Christ; but the Apostle then proceeds to refer to various characters or aspects of unity, the force of which I do not think has been generally seen, and which connects itself with the general subject of which I treat.

There is, says the Apostle, one body and one Spirit, as we are called in one hope of our calling. There I find what is essential and of vital reality in the Church of God - the body of Christ necessarily composed, as such, of living members, whatever responsibility those who pretend to be of it may be under; but here the Apostle speaks of the unity in its true nature: one Spirit, which is the bond and power of this unity, and the one conscious hope which belongs to those who are called into this blessed place. That is the substance and reality of unity. The next enlarges in its sphere of application, but loses in its essential character-one Lord, one faith, one baptism. This is profession upon earth, connected with the title of Christ to Lordship over them, He is Lord. It is not union with Him which is in heaven. The Holy Ghost unites us to the Head there; and we hope to enjoy fully what we enter into in spirit. Our calling is above. But faith here is the truth of the doctrine we profess. It is not even personal living faith here, for he could not then say, one faith. One faith is the one thing believed, in the truth of which we own the Lord; and in baptism a person is publicly admitted into association with those owning the Lord, and holding this faith, who form the house publicly upon earth. All this, of course, is on earth. There will be no faith in heaven. It is the unity of

the owning of Christ's title. There is but one Lord, the holding the truth with which the announcement of Him is connected, and in the announcement of which that Lordship is maintained, and public outward association with the professors of it where that Lordship is owned. Simon Magus believed, and was baptized; he was never of the body of Christ. It is a unity which regards professed Christianity on the earth. The next unity is one God and Father of all; that is, we have God, the Lord, and the Spirit, as in 1 Cor. 12. This last is necessarily a larger unity still, based on a more widely claiming name, a name to which a wider sphere belongs. The Spirit is connected with the body, for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body. The Lord is owned by faith, and men are associated with the public profession of His name by baptism; but with the unity of God everything that is is connected, or there is something that exists independent of Him, and His unity is denied; or else creatures are not creatures, but have independent existence of themselves. This to us, now, is simple; but when men owned " gods many, and lords many," it was not so; to us there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ. Hence the Thessalonians are said to be in God the Father. This one God is above all, and through all: It is far from pantheism. That a heathen could imagine. He is one God above all; yet He is present throughout - He is through all. Whatever length, and breadth, and depth, and height, there may be;-above all, He is; and, one God, fills it all-gloriously. But this is not all, He who fills all things dwells in the believer, He is in you or us all-He brings us most blessedly into this immediate association with Himself. If Christ is Head over all things to the Church, God, who is above all, and through all, dwells in each individual who composes it, and brings him into the universe with personal divine blessing - filled with Him who fills all. This brings us divinely back to realities, filling us with God himself, in the widest though more outward and general sphere of His glory; yet even here we could not be separated from direct divine blessing. Lordship over, might be over professed subjects; but God could not pervade all things without being in us in the proper way of divine blessing, because of our living relationship to Him - wondrous grace and blessing. Through all things He is, but He who is so, is in us, Here, then, we have three distinct unities, the first of which gives us the real unity of the body; the second, professed subjection, as the Apostle speaks, to the Gospel of Christ.. How wide is this gone now! How dreadful the state of those who thus own His Lordship; the third, that of all things and God!

This leads me to another question and passage, 2 Tim 2:15, to the end. Hymenaeus and Philetus had erred, overthrowing the faith of some. The whole passage refers to professed truth (see 15, 16, 17, 18, and 23 to the end), Satan subverting the soul by vain questions and false doctrine; the individual might or might not be a believer in heart, a member of Christ. It is not the question here. The answer to this unsettlement by error is, that the foundation of God remains sure - the Lord knows them that are is. That is immutable and unmoveable by evil. Then comes the responsibility of man; this has a double character: 1st. The individual's conduct, as to which conscience decides very simply; 2nd. His conduct as belonging to what is described under the similitude of a great house where there might seem more complication. The first principle stated in the passage is very simple; absolute and of universal application. It is a great comfort that it is so, and that this precept is of absolute unavoidable obligation. God's secret is with Himself, whatever the confusion and the error that is rife-He knows them that are His. That I must leave with Himself. I may rejoice, by the fruits produced, to know that any one is a child of God; but it is of God to know absolutely who are His; but responsibility is my part, I name the name of Christ. It is the profession of holy power; 1 must depart from iniquity wherever I find it. Whatever the leaving it involves, I must cease all

iniquity, depart from it. If it be bound up with an ocean of good, I am not master but slave in my responsibility of conscience; I must depart from iniquity. That is a settled thing, a divine exigence, which nothing can meet, but acting on it. It is owning and abiding with God himself in my conduct. Nothing can be so good, or doing so much good, as doing His will. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Is any given thing iniquity? Is it wrong according to the light Christ has given me? I depart from it. I am told, "But you will lose opportunities of usefulness, of serving the Lord, of doing good; and you must leave other Christians. With whom will you go?" I answer, I know nothing of all this. That thing is wrong; I must depart from it; I dare not do otherwise. "But you will find wrong in everything." Not for me-for a Christian-to sanction. He may fail in doing right, but not deliberately accept any doing wrong, however small, if he fears God. I name the name of Christ; I cannot abide in what is not right. It is destroying all responsibility, and denying God's authority over me to allege any motives for not departing from evil. None could have a better excuse than Saul when he lost the kingdom. There was one simple thing in the whole matter -he did not obey. "He that will serve me, let him follow me." A weighty word of the Lord's.

But the confusion which evil has brought into the Church, and the enormous system of evil which bears its name, may create difficulties in many a sincere soul, when what bears the name of the Church of God is the seat of the power of the enemy. To this the apostle turns. "But in a great house," continues he, after speaking of these mischievous teachers, and the general principles which secured and directed the heart of the faithful, "In a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth, and some to honor, and some to dishonor." The professing Church -what bore the name of Christ in the world - would become like a great house, where one finds vessels of every kind, and for all uses. What was to be done -leave the Christian profession - become unbaptized? That was impossible. There was no going out of the great house. Whatever state it was in, Christ was the Master of the house. We cannot be heathens, or Mahommedans, or strangers to Christian profession. What, I repeat, was to be done? remain with those that dishonored Christ because they also were in the great house? Not so. "If a man separate himself from these he shall be a vessel made to honor, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." What defiled the house was worse, as such, than heathenism, or the darkest ignorance. Amos 1, then, to remain isolated in separating myself from these vessels to dishonor? Not so; I am to follow what becomes saints-righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart. Nothing seems to be plainer. Vessels to dishonor, I must expect would be found in the house. I must separate from these. But there are those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. With those I am to associate, and follow after every Christian grace with them. If the house, once builded on the earth of choice and goodly stones (I am not aware that it is ever said that God positively built and formed it, I do not think it is), has become a great house, in which vessels to dishonor are found, my path is clearly traced for me. The extent of the evil does not affect the principle, and other guiding ones may come in for other points of conduct. But this I have; I separate myself from the vessels to dishonor. I associate myself with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. It is not a question of local discipline, but of public and personal conduct. The responsibility of all in the house remains founded on the place to which they pretend, in which they have outwardly stood. This is clearly taught in Matt. 24, where the evil is viewed as a whole (ver. 48). "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth His coming, and shall begin to smite his

fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder; and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites." Here the servant is treated as a servant, but as an evil one, as a hypocrite by the Lord. He considers himself so too. He says "My Lord"- he is so dealt with - the Lord of that servant. What a lesson for the professing church, and particularly for the hierarchical part of it. What makes this more remarkable is, that he is treated as the same servant, as to position, as the other who will be made ruler over all his Lord's goods. Nay, he is treated as the same servant changed in character, "But and if that evil servant. ■ κακος δουλος εκεινος." It is, indeed, a solemn thought for those who take the place of rulers in the Church called of God. But my object at present is only to lay before the reader the view Scripture gives of the Church's responsibility, and the fact of the existence of that house in which vessels to dishonor are - how Scripture looks at it. We cannot, with impunity, lose any part of Scripture truth, and especially on points which commit us to grave points of action. We cannot begin the Church over again. God is not beginning it. We cannot accept any evil in what is called by that name; less than elsewhere. That is a matter of absolute Christian responsibility.

The seven churches of the Apocalypse, also, clearly take up this responsibility of the Church. We see, no doubt, local assemblies; but embracing, I doubt not, as is very commonly believed, an aspect of the whole professing body, or something characterizing a general division of it by a distinct principle; but still the state of the professing Church, as such. The candlestick is threatened to be removed, and, finally, nauseous to Christ, the Laodicean is spued out of His mouth. What bears the name of Church is not only judged by Christ, instead of judging others; but every one that hath ears to hear is called upon to listen to, and give heed to, that judgment-to pay attention to it, as coming from the Spirit. It has been alleged there is no going out. In a certain sense, it is impossible; I have not the smallest thought to cease to be a professing Christian. I name the name of Christ; am I, for that reason, held to continue in evil? I add a few other passages, not cited or referred to in what precedes-all that I am aware of which refer to this subject-to facilitate to my reader his search into the truth of Scripture on this subject. First, Heb. 10:21; 1 Peter 4:17; and Matt. 16:18; the last I cite as connected with what I have said as to God's building. The word "house" is not used, nor is the thought of a dwelling-place of the Spirit in this passage; so that I do not think it affects the question. I think, myself; it may apply to both the true and external Church; but especially, and finally, to what God secures as the living God, the true Church. The "priest over the house of God" is used, in a general way, as an allusion intelligible to the Hebrews - the whole administration of the professing body, but exercised in favor and in behalf of those who drew nigh. I apprehend, in 1 Peter 4:17, the professing house is referred to, alluding to Ezekiel; but in both these passages, and in all where ruin is not spoken of, the house, though viewed as outwardly subsisting in this world, is supposed to be a true one. Thus, when it is said to Timothy "behave thyself in the house of God," it was his conduct in the professing Church of God upon the earth, but assumed to be composed of disciples. That hypocrites, false brethren, might have got in, this altered nothing as to Timothy's conduct. He was to behave himself in it as the house of God, and maintain its order practically as such. What might come of the house through man's unfaithfulness, is another and special question; what is seen in the passages I have just cited is the character, not the state, of the Christian body. Ουτις.

Fellowship With Christ: 4. Quickened Together With Christ

In the three articles which preceded this, we have looked at that which the Holy Ghost teaches us, in Scripture, as to the provision, made by God, for meeting all the evil of our old former selves; of ourselves looked at-in fallen nature, and according to our descent from Adam. In Christ there was Life, and Christ's work was such, that by it God could meet (meet and set aside) all the consequences of that which He finds to be in us by nature. Crucified together with Christ; dead together with Christ; buried together with Christ, are three most precious benefits to us of the humiliation of the Lord. What an epitaph, worthy for the God of all grace to put over Saul the persecutor, and such like, when, through grace, they believe, "Crucified, dead and buried together with Christ." Other remedy, other refuge was, is, can there be none for a lost son or daughter of Adam than is here presented. But God thought not to meet us in our evil only, and to deliver us from its awful consequences and results; - the love that looked upon us when we were in our sins (and when we were children of wrath looked upon us and thought to interpose between us and the fruits of our sins, by the work of Christ), that love had a length and a breadth about it which could not measure itself out fully in the limits of our misery, - but having loved us, in spite of what we were, and fully met all the evil at its own cost, that love has taken an arena for itself which is vast enough for it to show its full measure in. The Son of God associated Himself, as Son of Man, with all the circumstances of our misery, was put to shame in our stead upon the cross; died in our stead thereon and was buried. This was His downward path; obedient unto death, the death of the cross. "He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and - He was buried" (1 Cor. 15:3,4). But He also "rose again from the dead," etc., and, as we shall see, has associated us with Him in all the stages of His upward course of honor and blessing. He, associating Himself with us, had to suffer for us: He, associating us with Himself, in that which followed His suffering for us (as substituted for us), - how rich are the blessings which are ours in Him! These we will now turn to consider.

1.-Quickened Together With Christ

But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ" (Eph. 2:4,5).

" And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with Christ" (Col. 2.13).

Observe, first, what we were, as set forth in these two contexts. Dead in trespasses and sins; -having walked in time past according to the course of this world, - which is characterized thus; as being according to the prince of the power of the air,-the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, - among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Observe it. Death in trespasses and: sins; a walk according to the age of this world (at enmity with God and the Father); an age energized by Satan, whose sway is over rebels; the habitual bearing characterized by lusts of the flesh, desires of the flesh and of the mind; children of wrath: - these were our spots where grace found us, if we can credit Paul's letter to the Ephesians. And the picture is not more favorably drawn when he writes to the Colossians, whether Jew or Gentile be looked at. But, where no answer could be 'found in such a state of things, when it was looked at in the presence of God, - there God showed an answer in Himself: He was rich in mercy and in power too. If ' the object which He looked upon was the very contrast of all that He loved and delighted in in Christ Jesus, He could yet show compassion and mercy, - mercy and compassion - to what was in contrast with Himself and with His own moral beauty as expressed in Christ Jesus. He could save the sinner; yet, in the very act which justified Him in doing so, He would give the perfect expression of His own power, and of His mercy toward the sinner, and yet of His hatred against the sin. His Son, His only begotten Son, as Son of Man, should take the place penally due to the sinner, and bear the perfect judgment due to sin in His own body on the tree. Substituted for the sinner, - He (the just one in place and instead of the many unjust) bore sin in His own body on the tree. His doing so was the expression of His perfect sympathy with the divine and heavenly counsel of His Father's mercy, - He became obedient unto death, the death of the cross. The judgment is Past; gone right through by Him, all alone - all that God thought, felt, knew, to be due to sin in His presence. He who passed through those sorrows (which were justly ' due to us, but would have sunk us into hell for eternity), is now alive again. For, if Divine justice perfectly expressed its bearings against me and my sin and sinfulness when Christ stood to be judged in my stead, -Divine justice had also to express itself, if it would be clear, as to both the personal and the essential glory of Him who could do such a work - God raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God. He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and 'dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all (Eph. 1.20---23); God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 11.9-11).

The head of all principality and power (Col. 2.10). Yes, so it is: He who was the Man of sorrows is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, crowned with honor and glory; and, as Lord of all and appointed Judge of quick and dead, He knows how to call a poor sinner, a Saul of Tarsus, or, a John of Bedford, and to set before him and in him the contrast between-

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.

He knows, right well, how to set His own wondrous death and sufferings before the soul of a poor sinner who deserves eternal judgment, and, Himself the appointed judge to point out how grace provided Himself as a victim, that whosoever believeth might, accepting the judgment He bore to have been in place of their own, escape the judgment themselves. And what will the poor sinner say? Is God indeed willing to reckon that the Judge has borne the prisoner's penalty; is He, the Judge, waiting, as in an acceptable time, to see what effect such a message has upon the wretched lost one's heart? O the news is but too good! though, blessed be his name I not more good than true. It is finished! I bow to the blessed word of God's grace, through Christ, proclaimed to the chiefest of sinners. Through grace it has reached me; through grace it has bowed down my soul. Be it so: let God be just and the justifier of me a sinner. Let Him have the honor of having reckoned all my sins to Jesus; let Him have the glory of having found the way, through that Son, of reckoning me crucified together with Him, dead together with Him, buried together with Him. God thus sets honor upon the work of His Son, done for us: the work by which He meets and through which He moves out of the way all that belonged to us as in fallen human nature.

The work of Christ while upon earth was for us,-and is reckoned to us. He, the Son of Man, the Lamb of God was crucified, died and was buried. God reckons that the all that a Saul of Tarsus, a John of Bedford, and such like, had and were, meets its answer in the crucifixion, death and burial of the Lord Jesus; that is, when they, chiefest of sinners, come to believe. Yet it is reckoned so. But those parts of the blessing which follow are not merely reckoned, but have a real, essential portion in them. Quickened together with Christ, is more than what is reckoned merely. Christ, in all His perfectness, was crucified, died and was buried. God reckons to me in all my imperfectness and positive evil, the full benefit of this. He, Christ, the Just One, endured all that, according to God's good pleasure, for and instead of me, an unjust one. God so far counts it to me, that it is His epitaph for me, according to what I was. But this epitaph, or inscription on the tomb and final resting-place of the old man in me, is still a perfect Christ, - perfect though He bear (display of His perfectness) the marks of the judgment which He received once for me. He, in the richest grace, was stigmatized in my stead. Yet the I, that deserved to be stigmatized of God, am not actually in Him. What God reckons, faith reckons also; and so, reckoning ourselves to be penally dead to sin, we reckon that we have ceased from (and not only have to cease from), acting in sin. Now in some sense there is a contrast to this in what follows; for "LIFE " is a very positive, actual thing. And life is not merely reckoned to us, but has been absolutely given to us that believe and is positively possessed in Christ, and enjoyed by us in ourselves. A clear view of this difference is important. Let us pause upon it for a moment.

To Christ all that was due to us, as sinners, has been reckoned; and He has borne the punishment of it, and still retains the marks of the judgment so borne. Now just as we see on the walls of chapels and churches, some- times' a tablet erected in memory of some one that fell in a foreign land, and whose body still rests in that foreign land; even so, in one point of view, may the tokens of the passion which still remain, and may be seen by faith in the person of the Lord, be looked at. My wicked self is not in Him. The memory of all my guilt, all that God had against me, did once find its final resting-place in the person of Christ when He drank the cup of wrath upon the cross. And when I now, by faith, look up to Him, I see in Him the record, the remembrances of what He bore in my stead. This, while the question is of how I, a guilty creature in myself can find peace with God, is of all importance. The Just One, who is to judge all, bore on the cross the judgment due to me the unjust. I do not fear or doubt, whether He will or will not remember His own sufferings, whereon He has made my soul to rest. But this is not all. Not only is the penalty and power and being of the old man thus met, but another, a new man, having a being, and power, and liberty, is introduced to supplant the old man. And this is a positive thing, and a new thing altogether. Adam, as set in the Garden of Eden, had not that which the weakest believer in Christ now has: "Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (1 Peter 1.23), " The word of the Lord... the word which by the Gospel is preached " (ver. 25), is the instrumental means of communicating this, but the thing communicated is a new thing itself. Christ is the Giver - " the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life"- such a portion is not of human nature, but of God. Well now, when we come to the Scriptures what do we find as to this Life? First: If Adam was a living soul, Christ is a life-giving Spirit: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening Spirit"(1 Cor. 15:45). Then, again, not only is His glory thus described: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made," but also another glory is His: " In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:1-4). "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear," then' shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:3,4). " God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5.11) I cite these passages as showing that " Life" is, to us that believe, not merely moral order restored in the elements of the old man, but that it points to something which not only fallen but, which unfallen humanity, as first set in the Garden of Eden, did not possess; to something which fits us, not only for heaven, its native place, but for " fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. Such a fellowship is ours" (1 John 1:4). But many are the lessons Scripture gives us in details connected with the subject.

Our attention is called to much, if we can taste and see it, in these words, "Quickened together with Christ." I have heard expositions of this expression (which while they contained much truth in them, and blessed truth too), were not expositions of what our text contains. For instance, "Quickened together with Christ," does not mean that as He was quickened who lay dead and buried in the grave, in the garden, so our souls which were morally dead become morally alive if we have believed. That, if we substituted " spiritually, as well as morally, alive," for "morally alive," would be true; but it clearly would give no stress to the words together with. And such a truth would have been better expressed by, "have been quickened in soul, as Christ was in body." The text really leads back to the hour in which Christ was quickened, and points out a special glory as attaching to him when so quickened, and a glory which connects itself now with the believer.

Having laid down His life as a substitute for sinners, He took it again as the second Adam, life-giving Spirit, Head of a race. In redemption nothing is before God, or will be found to abide, save what comes forth from Christ. He is the Rock. He alone. He was smitten in death. In life - after death - a life which was in itself beyond death, and was shown to be so by His passing through death- the life-giving waters flowed forth, token of the Life which was in Him, which He was. It was necessary for Divine glory and for the conscience of the sinner, that the insults to God offered by sin, and the sin itself should be fully met by Him who alone could meet it. This he did by His death. But everything as to sin, past, present or to come, having had provision made for it in His death,-His life anew was with the avowal of Headship. No life ever flowed save from Him. Whence else could it flow? Quickened together with Christ! Then I am to go back in thought, as to this life which I know I have in the Son, to Him in whom is life; and to go back to Him, not only as one of whom this was true as the Word of God,-but as the one of whom this is declared by Scripture to be shown out as true - in the very hour when he was quickened as Son of Man, who was dead but could see no corruption. A simple view of this changes everything to a soul that believes; because it brings the mind down upon the very point of time and circumstances in time which God had arranged as the testimony to man. He knew who His Son was, and what His Son was and would do: He needed not, in His infiniteness, in order that He might see what He could know and understand, the developed accomplishment of His plans and counsels. But, in grace, He has presented, in time and in circumstances which are suited to man, great overt facts, such as appeal to man as man, and such as man, when under grace and in the light, can understand. The crucifixion, the death, the burial of the Christ were awful overt acts. Wrought by man and in grace and mercy's sake permitted by God, and endured by the Christ for our sakes, they, first, told out man's wickedness, and the end thereof to the believer through God's grace. The quickening, raising up, elevation and glorification of Christ are great overt facts also, acts wrought by God to the confusion of sinful man, and for the salvation of the believer. And they tell out (oh how blessedly) the wellspring of God's providing, full of every blessing.

Have I eternal life? Yes: in the Son. How do I know it? 1st. Because God identifies faith and life together inseparably; and, 2ndly, I through faith, know those things which the word declares cannot be known save where there is life - Divine life. In the Son and from the Son is this life. But to what point, to what circumstances does the word of God point me as the birth-place, as the scene of the coming forth into light, first, of this my life? To the quickening and raising from the dead of the God-honored, though man-rejected, Christ of God. He was quickened, and He was quickened as a Head. Directly I believe and understand the word, - the tomb of Christ, bursts into light, not now closed and dark as the resting-place of Him that was buried, but open and full of light (for the Son of God, the Word, and the Jesus of Nazareth were there, just proved to be but one and the same) - that-that is the scene to which the word leads me back. I fear few of us go back simply enough to that scene, as the scene from which our new life has its date and the manifestation of its origin. Man (we ourselves according to what we were) would not have Him on any terms. God would have Him, and would have Him as the second Adam-with Headship and relationship to man found upon Him both for Heaven and for earth. I need not say my old man was not quickened- it was crucified, dead and buried together with Him. No, but God communicates a new nature to me, the Divine nature; and gave with it, power to become a son of God, power to enter, not only into the enjoyment of the things and circumstances of God, but into His own thoughts and affections, and to enter into them, according to the mode of the revelation of them,

as displayed by God manifest in the flesh - by the Son of Man; by Him who though God over all blessed forever and Jehovah's fellow was once, in deed and in truth, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief- crucified through weakness.

Quickened together with Christ - gives me three vivid truths. 1st. The source of life, presented, according to the form and circumstances in which there was to be communication of life. 2ndly. That the prominent leading feature in the scene is the quickening of Christ Jesus from the grave. In time, in weight of importance, in every respect, when God speaks, Christ must have the pre-eminence, the first place-it must be so. 3rdly. That there was a unity, a something which God and the Spirit of God would not break into two things, in the life so communicated, in the communication of life - 1st., to the Christ as Son of Man awaking from the grave into which He had gone in order to clear us from guilt; and, 2ndly, to the believer cleared from guilt; a life in us unto God..

The Son of Man was to be three days in the heart of the earth. See corruption He could not - to know any moral change in Him also was impossible likewise. But He had power to lay down His life (and He did so) and power to take it again (and He did so); for such commandment He had received of the Father. He laid down His life in our stead. He took it up again and made us partakers of it.

That the old man and the new man are not merely different states of one and the same being at different times, is clear; for, 1st, they co-exist - the old man and the new are both in me a believer; and, 2ndly, they are in contrast; the old has no power to know and love God; - the new nature, given us of God, loves God; - the former can never rise higher than the living soul,- the second has been brought into existence in us by Christ.

The expressions, "being in the flesh," and "being in the Spirit "(Rom. 8:9), refer to standing. We are not in the flesh [our standing is not according to the flesh] but in the Spirit [our standing is according to Spirit], if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in us. But, then, though our standing be before God, according to Spirit, this, from the context, clearly does not put the flesh, the old man, etc., out of us. It is still in us, but, our standing being before God, according to a relationship formed with Christ by faith, through the Spirit, we are not under guilt, and we are debtors to act against the old nature, from which we received no benefit, and, according to the new nature which has given us, through faith, relationship to, and standing with, Christ. The doctrine of Scripture is very simple, and clear, and plain, though we, from want of simplicity in ourselves, often find it very difficult.

With God there is no difficulty in the perfect Son of God and the Son of Man (in all His perfectness) being one; -for God was manifest in the flesh. With Him also there is no difficulty in that blessed One, as Son of Man, life-giving Spirit, communicating a new nature, the Divine nature, under certain conditions to a poor sinner; no difficulty to Him to provide that which enables both that nature as an incorruptible seed remaining in a poor sinner, or the Spirit of God ministering to it - while sin remains in the body of the sinner. The cross of Christ met the difficulty in one form; the intercession and ministry of the high priest does so in another, and the power of Christ will in a third. But that nature, introduced into us by Christ risen from the grave, through faith, by the Word, can and will supplant, supplant with all its own superiority of nature and character, the old nature; and in the end, finally, when we have seen the Christ, it will leave no trace behind in us of the old

nature at all. If, by a constant change, through the acting of natural life, etc., in my natural body, it is, as is said, gradually changed in all its particles; yet I remain ever the same: I see no difficulty, even to my own mind, to comprehend that a new nature, of a higher order, may have been given to me,- a nature introducing other objects, motives, affections and desires; and that this co-existing for a time in me may produce conflict for a time: and yet, in the issue, when I shall have seen Christ, may be so perfected, as to its sole possession of me, in body as well as soul and spirit, as that no element of the old nature, in its former state, should remain; and yet identity and individuality shall be fully preserved. I do not say this as having any theory to establish, but as an answer to questions and difficulties which have been raised by some who (purposing to remain, and to retain their position as merely good men), have refused the testimony of the Word about the Divine nature, with a-How can these things be? I receive what Scripture says, because God says it; but, of a truth, I cannot see any greater difficulties in these things than those difficulties which are found in truths which are in the field of nature and providence; nor so great as human sense and pride would find in the higher subjects of revelation;-such as the incarnation, the atonement, redemption, etc.

According to 1 John 1:1-3, eternal life which was with the Father, was manifested in Christ. But the Son of Man had power to lay down His life and power to take it again (John 10:18). It is important to note the difference between eternal life in the Son of God (as in 1 John 5:11, together with, John 1:4, in Him [the Word] was life) - and the Son of Man having power to lay down His life, to give His life a ransom for many, and power to take His life again for their blessing. The Son of God (the only begotten Son) was given of God; -but the Son of Man was lifted up on the cross. Eternal life was in the Son, in the Word; and was manifested to us in the Son of Man; the life of this man Jesus could be laid down - it was laid down as a ransom for our sins: it could be taken again - it was taken again -- and, moreover, the having life and the circumstances of it were different to the Son of Man before death and after resurrection. His birth, as a babe, was, as seed of the woman, by the overshadowing of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost. Such was the Son of Man, the seed of the woman as the Man of sorrows. Therefore that Holy Thing that was born of her, was called Son of the Highest - thus did He become a man, the Son of man, the Seed of the woman, the Man of sorrows. But having laid down His life, Himself giving it up when man with wicked hands was crucifying and slaying Him - His taking life anew was without any such intervention as was found in His birth. It was an act that lay outside of the precincts of the life of Adam the first, who, had he been obedient, would never have died, could never have been in a position to experience resurrection. Not so with Christ -Christ had power to lay down His life and power to take His life again; He was quickened of God: but in taking a life beyond the precincts and sphere of Adam the first He took it, as to form and circumstances, according to the precincts and sphere in which He took it; that is in the precincts and sphere of eternal redemption.

Revealing Himself to Saul, He revealed a glory in Himself, who is Son of God and Son of Man and upon the throne of the Father, - a glory which communicates an incorruptible seed to every one into whom it shines. Now this blessing is from Him as Son of Man risen from among the dead, and gone up to the throne of the Father; but seated and owned there as Son of Man. Many lose themselves in thought here, by not seeing that the glory of the Son to usward is to act as " the Second Adam the life-giving Spirit." Now the incorruptible seed which I receive, is received from the Son Himself-it is fitted, in the order in which it is given (as given from Him who bore my

judgment before He took the formal place of being Quickener, and is now waiting at God's right hand until the time come for Him to be displayed as the Power of God), to meet every difficulty connected with me as a mere man in ruin and in ruined circumstances; to meet, I say, all the questions arising from the form and mode of life of ruined man. It is a life which is in itself as fitted to enter into God's things and man's, as is the life of the Son of Man, who is now glorified upon the throne of the Father with the glory which as Son of God He had with God before the world was. It is His life in me, even as He Himself is my life. He as my life and His life in me, is both according to Himself, and not according to my fallen ruined self, and it is according to Him, according to what He now is risen from the dead among whom He lay by reason of what I was and, in my ruined nature, still am. This new nature is in us in contrast with the old. The former will supplant the latter. There may, there must, be conflict now between the two. I, a creature, upon the ground and under the condition of creatureship, having to do with God as Creator in a ruined world, where Satan knows how to use the flesh against God; and the new nature, put into me by the Spirit of Christ through faith, having a world of its own, and motives and objects peculiar to itself, cannot but be in conflict. But the former may be reckoned by us dead, because God reckons it so as to them that believe, and we may walk in newness of life. The old is not turned into the new; nor does the new (like leaven) work out to fill the old. The old has yet to be changed. Mercy and grace would not suffice, that is, without Divine power, and that wisdom which knows how to change this body of humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His (Christ's) body of glory.

There are two errors to be guarded against on this subject at the present time, if we would hold the truth with soundness. For the truth of Scripture seems to lie on this subject between two extremes which error has marked for itself.

On the one hand, the religion of the schools has worn down the statements of Scripture - so that the blessed truth of being quickened together with Christ, is reduced to a mere humanizing of fallen nature. In this theory, the new birth is but a putting right of the old nature; and the most that is aimed at, or thought of, is to recover in heart, mind and life, that which Adam possessed in Eden.

According to it, redemption may be redemption from sin and hell, but it is not redemption unto fellowship with God through the Divine nature given to us of God by faith.

On the other hand, there is another error, most fearful, which, if it breaks through the trammels of system, breaks out into the wildest fanaticism. According to it the redeemed are to be omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent: and instead of one God (Father, Son and Holy Ghost) there are to be God's many. For each of the redeemed is to be God; Omnipotent; Omniscient, Omnipresent. Alas! what is man? Corruptor of everything he touches. Our privilege, our portion, our blessing, as redeemed, is neither according to the Eden that is passed, nor according to the glory proper to and sustainable only by God. The Son of God, He is God, essentially and eternally god, and is as such Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent. But He has wrought a salvation as Son of Man, and, according to the glory of that name, as the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, He has opened a place, and a sphere, and a glory fitted for the nature which as such He has communicated to us - a nature which, while able to taste the things, thoughts, feelings of God Himself, ever owns Him from whom it has flowed to us, as God over all blessed forever, and ourselves the recipients and partakers of His grace as, however near to Himself, absolutely and eternally dependent upon Him

as worshippers and servants. If we have life, eternal life, it is according to its avowed, displayed source, viz. the quickening of the Christ, Son of Man from heaven - from the grave: and the saint has this word for his shelter - Quickened together with Christ.

Fellowship With Christ: 4. Raised up Together With Him

Ephesians 2:6. Colossians 2:12; 3:1.

The English verb, " to raise up " [like the Greek verb, ■γερῶ], does not necessarily give the idea of resurrection. The first idea which the word suggests is that of causing to rise; and the word would, in its own self, very well suit itself in to a vast variety of circumstances. For instance, we find classical Greeks using the word when they want to say rouse up the sleepers "; arouse the mind "; "stir up the fight "; "wake up - the flame, the song," etc.; " raise from a sick bed," "raise a building," etc.; and in passive, " awake from sleep"; " wake," (be awake so as to) " watch."

Resurrection is so essentially a Bible and a Gospel idea and truth, that we should never think of finding it among the writings of the Greek historians and poets. On the other hand, it (resurrection) is so fundamentally doctrine of the Gospel, that we are not surprised to find that the hearts of Christians (as those who know that the Lord is risen, and that all their good is with Him and in resurrection) are unconsciously apt to twist every passage which can be so twisted, and make it refer to resurrection. Some of the passages in which this word occurs have, I judge, been thus twisted; for while the word is used, in the New Testament, for resurrection, that is not its primary sense. We find it translated variously; thus in -

Matt. 2:13. Arise and take the young child.

Matt. 3: 9. To raise up children unto Abraham.

Matt. 8:15. she arose (from sickness), and ministered unto them.

Matt. 8:25. awoke him, saying, Lord, save us.

Matt. 11:11. There hath not risen a greater than John.

Matt. 12:11. lay hold on it and lift it out?

Matt. 24: 7. nation shall rise against nation.

Matt. 24:11. many false prophets shall rise.

Luke 1:69. Hath raised up an horn of salvation.

Three passages which appear to me to have been wrongly pressed into the service of resurrection, are Acts 5:30, and 13:23, and Col. 3:1. Acts 5:30: " The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins" (ver. 31). The expression raised up, here refers, I believe, to the Lord's appearance in humiliation, and thus presents what the sin of the Jews was. Jesus was raised up "a horn of salvation" (Luke 1:69); you murdered Him; God raised Him from the dead. A concise but expressive statement of the outline of the facts; and, as a statement, much more natural, as well as more full, than to suppose that the

raising up, instead of referring to, God's causing the Lord to appear, means merely His resurrection.

Acts 13:23, I read as having the same sense as the preceding verse (viz., 22); " He raised up unto them

David to be their king"...(ver. 23) " Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus. When John had first preached, before His coming," etc. And, I think, any one reading carefully the verses 24-30, will see the reasonableness of this. First, a Savior raised up; then John's preaching and course; then the conduct of the dwellers at Jerusalem referred to; then the Lord's death and burial (ver. 29); and then (ver. 30) His resurrection - " But God raised Him from the dead."

Col. 3:1, refers neither to the Lord's being raised up "a horn of salvation," nor to His being raised up "from the dead," but to our being raised up from earth to heaven with Him - " If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." This we shall look at more in detail presently. But, and let it be remarked, the term raised up suits the Lord as a Savior, whether displayed in incarnation, in resurrection, or in ascension.

Attention may here, well enough, be called to the difference between the various displays of Resurrection-power. Some have been raised again from the dead to the same life which they had previously to their death, as Lazarus, the widow of Nain's son; then there is the first resurrection (at the commencement of, or just preceding the setting up of the millennium), of those that live and reign with Christ a thousand years; and, again, there is the general resurrection, when all who have not been previously raised from the dead will be raised. But all these displays of Resurrection-power connect themselves with the Lord Jesus as the alone one that could say; " I am the Resurrection" (John 11). It being written that the wages of sin is death, and again, that he that hath the power of death is the devil (Heb. 2), it is plain that none but God - who fixed the wages of sin as death, and who is stronger and mightier than he who has, as executioner, the power of death-can reverse the power of death; and the power to do so rests in Christ as " the Resurrection." But, blessed be God! there is another glory which is connected, in the same context, with that title of the Resurrection! even this glory of being " the Life"- " I am the Resurrection and the Life." By Resurrection-power we are brought up out of the grave according to what we were, essentially and before God, when we went down into it. And they who go down into it, never having been made partakers of the blessing of being quickened together with Christ, will be raised in the same state as they were in when they went down into the grave. In this way, there is an evident connection between the personal glory of the Son of God, because He is Son of man, and all men.

" I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This (in John 11) r gives the blessed connection between Resurrection and Life in Him for the believer [it was spoken to Martha, a true disciple] and the believer; but it leaves the unbeliever unnoticed. When, on the other hand, He was speaking to the opposing Jews (in chap. 5:19-30), He states it thus - As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Observe it: the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, and so the Son quickeneth whom, He will; and all

judgment is committed into His hand. This judgment He seems to exercise variously; as thus, first, He tests men by His word, and where that word's quickening power is made manifest, the creature's ruin is judged and set aside; thus-" Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." " Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (ver. 24-26). When God will bless any man, He must needs make nothing of what the man is; He makes him over, in the most thorough way possible, to Christ, for an integral part of His glory. A man's rights are met in hell, if a man be a slave of Satan; God's rights and Christ's worthiness can alone account for my being in heaven. In going to his own place, a Judas will awfully find the just sentence of God against his own cherishing of fellowship with Satan! He will find out himself there sure enough, and his own just recognition. For man has lost his own inheritance through sin: the lake of fire and brimstone was prepared -not for man, but for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). On the other hand, glory in the heavens is prepared for the Christ of God. In either place, we must be parties of secondary importance. But how much more so in the heavens than in hell, I need not say. But what I wanted to press was the fact, that redemption, as having been communicated to us, is found, by us, to be not only the expression of God's estimate of the worthiness and power of Christ, but the most thorough judgment of all that we were; so much so, that a soul will never really get separate from itself, able to judge itself, to loathe itself, save by the knowledge of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.. I would that we all knew a little more of this self-loathing. And then our Lord went on, after thus showing how all the poor lost sinner's springs were in Him the Savior, to speak of the wicked. He hath " authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which ALL that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of Who shall stand on his own works for foundation and be saved? And, let it be remarked, this is one result of His being Son of man. All men 'shall, therefore, rise from the grave. Some, first, to speak of quickening virtues found in Him the Son, and, through grace, tasted by themselves - themselves made subject to them:-raised to speak and to declare that they had known what it was to be quickened together with Him from the grave; and the works of such will bear witness, and get a reward, too, in the resurrection. Then, last, all shall be raised; and they, too, shall reap the reward of the root they grew upon, and of their separation from the alone Giver of new life (God's life) to the soul; but their works shall not stand in judgment. The root, the tree, and fruit go together; whether Christ or Adam be in question. May we remember it well.

There is one matter to notice here briefly, the transmutation of those saints who are alive when the Lord comes; their change at His coming without seeing death. It may be seen in 1 Thess. 4:16-17 and Phil. 3:20,21. " Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, 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 i He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.". The thought is unutterably precious, that the moment we that remain see Him Himself, virtue will come out of Himself to change these bodies of humiliation, and to fashion them like unto His own body in glory.

I need hardly say that the perfect difference between the Raiser and the raised (or the changed) must never be forgotten. All the virtue and the power are His, and His alone, though they may display themselves, through grace, upon us. Nevertheless, it is too sweet to the heart for me to pass by recalling it, that there is but ONE (our Lord and our God) of whom it can be said, He is "the Resurrection and the Life"; but ONE that had power Himself to lay down His life, and Himself to take it again; but ONE of whom it could be said, He was declared to be the Son of God, with power by the resurrection of the dead (ones); but ONE who can quicken now whom He will, and at whose voice all that are in the graves shall hereafter come forth. His glory and His honor are our highest blessing; and sweet is it to those that have known Him as their Eternal Lover, to think of the glory that awaits them-not as that which will fully and perfectly minister to their own enjoyment, but as that which His love will work in them:- expression at once of His own innate glory, of God's choice of them, and of His desire to have them perfectly fitted for companionship with Him and for the presence of God. Oh, how little do our poor- yet blessed, richly blessed-souls think of Christ and His Love! And yet we are loved by Him, notwithstanding all, and made to know the divine character of His love, which rejoices in giving, giving freely, to those on whom it rests.

I turn now to my texts.

Eph. 2:6. "Hath raised us up together." First let us read the context. We "were by nature the children of wrath," even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (ver. 3-6).

Some have noticed, as though it were the reason of the word together ("raised up together"), the union in the Church of those who had been separated upon earth into, Jews and Gentiles. That the heavenly body, the Church, contains those who were once Gentiles, as well as those who were once Jews, is a fact. But this is NOT at all the scope of the apostle's meaning. And, let it be remarked, that men are not together, in the Church, as Jews and Gentiles; as such they were separated, by God Himself, the one from the other; but they who were such are together, in the Church, as members of the body of Christ. But surely, my fellowship with a Paul in heaven is not the wonder (though, truly, to be there at all, and to be seen to be there, and that, too, in happy association with other men, is most blessed); but the wonder, in this context, is that which lies at the entrance of each soul into the place and position of this fellowship one with the other, namely, individual fellowship with Christ the Head. I am a member of Christ; He put off all that rested in nature in and upon me when it was reckoned to Him. Therefore He was crucified, dead, and was buried; and I am reckoned, and reckon myself, through faith, clear from it all, as reckoned of God, crucified, dead, and buried together with Him. But He has also made me one spirit with Himself; and, through a divine grace, which is boundlessly great, I share certain things together with Himself. The word leads me back to His taking of His life again, as the Son of man in the grave, that I may understand how, having been quickened--made alive - together with Him, I am free among the dead. And the life which I have is a life together with Him. He the Head, and I but a member. It is true that the blessing which I have in Him, I have in common with all the other members of His body; but the power which enables me, even, to have heart-room for a Paul is found in my known conscious possession of blessings together with Christ. Yea; and it is because He finds His interest in all His members that ours too can flow out freely to them. For the

consciousness of community of blessing among the members does not suffice as power to any individual member to act consistently therewith; he needs the love of Christ shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given to him, and communion with the heart of the Lord Jesus.

I fully admit, first, that God's dealings for the earth had divided (since the days of Abraham, if not even before, viz., from the days of the sons of Noah) the Jew from the Gentile; and, secondly, that this is an order of things which not only existed, while things were left in the hand of man to try and to prove him, as from Noah to Christ, but which will exist when the Son of man comes forth out of heaven to bless man, and to take the government of the earth into His own hands; for the Jews and the Gentiles and the extern nations will then still each have blessings distinctive to itself; and, thirdly, that the Church, as being not for the earth but for the heavens-not a part of God's governmental ways for earth, but part of His counsel of grace and for heaven - sets (as other counsels for heaven do also) this separation of classes aside, though it may sanction other classification. I say I admit all this; but I deny that this is the great wonder of the "together with" in the passage before us. To the unconverted Jew, it was scandal to think even of a Gentile dog being associated with him; to the unconverted Gentile, the narrow bigotry of the Jew was contemptible folly; to the converted man, whether Jew or Gentile, a new and a wonderful scene was opened -Heaven. And a truth, marvelous beyond all others, was propounded; that God has made him that believeth to be vitally one with the earth-rejected, man-despised, but heaven-owned and God-honored Jesus of Nazareth. Separation of Jew from Gentile was, is, and will be for the earth; but heaven neither Jew nor Gentile looked for. The wonder to a Paul was not that one, once a worshipper of Diana, the great goddess of the Ephesians, should be counted fit company for him, a Pharisee, who had thought he did God's service (not only in trying to blot out the name of Jesus of Nazareth from the earth, but also) in trying to destroy the Church, the counsel of God most dear to Him about Christ; but the wonder was this, that vital union, fellowship of life, should be to him with the same Christ Jesus whom he had persecuted, and this, too, in heaven, where Christ sits at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest. A tenure of blessing and a place of blessing, as open to Gentile as to Jew; and a blessing, too, so entirely divine and unhuman, so entirely heavenly and unearthly, that none could communicate even a right thought about it save God the Holy Ghost.

May the believer in Christ never forget that heaven is his home, his native place; and that this is the case just because he is one spirit with the Lord Jesus the Christ, partaker of the divine nature, as made one with the Heavenly Christ, and, therefore, to count upon sharing all things together with Him as the Christ.

But to proceed. We have already looked, 1st, at the being made alive together with the Christ (in 4). He that had laid down His life as a ransom and for an atonement, took His life as Son of man again in the

grave. And the apostle's subject of prayer is still a good subject of prayer; that we may know " what is the exceeding greatness of His [His refers here to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ] power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places " (Eph. 1:19,20). All things put under Him, and He given to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.

And 2ndly, at the life as so given being the life of the Christ Himself- a life which, if it now identifies us consciously with God, and brings us here below into conflict with everything within us and around us which is in conflict with God, will yet, in a little while, be openly displayed in its own proper sphere, in us in heaven, and be the power of our association with Him then in glory. We have now to consider what the force of the expression in Eph. 2:6, of our being raised up together with Christ, is. 1st. It refers clearly to something which naturally comes in, so far as the Christ is concerned, between His taking of His life again, while His body was still in the grave, and His sitting down in heavenly places. Two acts of His necessarily come in, perhaps, in this place: the one, His leaving the tomb, as in the act of manifesting His resurrection from among the dead; the other, His ascension. Indeed, I need not say perhaps, for so much stress is laid upon His resurrection, apart from His ascension, and such entirely different scriptures and truths are connected with these two acts of the Lord, that it is quite clear God meant us to mark the difference of the two. For instance, it was said - "Must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection?" so says Peter (Acts 1:22). And this is confirmed by Paul, where he says (1 Cor. 15:3-7)-" I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of " whom the greater part remain unto, this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles." The importance of this evidence as to the resurrection of the Lord follows afterward-" If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (ver. 14, 17). The very doctrine of the forgiveness of sin-of forgiveness of sins to anyone, anywhere-hangs upon the reality of Christ's resurrection. To us also righteousness " shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. "-(Rom. 4:24,25). "The answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:22). Without this, it is clear there could not be blessing in the presence of God for anyone, nor such a thing as a good conscience. Whether the question be about conscience in a Christian; in the remnants from among the Jews and the Gentiles who get into heaven, though they yet form not there parts of the Church; or in the Jew or the Gentile, or the outside worshipper. The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was God's way, both of being just while justifying a sinner of any class, and of making a good conscience in every believer. Sin was against God. If God appointed that the consequences of man's sin should come upon His Son as Son of man - He must die. He died, and rose and revived. God's way was, thenceforth, open to meet man where and how He pleased, but so (as He counted) alone, and so, as each accepted sinner -wherever his assigned place of meeting God, whatever the distinctive feature of blessing which grace may assign to him when he does so meet God -- so, I say, will each accepted sinner find. An arisen Christ alone can be God's channel to the conscience of a sinner, or a true answer of the conscience; and this simply because in this One alone, so regarded, does the conscience find, as God's answer to it, the very answer which God has provided for the claims of His own character. That which has satisfied God may well satisfy me.

But I left out, intentionally, Paul's reference to himself as one of the witnesses of the resurrection.

"And last of all was he seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Now when Christ was seen by Paul, it was not merely in resurrection. Arisen from the grave, His gospel was to begin at Jerusalem. When Jerusalem would not have it, it sounded out through Judea and Samaria. And, when Stephen was stoned, heaven opened upon him, and there was a blessed intercourse between Jesus standing on the right hand of God and the martyr. But Saul, ringleader of the persecution against the Church, saw, then, naught, heard and understood naught. But a little further on in the history, the arisen and ascended Jesus calls him by name. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" etc. That the ascension-glory took a most distinctive place in Paul's mind, and held a most peculiar place in his ministry, is plain. See, for instance, as to the place it had in his mind, the stress he lays upon it, in chap. 22:6-11, when he spake to the people in the Hebrew tongue; and again, in chap. 26:12-18, when he spake in the presence of Agrippa. These portions, compared with the account of his conversion in chap. 9:3-9, are very interesting. And to see the place which the ascension had in his doctrine, one has only to turn to his statement of his gospel in 2 Cor. 4:3-6, to the opening of his letter to the Galatians, chap. 1:11-16, to the tenor and contents of his letters to the Ephesians and Colossians, to be fully persuaded of it..

But, further, the whole of the distinctive position of the Church, the whole of the doctrine which is distinctively directive to each individual believer now, is found in this ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mercy in God may be thought of by a poor sinner now (after a fashion which would have been correct enough in patriarchal days; that is, mercy without its way of flowing forth being explained); but God's mercy shown before us is the mercy and compassion of God, which, having substituted the Christ, the Just One, in place of the many unjust, declares that it delights to flow forth with all its blessings through a Christ that is now upon the throne of the Majesty in the highest. We can only meet God in the place where Christ is presented as meeting us; to us that meeting-place is in the holiest within the veil; to the Jew it will be in the land; and the character of conscience is according to the place of meeting: the light is fuller within the veil, and the conscience is of a higher temper, even as the truth presented to us is the more overt in its expression, and even as the power given is of the highest order. For conscience needs, in order to meet God, that which God needs in order to meet it, and conscience needs a power accordingly. There is but one blood of atonement; there is but one Spirit to apply it: that's clear. But if any would argue thence that because, as regarding himself, relatively to himself, every man that is saved is saved by the Spirit and through the blood alone-that, therefore, as regarding God, relatively to God, each saved sinner must be equally near as another, they utterly mistake. Mercy and compassion were native to God alone; they flow forth as He will; they apply themselves to whom He will; they form classes, too, and put a soul in one class or a soul in another, as God saw meet from before the foundation of the world. A saint to be in the New Jerusalem, to form part of the Bride of Christ, needs a conscience and a spiritual power more than a saint would who had to be part of the kingdom of Israel-- to form part of the people of the Lord on earth. Now, escape from the ruin round about us will never be made good to a soul which does not know an ascended Lord. Such a soul is without that form of truth which is distinctive to the economy, and must be without that intelligence and that power which a man needs who has to walk as one risen together with Christ; and, therefore, his citizenship being in heaven, having to seek and to mind things which are in heaven. But of this more in detail. hereafter.

To which, then, of the two things which intervened between Christ's quickening in the grave and His sitting down in the heavenly places. (viz., His coming forth out of the grave and His ascending up- into heaven) does this expression, " raised us up together" (Eph. 2:6), apply?

I may say in reply, that, 1st, in point of truth, I do not see that it matters much, if at all, which way it be rendered; for rendered either way, it is one step of two between the " being quickened together with Christ," and the " being seated together with Him in heavenly places." 2ndly. The more common, and, therefore, perhaps, the more natural way to render it, is as referring to the first of the two steps. Observe it. Between the communication of life and the being seated in heaven, two things are supposed: 1st, a coining out of the grave (wherein life was received) up among men -to the region of man, so to speak; and 2ndly, a going up from among men into heaven.

I admit that the first of these, in reality, attaches itself to the preceding step; and, if you please, that resurrection involves two things: the communication of life anew; and the manifestation of life, if just dead and not buried, or the bringing up of the person from the grave, if he be buried as well as dead. Still they are not really one and the same thing; and, in the case of the blessed Lord, very distinguishable are His taking His life in the grave, with all the truth that it involves as to God, and Himself and the Spirit and the spiritual world too,-and His being seen and known among men as risen, and tarrying among His disciples for a season ere He went up. In dealing with individual souls, in a cloudy and dark day, the distinction may be helpful; 'tis one that the account in Acts 9 of Paul's conversion warrants, and it may be traced dispensationally (according to the analogy of the faith) in the Church's entrance into glory and the earth's future blessing. Paul was quickened before he took his place with disciples - before he could show that which they could accredit that he lived unto God.

I do not press the analogy of the faith, though, to my own mind, it is always confirmatory and important (if any one has ability from God to trace analogies); but the Church will be in glory ere manifested in glory, the Jewish and the Gentile remnants will each have life ere it is seen by man to be in life; so the Jewish nation will have life ere that life has become so outwardly manifested as for them to get the fruits of it in outward blessing.: --

On the individual believer, however, I would here press the thought, that " the life of God" (as Paul speaks in Eph. 4:18), if it belongs to those that have known (or rather been known of) Christ, shows itself in those that have heard Him and been taught by Him, " as the truth is in Jesus." Is our gospel, wherein we glory, the gospel of life - eternal life, in and through Jesus Christ our Lord; so then is our testimony the testimony of life - eternal life. If we are hidden in Christ in God, He is to be displayed in us in the world. Paul not only knew Christ as Life - his life, and that he, Paul, had -eternal life in Christ, but he walked also here below so of that he could say, " We are made manifest unto God; 'and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences" (2 Cor. 5.11). And the manner and mode of this manifestation he sets forth. It was,-not only in appearance, but in heart; but then it was not only in heart, but in appearance also. His life had motives, ends, and objects: a peculiar view, too, proper to it, which gave it its character before God, and led to a testimony such as the Corinthians could read. Self was neither his end, nor his starting-point, nor his spring of energy, as, alas I it so often is with professing Christians now-a-days. I, I, I, I, I, I, I,-a perfect number in egotism,-is a sorrowful thing in a Christian. Paul's Christian life was not such. " For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause" (ver.

13). God alone was the one to whom he lived; but God had objects of His affection down here; and so the divinely led man had to seek the interests of those whose interests the God, that led him captive in His cords of love, sought. Then follows the account of what it was that told so much on his own heart and mind (happy man that he was). " For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we 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 which died for them, and rose again" (ver. 14, 15, etc.). What a contrast between this mode of life and the mode of life of so many: " do this and do that"; " do not do this, and do not do that." The man of the world's actions are the index of that which rules within; and if the Christian man's actions are the index of what rules within, then the life of the worldly man and the life of the Christian will be very unlike the one to the other.

Myself, this life, earth, circumstances and Satan, are in the inside of the worldling's life; Christ, eternity, heaven, redeeming love, and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are all that the Christian's inward life knows. Do Christians, real Christians, sufficiently feel this? What are good works in a clock, if it have no hands whereby to indicate the good time it keeps. Reader! What art thou left down here upon earth for? Eternal redemption and its perfect salvation are thine; and such a seal is set upon thee for security, that none can take thy blessing from thee. Why, then, art thou left here? Surely, to be a witness, in the power of thy life as well as of thy lips, for the Lord Jesus; if so be we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

It is touching to see how to the Christ, alive again from the dead (there not only descended angels from above to greet Him, but), there flowed to His own heart and mind thoughts of the needs-be of His presenting Himself before His Father as Son of man, and thoughts of each one of His people. To each of them He might have taken a different way of introducing Himself-His way did vary much in the many cases which we read of; but the disciples He had left as sheep that were scattered (because He, the Shepherd, was smitten) must be gathered together again - they were His Father's sheep; and then He goes on high, Himself to become the subject, in a new position, of the testimony of His disciples to the world;-Himself gone on high at once to secure His disciples' best interests, to send them down, also, the Holy Ghost; and, while remaining there and caring for His own which are in the world, forming them, and directing and aiding them in their service.-Himself the subject of their preaching, as well as the joy of their hearts. Oh, how little do we live in the power of the heavenly calling and fellowship of the mystery of Christ and the Church! The Lord look upon us to renew the power of these things in us, and may we mark it well, that Christ, alive again from the grave, had things to do proper to the life, as so taken up by Him anew; and may we go and do likewise.

2. Our next verse is Col. 2:12, " Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Many expressions in this context, as well as the general drift of it, conduce to prove that resurrection is the simple meaning of it. For instance, the ' last clause is conclusive proof hereof; "God, who hath raised him (Christ) from the dead." The grand object is - not the Christ going up into heaven, from the earth, or Christ seen displayed' in heaven- but -the resurrection of Christ from among the dead. " God raised Him from the dead." It is His rising from the grave where He was buried when He had died for our sins; His coming forth from that grave to be seen of His disciples, to be preached of to His enemies; and this is not only the grand subject of the verse, but it is the one that rules the whole verse, for that which is declared in the last clause, to have been made good in Him, in that He was

as a man in overt action raised from the dead, is declared to be true of us that believe in Him; God looking upon us and judging according to the spirit of Christ which He has given to us, judges of us that we being one spirit with the Lord, are risen together with Him. This is true to all those that believe in Him that raised Christ from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification.

The bodies of those that believe, if they have been laid in the dust, will rise as His body rose; rise at His coming, and be raised by the 'power of Himself then present to do so; but those bodies will rise because they belong to souls that have been quickened, who, if absent from the body, are present with the Lord. The spirit of Stephen, of Paul, of Peter, are with the Lord; their bodies are in the dust. God does, in counsel and thought, connect the dust of those bodies - of those earthen vessels, with the souls which His Son quickened, and, hereafter, the bodies shall rise in proof thereof. But when these men - Stephen, Paul, Peter, etc., were alive upon earth, they, having believed in Christ, had been quickened by Him as the One that rose from the grave and were looked upon by God as vitally one with His Christ, and He could say to them (not as yet of their bodies, but of themselves) -Ye are risen together with Him whom I raised from among the dead. That Christ was arisen from among the dead was an overt fact when Paul wrote to the Colossians; so was it an overt fact, at that self-same time, that Paul and these Colossians had received the Spirit of Christ, and were judged of God (not as if their standing was according to the flesh and nature, as derived from Adam the first, to clear them of that) - all its consequences had been reckoned to Christ, and He had, therefore, been crucified, had died, and been buried; they were to reckon these things true of themselves-for God did so of a truth, but as having, a standing before Him according to the Spirit and grace. This Spirit had freely flowed down from Christ when He had taken His life again - had freely been given to them. Its starting point was the Christ Jesus taking life again in the grave; but it was life, eternal life, life divine though in man; and was looked upon by God, as it was found in them, not as something that would lie still in the tomb, though not of it, but as something that would prove itself as that which was arisen from out of the grave and from among the dead. And we may remark here, that, in unison with this thought, is the verse just before it. We " are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh" (ver. 11); which circumcision (it is the only circumcision we know as being Christ for us), is thus explained (Phil. 3:3), " For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

The context of the verse before us seems to me to contain two parts; 1st. The doctrine of the clearing out of the new man from the shell and husks of the old; and 2ndly. The building up of the new man; the two together making up the being " complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power," spoken of in verse 10.

On the first part, I would just notice, further, the pointed and distinct way in which our deliverance, the Christ penally dead but arisen, and ourselves once morally dead are brought together in verses 12 and 13.

" We risen with Him"- " whom God hath raised from the dead": ye who " were dead in your sins... quickened together with him, having forgiven you all your trespasses"; and then he adds, as bearing upon the Jew, and all the ordinances nailed " to his cross" (ver. 14).

How far do we test our lives and walk here below by the question: Are they in harmony with the life we have in common with the Christ arisen from the dead. He is the same-before death and after; but His position is different. When on earth He was the servant of God among Israel upon earth - a people owned of God, and to be blessed upon earth; and His outward life flowed forth, not only in zeal for God, but in zeal for His House upon earth, and for His people upon earth too. The temple He did honor so far as it was open to Him; the king's house was shut against Him, another possessed it. Yet He was the Shepherd of Israel, and His sympathies flowed out toward them. Such is not the case now; He has been put to death, and since His resurrection from among the dead, has been rejected afresh by Israel, now identifying Himself with nothing but a pilgrim and stranger band in its tarrying the little while upon earth until He comes again.

To be called to a walk upon earth, consistent with the truth that God looks upon us and judges of us as men whom he has made to be one Spirit with His Son who is arisen from the dead is a marvelous calling. It is freedom before God; freedom from all the elements of natural as well as earthly religion; freedom unto God; freedom to suffer and to do His will, though in a body of sin and death - an evil world, under Satan all around, until the glory come.

3. We come now to our third and last text upon this most interesting subject. " If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right-hand of God" (Col. 3:1). " Set your affection on things above not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory" (ver. 2-4).

The Christ is looked at, here, not only as arisen from the grave but as gone up from the earth to heaven. " He was carried up into heaven" (as we read in Luke 24:51). " And while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly towards heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10,11). Such is the doctrine of Scripture. The grace of His skewing Himself alive to the disciples upon earth-" being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3) must not be forgotten; nor the entire distinctness of the ascension, as a doctrine, from the doctrine of the resurrection of the Lord. In our verse He is pointed out as sitting at the right-hand of God - after having ascended. And the exhortation to us is to set our " affection on things above (that is in heaven) not on things on the earth." A natural consequence enough, if, indeed, we realize that we are risen together with Him; for the place into which we are risen is the place where the subjects of our interest will be found; our proper circumstances so to speak. And then, as giving weight to the word just spoken, he reminds them, " For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." This is the present blessing we have, " We are dead," and " our life is hid with Christ in God." The security of the manna in the golden-pot, inside the ark, shut in by God, who dwells between the Cherubim, is a poor expression of that security which is ours if our life is hid with Christ in God. It is life, eternal life; it is life inseparable from Christ; and Christ rests, not only in a seat of power in heaven, but is in God. We have to seek the things which are above. That is for the present our proper occupation. And-it is an occupation in which the Spirit will have some upon earth to be occupied with until that time. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. It is Faith which owns Him as our life"; the eye sees it not; soon

He shall take the place in which we shall see him for ourselves, and then what but to be seen together with Him in glory.

I may just remark that the apostle's use of the little word "if" (ver. 1), "If ye then be risen together with Christ" does not convey, is not meant to convey, any uncertainty; as though Paul doubted, as though he sanctioned their doubting, as though he even supposed they doubted whether or not they were in Christ, and risen together with Him. The whole scope of the apostle's argument goes upon the fact that there was no doubt whatever about it-to faith the thing was clear and sure; He had left Judaism by reason thereof; he was proving that these Colossians were in danger of Judaizing, because they did not retain the fact before them; and in chaps. 2 and 3 he thrusts this blessed grace of God before them, that they may find the power of seeking the things which were above.

Some will say, "but we are down here"- "our bodies are on earth": -and what then? May not God look at us, not according to what we are in the flesh, but according to what we are in the spirit, as partakers of a new life in Christ, a life which enables us to know that God identifies us, and looks upon us as one spirit with Him who sits at His right-hand; or, may not God, having made this good for a Paul, for poor Colossians, call upon them to walk by the faith of it? He certainly has done so; and faith, in us as certainly as it knows what He has done, takes up His word, His thought, and counts it true and to be but the expression of that which has more of substantive truth and eternal reality in it, than all that which Satan sets man's flesh on to say in opposition. It is a sorrowful thing to see Christians pleading experience and feeling and sense as to what they are in themselves, and as to what the world around them is, and as to what power Satan has over them; and refusing to take God's estimate of the world, the flesh and Satan; and so not finding a practical refuge in Christ for themselves; and in Him, too, that new life, new in nature a life in Christ; of Christ arisen from the grave; and after that gone up into heaven.

On the expression, "Seek those things which are above," I would say a few words. And first, as to the definiteness of the place spoken of by the Spirit here; nothing could be more marked; "things which are above." Where? "Where Christ sitteth on the right-hand of God." Now, to many minds this is all in the clouds, very vague indeed. So, at least, many have said. But

just let us remark, in this very epistle, how Paul, walking by faith, as a man that was risen together with Christ, saw glory upon glory, in Christ, by which he could answer (with divine perfectness in his case, as one inspired while so writing), all the sophism and all the vain deceits of the adversary. In Christ's light he saw light; and saw glory upon glory in the Christ; and saw offices and relationships in Him too, which not only gave a light in which he could walk as a living man, so as to avoid pits, and snares, and traps, into which others might fall; but also which gave a nourishment and a strength to his soul, as well as a healthy occupation to it which some of these Colossians were in need of. O if Christians now had the eyes of their understandings riveted upon the Christ of God,---upon Him who is not only now to be seen by faith, crowned with honor and glory (as in Hebrews and the Apocalypse), but in whom there plays all that liveliness of affection to the adopted children of His Father - and ten thousand bright and beautiful graces as well as glories if these things might, indeed, be so with us- what a change in the life and in the testimony of many! Natural religion will carry its string of beads to count its prayers upon: does spiritual religion find nothing in Christ to answer thereunto? Yes; he links together glory upon glory, and

grace upon grace, to be told over in praise before God. And what a halo of light, bright, but soft and beautiful, is seen around Him, by those that know Him in heaven. May God revive and restore the heart of His people to spiritual, heavenly worship. If silence becomes us as to ourselves, surely there is much to be said for and about the blessed Lord Jesus.

The exhortation is double, first, "Seek them," those things which are above; and, then, secondly, "set your minds on them," on things above.

There is something worthy of remarking upon in the graciousness of the introduction of the truth of ver. 3 here: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." It meets man both ways - little faith, or fleshliness, or worldly-mindedness, might object. "How can I do this"? The answer is, "Ye are dead." Weakness and conscious littleness on the other side is lured

on with the counter statements, which must ever be precious to every saint, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." How that word meets every temper in the soul. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."

In conclusion, it is clear that fellowship with Christ in life is not all that God has given to us; or all that God has made to be a matter of responsibility to us. Nor, again, would the life, being the life of Christ as risen from the dead, suffice - for as such He will rule over the Jews, and have the Gentiles under His power; yea, the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea under the power of the Christ, as having life in Himself; as being in a position in which to communicate it and fellowship with Himself to poor sinners - He being arisen from the grave. It is not until we come to His ascension, and His place taken in the heavenlies, that we get to that which, as connected with the life taken anew by the Lord, marks off the distinctive position of the believer, while He, as Son of man sits at the right hand of the Father. There is no unearthiness, no unworldliness, like that which flows from affections formed and trained for the divine and heavenly glory of the Son of Man; affections fed by intercourse with Him whose thoughts were the first in all these things. The discontentment of an ugly temper, which is satisfied with nothing, may make us complain of the wilderness; the sorrows of the passage through it may make us groan; and God's chastenings too for our practical inconsistencies may do as much; but none of these things will give groans like unto those which a home-sick soul, a heaven-filled heart will have, a soul which is too much occupied with Christ in God, and the glory to come, to have much time or thought to give either to itself or to the experiences of the wilderness. Christ felt the wilderness and the trials which man put upon Him as well as Satan in this way, for His soul was blessedly filled with the glory He had come from; with the Father ever looking upon Him; and with that Father's house and kingdom of glory He was to open to us. May we know these things; seek them and set the mind upon them.

Fellowship With Christ: 5. Life With Him

In the last article on this subject (p: 1), we looked at some of the testimony, given by the Holy Ghost in Scripture, as to the believer having been quickened together with Christ. By the passages then cited we found ourselves more especially led to consider the act and moment of the Christ's taking His life again as the act and moment in the which the birth place (as it were) of that life which we, believers, have, in and from Christ, is marked out for us. Indeed, the wording of those passages does, in measure, limit the thoughts of the mind to the taking-up of the life. But there are other passages which refer to that same life, passages in which there is no limitation of thought to the taking-up of the life, - passages in which reference is made rather to the possession of the life itself, than to the taking of it up.

What I mean will appear, at once, to the most simple minds, if the difference of the two verbs in Greek, $\sigma\upsilon\zeta\omega\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\omega$ and $\sigma\upsilon\zeta\alpha\omega$, which are correctly rendered in English by their equivalents " to quicken (or make alive) together with," and " to live together with," be considered.

God quickened us (or made us alive) together with Christ, is what we saw in Eph. 2:3 and Col. 2:13: God was the gracious actor; His Christ, the one in whom it was formally wrought for us, when He took His life again. Such was the teaching of our last article. We do possess life already in Christ-and shall shortly be manifested as ourselves possessing that life when He is manifested in life; such is the teaching of the passages to which we now turn. Not only quickened together with Him, but also so manifestly partakers of His life now, that we know that when He is made manifest in life to all, and when He reigns over all, then we also shall be made manifest in life together with Him (for we do already partake His life, and know that we do) and shall reign with Him. To these passages, less restricted than those of our last article, we now turn, viz.:-

Rom. 6:8. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." And,

2 Tim. 2:11. "It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him."

Rom. 6:8. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."

The doctrine of baptism, Christian baptism, is that God has provided a burial-place for the old man in us; He can reckon the old man of them that believe, to be crucified, dead and buried together with Christ. The act of Christian baptism is the individual believer's setting to his own seal to the truth of this divine doctrine,-his declaration, that he reckons, through grace, that the sepulture which God proposes altogether suffices. For the believer can trust God, who, having raised His Son from the dead, gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God. He, therefore, counts or reckons upon that being buried together with Christ, by baptism, into His death (Rom. 6:1-14). But if faith can reckon that the old man died together with Christ, because God says, that He so reckons it, faith is occupied also with another life,-" We believe that we shall also live together with Him." The first great point to mark is, that there is another life besides the life of Adam the first. If all that we were, or had of our own, from the first Adam, is reckoned to have died with Christ-we are not without life-for, secondly, Christ's life, taken by Him in resurrection, is given, freely given, to

us, as the whole chapter (Rom. 6) shows. Observe, the question is not merely about our future existence in another world than this,-that is true, indeed,-but that is not the great point here; but rather our present possession of a life, now together with Christ-the life which He took when He arose from the grave, a life upon the certainty of our present possession of which the apostle could rest our obligation to live to God; that is his subject. And, let the reader mark here, 3rdly, some of the essential characteristics of it, as named in this context. It is " eternal life" (chap. v. 21); it is that by means of which we can " walk in newness of life" (chap. vi. 4); it secures to us " the likeness of his resurrection" (ver. 5); it is life "together with Christ" (ver. 8); a life over which " death path no dominion" (ver. 9); a life by the which we are " alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (ver. 11); " alive from the dead," and our " members instruments of righteousness unto God" (ver. 13); " under grace " (ver. 14).

We see, then, 1st., that if grace puts its sentence upon the life of nature in us, upon the life of Adam the first, it gives us, at once, another spring. 2ndly, that this new life in us is the life of Christ, the Christ that rose from the grave; and, 3rdly, that it is to be judged of and thought of according to its fountain-head and source, -the Christ who is in God. It is eternal life-has a new path for itself-according to the glory of the risen One-for it is a life of fellowship with Him-a life beyond the power of death-a life unto God-from amid the dead; a life of practical godliness under grace.

Let it be observed that there are three distinct statements as to the life. 1st. In the Son of God, as the Word was life (John 1:4). 2ndly. the Prince of Life, who was killed (Acts 3:15) had eternal life (compare John 5:26,27); and, 3rdly, the eternal life is given to us in the Son (1 John 5:11,12).

The first of these passages refers the glory of the life which is to be given to us, to the Son as the Word; and its context refers every other glory of God which has ever been displayed to the Son, as the Word of God; the second asserts, that this life was in the man Jesus, who was crucified; the third presents us with a risen and ascended Christ, Son of Man and Son of God, now in glory, as the one in whom this life is now presented to us. It is important to mark this distinction on many accounts. For instance, by the observing it, we are guarded, on the one hand, from supposing that our fellowship is association with the Son of God in His character of the Word; from the folly of expecting to sit upon the throne of God; to be clothed with Deity; to be omniscient, omnipresent, and such like absurdities; and, secondly, we are kept from the thought that our association with Him is according to what He was while He was upon-Jewish grounds, and had not as yet made atonement, which leads into bondage and legality of spirit; and, thirdly, we are shut up by it to the truth of association with a risen and ascended man in heaven, who is in heaven and not upon earth, sits as Son of Man upon the Father's throne, and sits there as the one who. is past the judgment which he bore for our sakes, and is not only Head of His body the Church, but, also, is the One in whom our life is. Unless this point be clearly apprehended, I do not think the Christian will be free from what he ought to be free from, or free for and to that, to and for which he ought to be free. I shall, therefore, rest upon this a little, and call attention to it by citing a few verses which show what is the position and what the placing of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He is spoken of, in Scripture, as our life.

1st. The doctrine as taught by the Lord:

John 14:19,20. " Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me: because I live ye shall live also, at that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you."

2ndly. The realization of this by the apostles and early Christians:

Col. 3:1-4. " If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory."

The whole Epistle to the Ephesians, also, looks at the Church as being in Christ, and having its life there, in Him, in heaven (read chaps. 1, 2, 3).

3rdly. We may remark the same thing, where the Spirit of God is arguing out God's way of blessing to be only in and through Christ, in Rom. 5 and vi. Take, for instance, these verses:

Chapter 5:10. " For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life;"-and (ver. 17) " shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."

Chapter 6:4. " We are buried with Him (Christ) by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Ver. 23. " The wages of sin is death; kit the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Chapter 8:2,6,10, bears the same testimony. Here the topic is what the life of the Christian here below should be, a life flowing out of a salvation which had just been shown to be union in life with the Christ who had passed through death.

Take, again, the very form of the gospel as made known to Saul - of Christ, as the Savior and salvation of Paul.

We can truly cite " I was found of them that sought me not. I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me" (Rom. 10:20). It was the ascended and the glorified Christ, who said, " Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me," etc. (Acts 9) And one end of this we find named in 1 Tim. 1:16, " Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting."

Take, again, the gospel as formally stated by Paul. " But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. In whom the god of this world 'lath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, path shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:3-6).

With this position of Christ clearly, 2 Tim. 1:1 and 10 must be connected, and also 1 John 1:2; 5:11, 12; and not with Him when on the earth previous to His suffering.

I now turn to my second text.

2 Tim. 2:11. "It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him.

Some of the essential characteristics of the life we have from, and with, the Christ, were noticed above, as found in Rom. 5 and 6. That it is "eternal;" gives power "to walk with God;" secures to us

the similitude of Christ's resurrection; is a life over which death has no dominion, is life together with Christ; a life unto God from among the dead, etc. In the portion in which it is found in the Epistle to the Romans the how we are saved, is the subject under consideration. In Paul's Epistle to Timothy, the walk here below, which becomes such a life is rather the topic; and accordingly the force of this context seems to me to be just this: you must make up your mind, if the life of Christ is indeed your portion, to have experiences here below, similar to those which He had. Paul's effort was to tighten the girdle of Timothy a little unto patience in suffering: so it seems to me. " Be strong in the grace that is in Jesus Christ" (ver. 1); " Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ " (ver. 3); " No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life;" " be a soldier " (ver. 4); "Strive for masteries... lawfully" (ver. 5); are all of them expressions which mark the servant's position and portion. And then he adds, "Consider what I say: and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my Gospel. Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself" (ver. 7-13).

If Christ was raised from the dead; if Paul also preached the Gospel of Christ raised FROM THE DEAD (that is, of a Christ who had suffered unto death) what had Timothy, what have we to expect, here below, if made one with Christ (He the Head, and we members, and hereafter to be displayed as such, alive and reigning with Him), what have we to expect, in and from this world, save suffering?

Such, I take it, is the thought of the apostle. Clearly we who, through grace, died together with Him, have already a life in and from Him. Its manifestation, hereafter, will be in glory; for in heaven, and before God, what, but that which is Christ's will shine, and how brightly will every expression of His life then shine! But now that same life which, hereafter, in God's presence, will tell itself out in bright glory; now, in the presence of a godless world, and before the flesh and Satan tells itself out, as did Christ's, in suffering.

I speak not of his sufferings on the cross, when making atonement for us, but of His sufferings as the Son and servant of God in His life on earth. Conflict with Satan; opposition to the world; a course of holy walk; testimony for God; sympathy with His disciples, and compassion towards a world dead in trespasses and sins, could give but sorrow and suffering to such a One as the Christ of God. We have life in and from Him; and, therefore, in whatever measure His life be developed and manifested in us, that life which is to be fully displayed in us when we reign with Him, in that same measure will there be, without an effort on our parts, approximation to, and a tasting of, His portion, who was the " Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" all His life through, from the cradle to the cross; that cross where He was altogether alone, and none with Him; sorrow was His portion-perfect sorrow-sorrow to a degree, such as there is none to be likened to it. In our measure (oh how small a one it is, yet, in our measure, because we have His life, and are in the same world He was, a world, too, now declared to be enmity against God) we have sorrow and suffering. May we gird up the loins of our minds and be sober, enduring unto the end.

Life in the Son as the word; a life lived by Him upon the very earth we are upon; a life given as a ransom for us, and now taken by Him again, and displaying itself in Him to faith; made ours for entire liberty, privilege, and service, now and as the power of fellowship, with Him in all His sufferings (save that of atonement, in which He alone suffered, and we are freely make partakers of what He did for us) have just been briefly looked at. May the saints ponder these things. That life we shall hereafter have to look at, as it is to be displayed in glory; but the two thoughts which have here been more particularly rested upon, are the essential qualities of His life, as His and (through grace) ours, and the necessary consequence of this, while we are on the earth, of suffering.

The importance which attaches to this part of our subject, will unfold as we proceed. But, clearly, if our gospel is the gospel of life, eternal life in the Son, the life of which we have been speaking is of all-absorbing interest: and so, also, in handling the subject of " Fellowship with Christ," what immense place must the life in which we participate have! the life which is, in us, the power of fellowship with Himself first, and then with Him in the portion into which, through grace, He brings us. To a simple mind, this would suffice; but (so little simple are we when we are occupied with the things of God and of heaven, and not with the things of ourselves and earth, that) I shall venture to present a thought, or two, which may help some minds.

First, look back into the times which Gen. 1:1 reveals to us, and see the infinite God in action, calling into existence what He wills, with almighty power and wisdom and goodness; look, now, into Eden, as revealed in Gen. 2 the circumstances-the Being, and attributes and Actions of the infinite God. How different is this from the circumstances-the being, attributes and actions of the finite creature in chap. ii. Fitness for the enjoyment of the possession of Eden, supposed the possession of a being, heart and mind similar to Adam's. So that when he first looked around Eden, he saw there was no help meet for him. Eve was the complement of Adam in this respect; complement to himself for himself, and for the then scene of blessing: and mark, too, how infinite the distance was between the infinite God and His creatures. From the highest created angel, down to the lowest creature, there may be gradational steps, for all I know. From man, lord of creation, down to the lowest creature, there seems to have been a string of creatures gradually decreasing in power; and no break so mighty in the many-linked chain, as that between human reason, with its power to own God as the giver, and the very lowest instinct, or (lower still) lowest proof of life in any sense. But that break is not infinite. But the distance between infinite and finite, is infinite; or the infinite God would not be infinite, and man finite. Now mark the strange prospect which is before us: the Son of God is heir of all things, but He is to take the inheritance as Son of man (Heo. i. 2, and 8). Now, if I Son of man possessing, at God's hand, heaven and earth, and see Him in the new Jerusalem above, in heaven, with the Church His bride, I can see somewhat of the sort of life, mind, heart, habits, those must have who are really to enjoy such a position, and such a scene, with Him, and for Him, and for His glory. The life of God would not have done for Adam in the garden of Eden; he had been made to fill a scene fitted for a living soul; the life of Adam would not do for the new Jerusalem. Fitness for fellowship with Christ, there to be His joy, as well as to find all our joy in God and the Lamb there, supposes participation by us, fellowship with Him, according to the life which He will then and there display in glory; and (mark it) it is not creation- but redemption-glory; and in heaven, not upon earth. The infinitely blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; heaven (as well as earth) re-arranged and arranged according to a new

order; and the Son of God, as son of man, the center of the whole scene of glory, the Church with Him, object of His love, sharer of the glory then, as she even already is of the life of her exalted Head; and, therefore, now of His suffering.

The living-soul life of Creation's fairest scene would not do for participation in The Almighty Quickener's higher scene, divine and heavenly as it is, of His redemption-glory. The second Adam, therefore, is a life-giving spirit; and we have eternal life in Him, and derived from Him, that we may be able to taste, and share, and enjoy, and do honor to heavenly courts above.

" Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life " (Job 2:4), was the estimate which Satan formed of man; yea, and that if thou "but put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, he will curse thee to thy face." Man, in his own power, cannot stand-human purpose will go but a little way in following Christ. "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice" (John 13:38). But Paul's strength was not in the flesh, but in the spirit; and the power on which he counted, when he thus wrote, was that of which our Lord spake to Peter. " Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He, signifying by what death He should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow me " (John 21:18,19).

The point, however, which I more especially wished to notice, was the difference between Paul's willingness to die and to live with the Corinthians, according to the life of his own body, and his being dead with Christ, and living together with Him in the spirit. In the former case, he had a life which he was willing and ready to lay down, to pour out, to make a libation of to God, if the life which the disciples had, needed it in any way. He would that his life should be preserved or sacrificed, according as the preservation or the sacrifice of life seemed most expedient. In the second case, Christ had penally died, because he, Paul, was morally dead; he was counted dead; counted himself so: but He had life in common with Christ, who was risen from the grave; and this life was eternal life; a life which he, Paul, never could lay aside, which never could see death; the power and worth of which would only come out the more, if he had to lay down his bodily life, and to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord.)

Napoleon (the first) spent his life in efforts to throw down all that belonged not to him, and to gather it up again for himself. Wellington's public course, as soldier, was not marked thus, by selfish lawlessness, but as a servant of the king, under whom God's providence had cast his lot. He labored, as a servant, to counterwork the enemies of his king and country. In their service his mortal life was carried in his hand, ever ready, for their benefit, to be laid down. Paul, in the power of a new eternal life given to him, held his mortal life as ever ready to be laid down, if the Christ, whom he served, could be served thereby, even in the needs and wants of His feeblest members here below. But the new life was the medium through which his object was seen and sought after. Jesus, in heaven above, the Lord of all, Himself the center and end of all the divine counsels, was He in whom the Spirit had revealed to Paul, what the fountain-spring of his new life was. Christian you have to live herebelow, as being yourself, already, an integral part of that glory, which has yet to be revealed to mortal eyes, though known now to faith: as being yourself, already, one connected with, and knowing yourself to be connected with, that same Jesus, Lord of all, who sits

in heaven, center and end of all God's counsels, thoughts, desires, and plans. Have you realized this? Are you living in the power of such a life at this present time? The eternal life, which will be displayed in glory hereafter, is now connected, now connects itself, has now (properly) no connection with anything looked at as apart from, and not a subject of interest to, Jesus, sitting as Lord, at the right hand of the Father.

Fellowship With Christ: 7. Sitting Together With Him in Heavenly Places

"And made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6).

The words, made sit together, are here the rendering into English of a compound verb, which is made up of a preposition, expressing "together with," and a verb signifying to seat, set, make sit. This verb, in its uncompounded form, is that which is used to mark the position of the blessed Lord Jesus since His ascension into heaven. We will turn to some of the places of its occurrence; for instance:-

First: Eph. 1:20, "He [the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory]... raised Him from the dead, and set Him or made him sit] at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (20-23). The context which I have quoted shows here, that "recognition in glory is the leading idea of the whole portion. The Lord Jesus Christ took a servant's place. As Son of Man He could say, "My God," to Him to whom we through grace, say "Our God" (John 20:17). Here the action is from God Himself as such: the God of our Lord Jesus Christ -the Father of Glory, has acted towards Him in a way to mark His estimate of Him, and hath declared it in the Word to us, that we, having the eyes of our understanding enlightened, as well as being endowed with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, might know these things about the Christ.

The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, hath made Him (who said of Himself, when upon earth, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head"), to sit down at His own right hand in heaven; and hath heaped upon Him there titles of honor and glory. The making Him sit at His own right hand, marks in this place, the character of the Divine recognition of His worthiness who is so placed,-the conferring upon Him the honor that is due. That the word, "seated," "made sit," suggests naturally enough the idea of personal rest, is true, as we shall see shortly from other passages in which it is used; but, then it is used here in connection with the thought of glory, and in those other passages as connected with the taking of a position which supposed a certain work or character of service ended. And this makes an important difference. Very similar to this in some respects is-

Secondly: Heb. 1:3, "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; 'who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down [took His seat] on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (2, 3).

It is to be remarked, that the action here is on the part of the Son: not viewed in that character of glory attaching to Him as the Son of the Father, but in that which He has as Son of God. Having

made by Himself purgation of sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. It is there we see Him, crowned with honor and glory. Office and service are in this passage not at all the question - but rather the glorious position and honor taken by Himself and recognized as justly His by God, and owned with joy to be His by those who have faith. He is at rest in glory; His humiliation ended and in contrast with it; glory in the Majesty of the highest taken by Himself; owned by God to be His, in that He has crowned Him with honor and glory;- but, if thus personally glorified, He there waits, amid the glory proper to Himself which he alone from among men could occupy, until He can take that glory which He can share with His people. He sits at that right hand until the time come for His taking the kingdom. His position is looked at as in glory in chapters 1 and 2, and having glories many connected with it; but the idea of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man, is not introduced until the third chapter. This is to be noticed, the rather because, afterward, the same idea of His session is introduced again, after various functions which connect themselves with worship have been treated of (see chap. 10) Government and worship are two truths inseparable from the thoughts when God, known as He is now, is revealed. In chaps. 1 and 2, many allusions are made to government as to man under God's direction. With chap. 3 truth about worship begins, and in chap. 8:1, we find the supremacy of Christ in the connection noticed.

We will turn now to this passage. " Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum. We have such a high priest, who is set [or seated] on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Both these passages (1:3 and 8:1) ascribe the highest place to the Christ, but the former refers rather to dominion, and the latter to worship. Both tell of the pre-eminence of His glory.

Again; in another passage the stress is not laid upon the glory in which He sits, nor upon that which attaches to Him who sits, but there is a contrast marked between the position of standing and sitting. Under the law " every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10.11, 12).

The many priests, typical, all of them, of THE ONE which was to come; daily ministering and oftentimes offering,-one sacrifice and only one; standing too to do the work seated because the work was ended; these are the points set in contrast. The Levitical priest necessarily had to repeat the sacrifice, because the tabernacle was on earth, and merely served the glory of God as King of Israel, and the needs of that people, and was done in a cycle of time which was limited to a year. Christ shed His blood on earth but presented Himself, in the power of the blood, in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man; His work subserved the glory of God, as God, for eternity, and also the needs of all that believe, whether heaven or earth be the place in which they are met by God; and His work was done in God's own eternity. " Forever sat down on the right hand of God," may very well apply to the work which is the subject of the passage,-which does not treat of the place where Christ's ultimate glory is to be, nor of what is His present service, but of the value of the atonement offered on that great day of atonement in which He presided:-the work was done;-ended forever; and, as to it, He sat down. Most reasonably, too, because by that " one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (ver. 14) Now if I, by faith in the blood, am sanctified, I am by that one offering perfected forever: my conscience has for its answer before God, that which God has done in order to justify Himself in acting in mercy as on the throne of

heaven: Christ, who has the full understanding of God's estimate of things, and of the correctness thereof also, could not assert there was need still of sacrifice without disparaging His own work and God's estimate of it; and the soul's estimate (that it needs nothing further as to sacrifice) is thus shown to be correct.

Again; where the subject is (not the completeness and sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, once and only once offered, -but) the sympathies of Christ towards His suffering, faithful witness (as in Acts 7:55,56), there the Lord Jesus is represented (not as sitting down, but) as standing up.

" He [Stephen] being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And said Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

On the other hand, again, where not sympathy with sufferers, still in the wilderness, is the subject, but ceasing (not from priestly offering - because Himself was the only one that could be offered and had been offered and accepted, but) from His sufferings as Man of Sorrows, is the topic, we find rest marked by the word sitting.

" Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God " (12:1, 2). Truly He is in glory; but it is a glory the rest of which is set in contrast with the path-way of sorrow which led to it, and the which we now have to tread. A verse similar in some respects is Rev. 3:21. " To Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set [or seated] with my Father on His throne." A rest in glory, ordained in love, is the conqueror's prize, or one of the many prizes with the thoughts of which our Lord cheers our hearts.

Installation in office" seems the force of the word as used in chap. 20:4. "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them," etc. Kings and priests they were before this --- and had known it. Welcomed to His presence they had been-glory had begun-but the being seated upon the thrones and reigning with Him now began.

From these blessed verses, some correct idea may easily be gleaned of what the spirit of God's thoughts are, as connected with the session of Christ at the right hand of God. " The Christ " as a Jewish hope for the earth was to be a king and to have subjects; but the Lord Jesus, as such, was rejected; and in the writings of Paul to the Ephesians, we find who " the Christ" is who is heaven-welcomed, when He was earth-rejected. He was given to be Head over all things to His Church, which is (as the body, with its many members, is to the head)- needful to make up the perfect man. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, knows us as members of His body, as one Spirit with the Lord. And, accordingly, not only is no separation possible between the Head and the members, but the member is, necessarily and always, looked upon by God as a member and seen as a member of the body of which Christ is Head. Did He take His life again? We were quickened together with Him. Did He leave the grave and show Himself alive again? We have life together with Him. Is He ascended up on high? We are ascended up together with Him. Has God seated Him at His own right hand in heavenly places? God sees us as seated or made to sit together with Him in the heavenly places likewise. More blessed, far more blessed, than the

glory, or the privilege, or the honor, is this grand truth of our identification, in the divine mind, with the person of Christ Himself. He the Head - we but members (it is true); but what union, what fellowship, is like the union, the fellowship of life - one life in common! And, al, we have a life, His own life, so entirely in fellowship, so inseparably in union with the Christ who is sitting on high in the heavenly places, that God speaks about us (feeble yet rich) as having been made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places. It is an accident, a passing accident, that our bodies are still down here: let the Christ but rise up from the Father's throne (His Father's and ours) and we are found body, soul and spirit there where we now are; that is now through the life which is in the Christ who is there, and in us who are down here. It is an anomalous, abnormal, state of things for a man to have his body upon earth, but to have a divine and heavenly life flowing through him from heaven and back to heaven. This life is an eternal reality, the Head and Source of it is Christ, and the vital union which we have with Him is a much more real and powerful and important thing than the accident of our bodies being down here. I find that many really overlook the unity of the life of the Christ and His members; they may think of a store of life in Him in God for them; they may admit that He has given to them eternal life; that the Spirit dwells in them to nourish an incorruptible seed, etc.; but the UNITY OF LIFE between themselves and the Christ they do not see or own; and, therefore, they cannot act on and from it. All of those in whom the Spirit of God and of Christ dwells are, really, vitally one with the Christ who is on high. The union is in the Spirit, but it actually exists and is known to us to exist - and it is a union which excludes forever the idea of separation between the Head and members. To see it and to enjoy it and the grace which has made it ours, gives intelligence to the mind and warmth to the affections of the believer, such as naught else can; an intelligence and affection such as are needful for the heavenly walk here below of any who are sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty.

I have sometimes thought that there is no part of the doctrine of the fellowship of the believer with Christ, which shows the reality of its being a fellowship in life, so markedly as the passage before us, and others like it, which show the recognition by God of our union with His Son as the Christ, in the interval which takes place between Christ's rejection by man, and His taking possession of the glory which is yet to be conferred upon Him. The Son of God, " being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. 2:6); As Son of the Father we read of Him: " No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18). Divine glory was proper to Him. He had glory with the Father before the world was (17:5). When He became Son of Man, in grace and mercy He became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,-that so (for so alone it could be), He might share the titles of glory pertaining to the Son of Man, with others from among men. His work on earth finished, but the earthly people not being ready to receive the blessing, yea rejecting it,-He went on high, and took His seat there on the throne of the Majesty in the Highest; glorified as Son of Man with the glory which He had as Son of God with the Father before the world was.

It is not that there is more than one power of blessing, permanent, lasting blessing, whether for Jew, Gentile, or the Church of God. But that which, according to divine wisdom, gives its characteristic form and limit to the power when in action in those that are blessed - is the relationship in which the various parties (all partakers of one power) stand in Christ, and this relationship is connected with the place in which they meet God and the Lord. So seemed it meet to divine wisdom. We meet God in Christ on the throne, and know that which God has been

pleased to reveal in the unveiled face of His Son, earth-rejected, but seated upon the throne of God, and in the glory which He had with the Father, as Son of God, before the world was. But He is not there without our being recognized as being there, even there in Him: made us sit together with Him in the heavenly places. This marks, to me at least, how dear to the mind of God and the Father the thought -the truth - of the vital union of Christ and the Church is: for when He is marking the Christ's presence with Himself during the now, nearly, two thousand years of His sitting there as Son of Man, we are made by God to be sitting together in Him. Our minds may more readily lay hold of the thoughts, " crucified together with," "dead together with," " buried together with;" because the first thoughts which such doctrines communicate to us are of liberation from ruin; or, again, we may find in " quickened together with," "having life together with," " raised up together with," " ascended together with "- that which, while it speaks of life, as the others do of freedom from death, present actions more connected with the movements of the Christ in doing work given to Him to do.

But in this His present position, there is something very peculiar; - it is an ad interim position - His highest personal glory is recognized. None but He could sit where He does; to share that part of the glory of God, as He does, He must be God; and He is there as Son of Man, in a certain sense abnormally, for the throne of God and the Father are not the spheres of the display of His glory as Son of Man: yet most blessed is He there, and His having been there so long recognized in that glory as Son of Man, will cast a peculiar light on all the glory that is yet to come. For God will associate Himself with the Son of Man in His special glory, even as He has associated the Son of Man with the fullness of His Divine and Fatherly glory. But then, what a marvelous place this is for Him to recognize the unity of the Church with the Son of Man in - seated together with Him in heavenly places. The thought, the plan, the accomplishment of this marvelous work of the Church, the Bride of Christ, is all divine. And, blessed be God! there is divine power ready to make it known to us to make it enjoyed by us - power sufficient to clear out room for God and this blessing even in this poor heart of mine; -power and readiness to make the cup flow over on every side with the blessing given.

This may be a good place to introduce some passages of Scripture, in which the most intimate and blessed associations are presented as resulting to the believer, through that root of all his blessedness, viz., association and vital union with the Christ of God. And the rather, do I introduce these passages here, because they show at once the marvelous delight which God has in the Church, and, consequent thereon, the marvelous privileges He had, of His own rich and boundless grace, prepared for her even from before the foundation of the world.

The passages to which I advert are these:-

1. 1 Cor. 3:9: "We are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

Who then was Paul; who was Apollos? Servants by whose instrumentality the Gospel was preached which these Corinthians had believed. But He about whom the Gospel was, even the God of Mercy and Compassion, who had placed all His glory in the cross of the Christ,- He it was, and He alone, who chose the messengers of His Gospel and went with them, " even as the Lord gave to every man." And more than this; for He not only went with them, but caused all the blessing which attended their service. A Paul might plant, an Apollos might water, but it was God alone that gave the increase. " Neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth; but God

that giveth the increase." He is All. It is all one who plants and who waters, and yet every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. " For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." What honor will not grace, free grace, put upon its servants: God has a tillage - God has a building. Does God use any man in connection with His tillage, with His building? He useth them not as dead tools, but as quickened saints, made willing in the day of His power. In that tillage, in that building, all is of God; and God is the all - for blessing. Yet He puts this honor upon His servants to enable them to say, "We are laborers together with God." What is the energy of an Alexander, of a Caesar, of a Napoleon, compared to that energy which wrought in a Paul, in an Apollos? What the prize of present self-exaltation for a moment which the former sought, compared with the present exaltation which leads on to a " forever of blessedness," which the latter possessed. The presence of God, of God in power working,- may well prostrate every soul before it,-must prostrate every soul that knows what it is: but if, on the one hand, it prostrates self with an " it is not anything " (ver. 7); on the other hand, how does it exalt the servants in giving them power to say, " We are laborers together with God." Such things were never said, save of a people who were one spirit with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word here used is the noun *συνεργός*, or co-laborer; one associated in work with another. It is the very same word as is found in Rom. 16:3, 9, 11. The leading subject of a context always, however, of course has to be borne in mind: in the passages already looked at, God is the All, though in grace He may be pleased to energize and work through man; and because a man's affections, thoughts and energy are thus through grace energized by God - what the man was in Himself is counted dead and buried - and he living; yet not he, but Christ living in him - therefore God speaks of such as workers together with Him. In the passages which follow, all that are such are looked upon as fellow-laborers the one of the other. Thus:-

Rom. 16:3: "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus."

Rom. 16:9: "Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ."

Rom. 16:21: "Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius salute you."

May our hearts not only know fellowship with a Paul in his labors, and the sufferings which are connected with it, but also the fellowship of that Almighty grace with all the blessing and liberty which are connected with it, and which formed to Paul the basis and root of his very life, as well as of all the proceeds of it.

2. My next passage is 2 Cor. 6:1, " We then, as workers together with Him, beseech... that you receive not the grace of God in vain " [or as a vain, light, empty thing].

Here the word used is the verb, which corresponds to the substantive, which is used in the last cited passages. The two passages are very similar, yet there is a difference: in that which we have looked at, the field of labor is the Church which is upon earth; Paul might plant, as a master builder lay the foundation of churches; Apollos might water them. Neither Paul nor Apollos were anything, but God was the Blessor. Yet He that was the Blessor called those through whose labors He wrought His fellow-workers. What ineffable grace! In this passage: The Lord, before whose judgment man shall stand (ver. 10), has provided a Gospel of good tidings of great joy. That Gospel had made. Paul manifest before God (ver. 11), and manifest also before those among whom he labored. And what had it manifested? That if Paul was beside himself it was to God (ver.

13); if sober, he was so for the sake of those among whom he labored. For the love of Christ led him captive in its blessed constraint; a love which declared, that as Christ had died, so all that believed in Him were dead together with Him; and that His object in doing this for all His people was, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again. This set Paul altogether in another system of things than that of this world; and, consequently, he knew no man after the flesh; Christ he had known after the Spirit, all things took their place accordingly. If any man were in Christ, he was a new creature; old things were passed away; a new order of things was introduced - not yet in glory, but yet in the principle of all true glory and blessedness,-all things are of Him who, first, has reconciled us to Himself, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and who, thereupon, has committed to us the ministry of reconciliation. Such was His love. Not merely to make us new creatures, but to give us to know all things to be of Him who hath reconciled us to Himself; and having done so, has identified us with the work in which He, in His love, is occupied-a work which our own salvation, position of blessing, new life and privileges have made dear to us - viz., the announcing of His own character and Gospel. It is not, merely, that we are called to plead with poor sinners, " Why will ye die?" " We beseech you receive not the grace of God in vain," etc., etc. (as in ver. 1, which is our text); but more than this, we are associated by God with Himself as the One who is revealing Himself; who has committed the word of reconciliation to us who have tasted it, for ourselves know the mercy of God; the work by which that mercy opened a way for itself to us, and for us to it; we have tasted the suitability of it to ourselves and to poor sinners; we know, too, how God delights in it (vers. 18-21), and who, if He bids us, invite and bid those whom we may meet, is Himself standing to welcome those that come. For He saith, "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Context is always the safest medium in which to look at a text. And while these two texts are verbally very similar, the light of the respective contexts gives a difference. In the former, the writer speaks as laboring in the Church upon earth; in the latter, as laboring in the light of the throne of the Lord of Judgment, and as proclaiming His mercy and the glad tidings, that " He who knew no sin [the Judge] had been made sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." In this service he was associated by grace with the work, and with all the affection, too, of God.

Mark 16:19,20, " So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following."

Rom. 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

James 2:22, "Seest thou how faith wrought with His works."

The faith was the energizing power - the works the fruit of it. All these passages give the idea and sense of co-operation - working together with-in the fullest sense in which the subjects of them admit; and thus they confirm what has been just said.)

3. I turn now to Eph. 2:19, in which we get another kind of intimate and blessed association referred to; and it also is one of the blessed consequences of this our fellowship together with Christ. " Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." The "ye" refers to the believing Ephesians, who had been,

however, heathens, and as such had not had, like the Jews, any place in connection with God in the world - without God in the world. For this expression does not mean that they had been godless, and in the wickedness of the world as individuals; that, alas! many of the Jews were also but that the Gentiles, as such, had no religious connection marked out for them with the only thing which was recognized before God as religious upon earth, viz., the Jew. Such they had been. With Jewish worship they had had nothing to do. But now, since they believed in the Christ risen and ascended, they had a most special connection as such with God in heaven; they were among His heavenly holy ones, of His household (inmates of His house), this they had found, as we have seen, through and in the Christ, each one for himself had found it, each one been found of God - there was fellowship in the citizenship of all such, whether they had been drawn off Jewish or off Gentile ground. They were fellow-citizens of (co-citizens with) the holy ones (of heaven), and parts of God's family. " Our free-citizenship is in heaven " 3:19).

It is only when the scope of the Epistle to the Ephesians is weighed, and the peculiarity of its blessings, as contrasted with all earthly blessing, is considered, that the amazing blessedness of this portion of being co-citizens with the holy ones of heaven and of the household of God will be seen. But this rank, this fellowship, is to each of us but one of the many blessings resulting from our association in life with the Son of Man. They that are so have, most surely, their greatest of blessings in the association which they have with Himself- that is in life and in association, as of a member with the Head, of all that is His: it brings them, into certain privileged associations in service, through the purest grace, with God; but it sets them also, as here, all of them, in most blessed association the one with the other, in a freedom of the city which is in heaven, and in the liberty of the Father's house, too. And so entirely are these things linked together in one, in the Spirit's mind, that no sooner has the apostle named this privilege of being " fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," than he immediately goes on to speak of being " built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.... builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

4. There is another verse in which a somewhat similar kind of blessing is referred to, which we will now look at: -

" That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel " (Eph. 3:6). All is in Christ; all our blessings of whatsoever kind have their root and source in Christ. Nothing which has not Him for its root is blessing, or could be given to us by God as if it were counted by Him as fit to be a blessing to us.

The participation here looked at is in three things: 1st. A place in the expectation of the inheritance; 2ndly. A place in the body; and 3rdly. A place in the good promise- all three belonged to as many of these poor Ephesians (Gentiles though they had been) as believed,- a place in common with those from among the Jews also who had believed,-but the place was in Christ and in Him alone, and " in Him " was the participation found; for the inheritance was His; He also was Head of His body the Church; and in Him alone any promise could stand true; and all were yea and amen in Him, to the glory of God by us. He who had been a Gentile idolater might meet in Christ, one who had been a Pharisee of the Pharisees -but in Christ the old history of each lost its place of pre-eminence; once in Christ, and you are there where all is governed, and arranges itself

according to a new order, even according to God's delight in Christ, who is the Heir; the Head of the body, the Church; and His are all the promises of God. Some, in handling this verse, have made so much of the union of believers from among the Jews and the Gentiles, that they have overlooked the questions of "union in what?" and "union in whom?"

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek; they that are in Him are a heavenly people; they are, through grace, all fellow-heirs, the one with the other, in that inheritance which is due to Him in whom they are; together they form a body, each one a member in particular of the body (and so they are united one to the other) of which He is the Head; even as each of them has shared, like all the rest, in the promise. Various as the privileges are in which they have community, one with the other, those privileges are one and all in Christ, and Christ is the alone way into the possession of them.

The following passages naturally connect themselves with the subject, and show, in a striking way, the nature of the tie which binds the members together, after first uniting them to the head.

Eph. 2:20,21, " Jesus Christ Himself being the chief, corner-stone: in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

Eph. 4:15,16, " Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together.... maketh increase of the body," etc.

In both of which passages, the word which expresses the joining together in one, is συναρμολογουμενος.

In the passages in Ephesians, this intimacy of adaptation of the parts one to the other, to accomplish a common end, is evident. First, in the building, Christ is the chief corner-stone, elect, precious, of a holy temple to the Lord;-and then each stone which is in Him is adjusted and nicely made to fit in to its own reserved, prepared place for the accomplishment of this common end. Secondly; in the body, Christ is the Head; each member in particular is a member of Christ, and as such has a place nicely suited to it in the body, in which it gets relationship with other members. But no member can speak of being member of another member; that would be to make that other member head, and to displace Christ, as did some at Corinth. The body is the body of Christ, and each one a member in particular; and because a member in particular of that body of which Christ is Head, having both responsibility as such towards the other members, and also, what is far better, having the privilege to be used as such by the Head for the blessing of the rest of the members.

Exact adaptation to places so near to Christ, when the temple (habitation of God), and when the body of the Christ are in question, is a precious privilege. In both cases, it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Lord's Spirit; and unites - if forever - to scenes in which God and the Lamb will be the glory, yet unites us (men who believe in Christ during the days of His rejection) in one bundle of life, in the which not our individuality, but Christ's (as a man - a heavenly man) will have all the pre-eminence.

Then, again, we have the word συμβιβω used as in Eph. 4:16, and Col. 2:2,19.

" From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the

body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16).

" I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you... and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" (Col. 2:1,2).

" The Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19).

The compacting, the knitting together is, in each case, by the power of the life of that body, the Head of which Christ is. Paul, looked at as an individual, was but a member in particular; so was Apollos, and so was Cephas. But the power of the Life which united them to the Head, gave them, subordinate always to Him, a power of fellowship - a compacting, a knitting, together the one with the other.

In our day vital union with the Christ has been too much considered as a high doctrine, the doctrine of the elder classes in the school of God. Alas! where recovered as the doctrine of the family of God as such -it has, in more cases than one, been so corrupted as that, while the fellowship of the members has been held to, it has not been kept subordinate to the Headship of Christ. And so the most precious truth has been turned against the Lord as the Former and Giver of it.

Hitherto we have seen three great and distinct things. 1st. God reckoning; 2ndly. God communicating; 3rdly. The position in blessedness (before God, and in the mutual bearing of the parts one with the other), of that in which the blessing of God has, in these last days, presented itself.

1st. God reckoning;- He reckoned unto Christ all that we were as men, descended from Adam, and all that we had done; visited it all on Him; and received as a ransom His life, given as Son of Man. He reckons these three things to be true of us who believe; and bids us to reckon them so concerning ourselves and to act thereon.

2ndly. God communicating. The Son of Man taking life in the grave, is the fountain whence divine life flows to us; but, if divine, it is yet divine life derived and suited to man;-it is life together with the Christ; the life in which He rose up out of the grave and, after showing Himself on earth, ascended up into heaven.

3rdly. The position in blessedness of that in which the blessing of God now presents itself.

In heaven we sit together with Christ - in heavenly places. Upon earth we are recognized as associated with the work which God is doing; as thoroughly identified with the city and house of God, and with the body and members of which Christ is Head: thoroughly so, because we are identified with these things in the power of a life which is Christ,-a life which is hid with Christ in God; our eternal life.

In what follows, we shall have to look (4thly) at what results from all this. Being made one with the Christ, already one with Him, two things naturally result. 1st. now we have to suffer with Him; and, 2ndly, we must hereafter be glorified together. Various kinds of suffering now may be ours, as

various kinds of suffering were His; the glory, too, may be looked at in a different way, in different Scriptures, as we shall see it is: but this must never be forgotten. As to all our pilgrimage and strangership here below (with all the vast variety of ways in which we may be called to suffer, from the world, the flesh and the devil); and as to all the life of honor and power hereafter; yet it must be remembered, that both the one and the other are to us the results -- necessary and inseparable results from vital union with the Christ of God. He took out of the way all that God had against us; He introduces us into that place, and those things into connection with us, which could enable God not only to have nothing to say against us, but to be able to delight in us; and all, in the power of that blessing which Himself had given as in Christ, to undertake to lead us to His own home, forming and fashioning our hearts, and teaching us His ways in contrast with our own, all through our wilderness pilgrimage. All the wrath due to us fell on the Christ - and it is finished. The cross has settled the whole question of God's wrath against ourselves who believe - Christ bore it all, and I that believe shall bear none; in Christ, too, the whole question of the acceptability and the character of the acceptability has been settled = He is risen and ascended: God has conferred every honor upon Him which even He had to give - conferred it upon Him as Jesus who died, the Just One for the unjust, and thus, the righteousness of God in Christ is inseparable from the full acceptance of the believer. The believer is accepted in (graced in) the Beloved. But the same grace which has linked us up to God by and in the Christ - has been pleased to link us up also with the fortunes of the Christ, both in this world and in that which is to come. In our next paper we shall, therefore, have to enter upon these results of the life so enjoyed by us already: viz.," that if so be we suffer now, we shall be glorified hereafter."

Fellowship With Christ: 8. Suffering Together With Him

Three passages in Scripture may serve as introduction for our meditation -

Rom. 8:17: " And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him [ἐ■περ συμ■σχομεν], that we may also be glorified together."

2 Tim. 1:8: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions [συγκακοπ■θησον] of the Gospel according to the power of God."

2 Tim. 2:12: " If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him' [ε■ ■πομ■νομεν κα■ συμβασιλε■σομεν].

The last of these passages (2 Tim. 2:12) connects and contrasts endurance, or patience, or the abiding under trial NOW, with the FUTURE sharing of Christ's dominion. Now, PATIENCE; then, DOMINION together with Christ. It is more specific in its statement than either of the other two: "Endurance, NOW; Dominion, THEN."

The second (2 Tim. 1:8) connects the suffering of afflictions (or the suffering of evil trials) with the work of the testimony of Paul, and invites others to share the trials. It naturally recalls to mind a well-known text in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which presents us with another witness, who lived in other days (chap. 11:24-26): " By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with [συγκακουχε■σθα] the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." In Egypt, honorable place; to be called son of Pharaoh's daughter; and treasures enough there to minister unto such the pleasures of sin for a season. But the faith which revealed God unto Moses, made Moses choose rather the afflictions of the people of God and the reproach of Christ. What had God and Egypt, or God and the house of Pharaoh, and the wealth of that house, in common? Nothing; and Moses knew this, and acted accordingly. The world of to-day is, according to God's word, to us Christians what Egypt was to Moses. Are our moral estimate of it, and our conduct towards it, similar to Moses's towards Egypt? [Reader, is your choice and is your taste practically the same as it was with Moses?] Whatever patience, what- ever afflictions attend now those who preach the Gospel, in all such, faith will claim its share.

But it is not, merely, that we must be patient while we wait for the kingdom which is ours, or that there are certain afflictions which naturally attend the labor which is given to the Lord's servant to do: the position he is set in, the people he is connected with, the work of testimony, will all bring sorrow now, 'tis true. But the teaching is wider in its scope still in our first text:-

For if we suffer together with Christ, brings before us the Son of man.

It was a free grace gift to the Philippians that Paul spoke of (chap. 1:29): " Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ., not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake; having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me." But then he goes on (in chap. 2), to show

them that there was yet more which was open to them to take up, even the acting as those who had the mind of Christ. For he was one who could say of himself, through grace, " Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church " (Col. 1:24).

The cross - that Christ had borne all alone: there He had taken to Himself alone all the wrath due to the sinner. But the cross was not all of the afflictions of Christ; there was that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for us also; and when we consider that " the sufferings of Christ" were testified of to prophets, by the Spirit, at a time when the revelation of what man was, was more the object of God's dealings than now, that, man having proved himself irremediably bad by his rejection of the Son of God's love, God is showing His own love towards man as a sinner; - when we consider this, I say, we must not be surprised to find those sufferings of Christ, which were experienced at man's hand, and as fruits of man's condition, largely unfolded in. the Old Testament. In many of these, the Apostle had his part, and bore, through grace, his share. Jealous against those who wished to avoid sharing these sufferings of Christ, he was fierce and altogether intolerant of those who pretended to set aside the wrath of God against sin in any other way than by the Cross of Christ, endured by Him alone on Calvary. No Apostle ever madly dreamed of himself sharing the wrath of God due to sin, which had been borne already by Christ the Just One, in place of the many unjust.

In the first eight Psalms I find no reference to the sufferings of atonement; but I cannot read those Psalms without those sufferings of Christ, in which the servant of God could share, being brought before me.

The perfection of the Blessed One, spoken of in Psa. 1, is thus laid down -" His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth He meditate day and night." But what the effect of that upon Himself, when the scene around presented nothing but the counsel of the ungodly, the way of sinners, the seat of the scornful? Isolation to one that loves communion; rejection to a heart whose affections are diffusive; sympathy with and dependance upon the Lord in such a scene- in a place loved of the Lord, but among a people who had no heart for the Lord - are all causes of suffering. But to be possessed by the word of God; to find its indwelling to be the very mark of one's course, and to know the sorrowful bearing of it upon those who shut it out, because of its contrast to their own plans, ways, and established purposes is deep sorrow to one who knows who and what God is, and sees who and what man is, to oppose himself to God. Now in all this, that which was fully developed in the Christ may be shared by all that ever had the spirit and faith of the Lord's elect.

In Psa. 2 we see that not only is man individually wicked, but that there is a power, governing the world as a whole, which leads to the thorough rejection from the earth both of Christ and those that are His.

The Lord Jesus tasted this fully and all alone; but Peter, James, and John tasted it together, when, as in Acts 4, they quote, as applying to both Christ's rejection and their own position, the close of Psa. 2. The world knows us not, because it knew Him not.

In Psa. 3 we find one with nothing but multitudes of difficulties before and around him, and no answer to any one of them save in the Lord. Who tasted this fully, save the Christ? Who ever really

walked with God, and has not, according to the measure of his faith, tasted it and its affliction?

It is a blessed thing, not without sweetness, though bitter be mingled with the sweet, when, amid the thousands and tens of thousands of trials, the soul's energy is roused, as in Psa. 4, by the sense of the contrast between its own integrity God-ward and the thorough corruption in wickedness of all around it; and this character of suffering has its own character of comfort-a character as peculiar to it as hope is the characteristic comfort of the state described in Psa. 1; waiting, of that of Psa. 2; strengthening of oneself in God, of that of Psa. 3

Appeal to God against the wicked characterizes Psa. 5, as patience under discipline and correction does Psa. 6, and appeal for judgment upon the enemy, Psa. 7.

The mind of Christ can be little known, if His sorrow as to the wickedness of the wicked round about Him is not known. His heart can have been but little revealed to us, if His sorrow as to the state of the nation Israel, brought low by discipline and correction, on account of its careless walk with God, has never been seen by us. How could He be indeed the Son, the Servant of God -the One on whom all the duties of the kingly, prophetic, and priestly offices of that nation devolved-and not feel sorrow at the discipline under which the nation was? And His hard words against the harder hearts of that generation of vipers-His weeping over Jerusalem, that stoned the prophets, etc., it was all a service of suffering to Him - a service in which, at however great a distance from Himself as to measure, yet a service of suffering, which Paul shared with his Master. " If so be we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together," is applicable to all this.

Psa. 8 is a psalm of glory; but as chap. ii. of Paul's Epistle to the Philippians teaches us, the glory due to the Son of man had a pathway of suffering and sorrow into it. He who was, according to Divine counsel, to be the center of a new system as Son of man, had to stoop to a path of suffering service, and to be obedient unto death - the death of the cross, ere He was to be highly exalted, and a name above every name given to Him, and be placed as Son of man at the Father's right hand. The cross is not looked at in Phil. 2 as the expression either of God's love to man in providing a Lamb, or of Christ's love to man in giving Himself, the Just One, in place of the many unjust; but as the expression of the perfection of His obedience-obedient unto death, the death of the cross. Blessed be God, we know that there, and there alone, that one thing without which God could not be just while justifying the sinner-without the knowledge of which no soul can ever have peacefully to do with God was found; but the object of the passage is not to show this, but another truth. And we neither honor God's word, nor show a sound mind, when we, however unintentionally, force passages to other than their simple meaning. Now the meaning of Phil. 2, as well as the object of the Apostle in his writing it, is to press practical conformity on the mind and conduct of the disciple, and not to show the enquirer where peace is to be found. And surely they who have known themselves so blessed with Christ, through grace, and have tried to exhibit the mind and walk of their Master, have known that it is a path of suffering, subjection, and of self-sacrifice.

The Old Testament believer must have found in the Psalms (not all that we find, but) a plain testimony that, independent of all blessings of God for a people on the earth, the household of faith, who always, somehow or the other, got tried, had to do with God in heaven. The pathway of their faith was always one of suffering.

These few remarks may suffice as to the fact of there being sufferings, quite separate from those of sin-bearing, or even of testimony, to the blessed Lord. If we stand upon the work He wrought in suffering upon the cross, we may share in His sufferings, in testimony, etc., and so only.

The life of the blessed Lord upon earth divides itself into three parts.

There is, 1st, His private life, from the birth to His public showing unto Israel; there is, 2ndly, His public life as a witness for God unto Israel; and there is, 3rdly, That part, alone, and in some sense, apart from the rest, in which He was bearing our sins in His own body on the tree.

A soul, taught of God, will have learned the difference for itself of the three, though it may never have marked off for itself the lines of distinction. The question of how God can receive a sinner, of how a sinner can go to God, cannot be seen save by the Cross, where all God's wrath went over Him who was the substitute. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us - that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. I have no idea of myself enduring the wrath of God, or any part of it, as of God against a creature: it would be to me eternal misery and ruin. God saw no way of introducing, and of making effective, his mercy to a creature, found on the ground of rebellion, save the Cross of Christ. And faith knows no other settlement of the question of man's guilt than this, that the whole penalty of it was borne by Christ - the just one in place of the many unjust.

That Christ suffered, in his life, for righteousness' sake; suffered as a righteous one, and as a righteous witness for all God's claims, and for pressing upon man his responsibility to God, cannot be denied. And so will those that are one with Him have to suffer. It would be impossible to hold the word of righteousness, and to urge God's righteous claims as Creator, God of providence, and God of government, and to urge man's responsibility to meet these claims in such a world as this, and not to suffer for it. But while Christ suffered for righteousness' sake perfectly - as some have done, and others now do, imperfectly - he introduced, so to speak, a new kind of suffering - for in Him first was presented openly God dealing in grace - " God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." It was not that responsibility in man ceased, but a new element was introduced which had in itself an entirely new character. Man had owed God for this and for that which God had vested in men. Creation, providence, government, all of them not only gave streams of blessing to man, but by those very streams made man responsible. But when Christ came, though he might and did recall all that blessing and responsibility to man's mind, He came into a ruined system as a Savior in grace, and this was quite another thing. If Israel would not own Jehovah dwelling between the cherubims, and so be kept from famine, hunger, sickness, and oppression, would they own Jehovah coming, as Son of Man, into the ruin which their sins had caused - a feeder of the hungry, a restorer of the sick, a Savior for the poor and the meek.

Such was the new position taken by God in Christ; everything due by man to God was pressed by Christ, but Himself was there the answer in grace to all the need. When he acts in righteousness, and sustains that righteousness with power, judgment will be revealed. But He acted in righteousness owned every claim of God - owned every debt of man - but stood in meekness and lowliness, offering Himself to meet all the claims, all the debts, and to do so at His own cost. He was thus thrust from the wall continually, and He bore it all in gentle meekness and patience.

The Apostles, and Paul especially, never for a moment thought of denying the righteous claims of God, or the responsibility of man as to creation, providence, and government - and they all

suffered for it; but the great characteristic of their suffering, together with Christ, was that they were witnesses of mercy and grace from God to man, through Christ, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, in resurrection. The very place that resurrection held as connected with their testimony -"Jesus and the Resurrection"- told how they had to hold themselves as sheep for the slaughter.

It is impossible to be possessed by the word of the Lord and not to suffer; and the word of Christ is inseparable from sufferings for grace's sake. I find many overlook the difference of suffering for righteousness' sake and suffering for the sake of grace.

But further, in the passage before us (Rom. 8:17) the suffering is clearly defined by the context. The question here is not about suffering for righteousness' sake, in any sense: neither in the sense that Abel did, who was slain because his own works were good, and he was hated by his murderer, whose works were evil; nor in the sense in which Jeremiah, and other of the prophets, suffered for a righteous testimony for God against an unrighteous people; neither, indeed, is the suffering in this passage limited to the sufferings which attend service and testimony, as connected with grace, as contrasted with righteousness. But the context defines a certain position, now the position of the possessors of faith; which position has privileges, power, hopes, and sufferings, connected with it. And most highly blessed as the position, the privileges, the possession of the power, and the enjoyment of the hopes so spoken of -they cannot be separated from a present suffering. Christ tasted death fully, and realized resurrection fully too to open that position. And though he has left no wrath for our souls to taste, and is Himself the resurrection and the life to us: yet does He give us to know practically the principles of death and resurrection; and that not only as perfectly set before us in principle, as realized by and in Himself, but because thus made true to us in the spirit, He adds to each member that has partaken in the blessing an experimental tasting of death and resurrection in themselves, and in their course through their circumstances.

Inseparable association with Himself, as the first-born among many brethren, is a preliminary to the suffering together with Him. He is in heaven now as Son of Man; but has there a heart to be touched with all that touches God and his people down here in the wilderness. If we want to have His standard of a walk in the wilderness, we have it perfectly given in His life when here below. But life, and the power to walk with Him, and (according to the measure of our faith) as He walked, begins to us only in our knowledge of Him gone on High, and remaining there for a season for our sake. And the power of continuance in this life is in communion with Him in heaven. In our introduction to Him there, and in our communion with Him there, we found, in the one, the beginning of power; and, in the other, the brook by the way to renew our power of being here below in affection, feeling, and thought, the present expressors of the mind of Christ, who is in heaven. Oh how fallen is all now-a-days Where are they who are practically showing out grace reigning through righteousness, as the witness of their present enjoyed association with the Son of Man in heaven. " If so be we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

In a world, the foundations of which are out of course, where the power of evil is dominant, and ourselves in bodies of sin and death; suffering is sure to be man's portion. The " sorrows of humanity" are not, however, the sufferings with Christ. The worldling shares them with us. And the only way in which we can have them connected with Christ is, if recognizing that all things are to us of Him, who hath reconciled us unto Himself, we bear them in Christ's strength, and for His

sake. In bearing them as a Christian, in the strength of Christ, there is a Christian's reward. Another kind of suffering there is, also, in which, though its sorrow come to us from our being true to God's claims, and true in recognizing our own responsibilities as creatures, we cannot be said to "suffer as a Christian," as Peter says (1Peter 4:16).

A broken limb, a fever, penury, may be common to me and to my unconverted neighbor - He may repine and I may find in each such sorrow, an occasion of patience, courage, and endurance, as becomes a Christian. Again, in many a question of governments, of commerce, etc., the fear of God, and respect to the just claims of man, will distinguish the consistent Christian from the worldling. But in neither of these two cases does the trial spring from the position in which the faith of Christ has set us; in neither case would a spirit-led heavenly-minded Christian act differently than would a righteous Jew, whose hopes and thoughts went not beyond the earth.

But there are sufferings which grow up out of faith in an earth-rejected and heaven-honored Christ, who, from heaven, has revealed Himself, through faith. Christ has His sympathies and His feelings about things down here, and has a path of sorrow, of death, and resurrection, for His chosen flock to pass through. The sufferings of that path, grow up out of fellowship in life with Christ, and are the expression of intelligence in His mind, and of sympathy with His heart. Such are the sufferings, together with Christ, which we are considering.

Pilgrimage and strangership here below; the exercise of heart and mind as seeking His honor among His people; the sorrows of the failure of the testimony, and of the weak state of the flock, with all the suffering that comes out of the holding the position of being one, practically one, one in heart and mind, one in interests and in feelings (alas! how little do we attain to it) with a heaven-honored Christ, who is ever seen to us by faith, while we are in the place where and whence He was rejected, and which, as a place, knows us not, because it knew Him not; these are the sort of sorrows which are meant by suffering as a Christian. His anointing is upon us, and we are one with Him; and we must needs suffer, as ourselves dying daily, if the life of Christ is to be made manifest in us.

All God's counsels turn around the Anointed One, so to speak. Because the Son of Man is on high, creatorial, providential, and dispensational, purposes all stand fast, and can be acted upon or towards by God: I cannot doubt but that, because Messiah is on high, Israel is remembered on high; because the Messiah, who is the head of government and worship upon earth, is on high, therefore, also, the nations, as they are, and the nations as they shall be, are thought of and acted towards. But then the spiritual heavenly believer, while his faith sees all this, and finds joy as to Christ, and rest as to himself in it, knows that the range of life, and of the positive action of the Spirit in life, and as the Comforter or Paraclete is circumscribed. The Lord Jesus has a present testimony connected with His present place, and the Paraclete, has a present work connected with the present faith. God made us what we are, and God found us where we were, and God sees us where we are; but that which is of us while it may be, and is, the occasion for God and Christ to be recognized and honored by us, is a very different thing from that which flows out of the anointing; which is connected with the Person of the Anointed One who is in heaven, and which we have to live out, and act out, and own here, according to the mind of Christ, and by the Spirit. This, in every part of it, is connected with divine and heavenly grace; but to us, if living in it, with suffering. Not only did the Son of God learn obedience as Son of man, by the things which He suffered, but,

further, it was impossible for the life of God to be perfectly displayed in such a world as this, save amid sufferings. Mercy needs circumstances of need and want in which to show itself. And mercy cannot see such circumstances without a correct, and to itself, a sad, estimate of them in themselves, and of the sin which has produced them.

Man may see affliction, and may try to alleviate it, without our hearts really tasting the bitterness, not of those in the circumstances only, but of what caused the circumstances. It was never so with Christ; is never so with the spirit-led man, so far as he is really taught of God. And who can see what the fallen state of the church is, what the triumph of evil, what the supremely good opinion man has of himself is now, and see it with eyes enlightened by the glory of Christ, and with affection quickened towards Christ by the Spirit, and not find a world of woe for him, as a Christian, as one who cares for God and His Christ, as one who enters into and sympathizes with Christ in His thoughts, and feelings, and desires, for the glory of God, and the blessing of the people of God down here on earth. Such is the fellowship of his sufferings. To enter into His sympathies - to sympathize with Him, and to live out that sympathy, is " suffering together with Christ."

Fragment: Divine Counsel

It is the same divine counsel that has placed the Christ upon the throne of the Father, and which has arranged all according to his glory - which has also decided who of us in that day shall be alive on the earth to await Him; and who of us, also, He shall have to bring down as having been previously absent from the body and present with Himself.

Fragment: Heaven

" You tell me I am dying, and urge me to say whether or not I think that I am going to heaven. - What is the heaven you mean?"-" To be with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and to be with Him - forever and ever - is what I mean by heaven."

Fragment: the Church

Is there, anywhere upon earth, anything to which we can turn and say, according to the truth of God, and with certainty in our own minds as we point to it, "The Father worketh herein and the Son also"? Most assuredly, Yes. The Church of the living God is still upon earth, and that Church is the workmanship of God - is the subject and field of the operations of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Yes! God is working a work upon the earth; a work, too, which was counseled from everlasting, which is for God's own eternity, and for Himself and His Son, in that eternity. Let this be once seen as to the Church, and man (the renewed, saved man) will see how near he is to the work of God. Questions will, then, surely follow to each one - questions, such as, " How far do I understand God's thoughts in the Church?" - " How far am I practically working together with God in this matter," or " How far is my life, here below, practically inconsistent with the present aim and the present object of God in this His work?"

It is not merely eternal life to one's own soul, but eternal life connected, through the Spirit of God, dwelling in a body which is seen in the Church, upon earth; a body which is made responsible for the honor and the glory of the Lord; a body, in which God not only forms by faith the souls of His own for eternity, but which He has placed as a pattern to show forth that which is to come.

Eternal salvation to each soul individually is through faith in the Lord Jesus; - but the individuals so saved were to be gathered together, in each place, under the present guidance, corporately, of the Holy Ghost; - and be the body which is responsible for the truth and the honor of the Lord.

Fragment: the Glory of Christ

When Jesus is testified of to the saints of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he who speaks, loses sight of himself, and his audience; and his audience lose sight of themselves and the speaker; and the vision of each is filled with the glory of Christ.

" If we seek and receive honor one of another, and not that which cometh from God only," these blessings cannot be realized. " He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."

H.P.

Fragments

What loss the gain is when, in collecting, or enlarging knowledge, we lose simplicity and affection. I should like to see them [at-] in their simplicity, and be refreshed by their faith. May we only the more long for the time of perfection. The fragments will surely be gathered up at last. Not one shall be lost -not a fragment of the joy of the Spirit shall be lost; but the bright spots of the soul shall be fixed there in their full beauty forever, though now they seem at times to disappear.

The Lord's relationship to the world was perfect in moral dignity. He was a Conqueror, a bitterer, and a Benefactor in it. Such a combination is wonderful and excellent indeed.

He was ever serving that world, the course and pollution of which made Him a Conqueror; the iniquity and contradiction of which made Him a Sufferer. He was never overcome of evil, but ever overcame evil with good.

Fragments

The Turn Of Time.-" When things come to the worst, then they begin to mend. And now at the worst they assuredly were; so this was the turning-point-the cold hour before the dawn."

Home.-" I wonder shall I ever see you all again! In my thoughts I dwell with you; in my dreams I tread the green fields of home, and pluck those flowers that too soon wither in my grasp; - for I wake and find myself in a foreign land."

God Unchanging

" The skies have been wondrously grand of late; such a magnificent array of stars thrown out on that dark back-ground. This evening, however, I was walking by the sea, it was cold, windy, and cloudy; not a star to be seen. It suddenly struck me: there they are though, all those shining myriads, and that lovely milky way, as bright as ever; though unseen, no change in them, however clouds may fill these lower heavens. The thought was cheering, So is God: no change in Him, or in His love, however dark and cloudy our poor hearts may be. Oft am I thrown on such thoughts as these: without them what and where, in this dark and lonely world, should we be The only relief is to look right into the very heart of God, and there to find out love.

" I have been out again-the clouds are partly gone - and there (as I said) are still those beautiful constant stars-as bright and lovely as ever."- Wetton.

God Who Gave the Blood to Screen Us

God who gave the blood to screen us,
God looks down in perfect love;
Clouds may seem to pass between us,
There's no change in Him above.

Heads of Psalms: Book 1

In the first place we get, in Psa. 1, the righteous man; and, in Psa. 2, the counsels of God as to Messiah. Then, in general, Psa. 3-7, the sufferings of Christ in the remnant, whether from enemies or from a sense of their own state; and in result, VIII., the Son of Man set over all the works of God's hands.

In 9 and 10, we get particulars of God's executing judgment against the heathen in Zion, in favor of the needy; and, in particular, the ways of the wicked one.

In 11-15, the sentiments and spirit of the remnant,-the moral movements of their heart in this time of trial.

16, The place Christ Himself takes in His dependance, in trusting in the time of humiliation; • ending in His joy in God's presence in resurrection. XVII, His appeal to right, which ends in His being displayed in glory, as man of course; a lower kind of thing, but still a part of His glory,

In 18, the sufferings of Christ are made the center of all God's ways in Israel, from Egypt to the manifestation of the glory of Messiah.

19. The testimony of creation and of the law; according to the letter of which the remnant presents itself in conscience before God.

In 20, the remnant prophetically sees Christ in His day of trouble, and in His sufferings from man,-in which God hears Him in order to His establishment in His royal rights. 21. He is answered with length of days forever and ever, and excellent majesty; and judges His enemies. 22. He is in sorrow, in which no remnant can enter; in which, through all the concentration of evil from without, He finds the forsaking of God within, instead of answer to His confidence: but, when He had drank the whole cup, He was answered in resurrection, and all flows forth in unmingled blessing; first, to the remnant, immediately consequent on His resurrection saluted as "brethren," with whom He unites Himself in spirit, as He says, "In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee;" then, to all Israel; then, to all the ends of the world: the testimony of that which is done going down to other generations.

23. He takes the place of the sheep on earth. 24. He is saluted as "Jehovah of Hosts," and "King of Glory."

25-28. In general, the exercises of the renewed love (in the remnant always), in confidence in the Lord; consciousness of integrity through grace; consciousness of sin; and earnest desire not to be drawn away with the wicked,-counting on the Lord's having called them to seek His face.

29. God's voice (not the still small voice) the answer to it all. 30 and 31. Enjoyment in the sense of this interference of God (still through in the trouble). 32. Forgiveness and guidance (still in the remnant). 33. Creation and the counsels of God in favor of His people give confidence. 34. What God has been for Messiah in His sufferings gives confidence. 34-39. We find them in the presence

of the power and prosperity of the wicked, with the sense of having deserved judgments and having been under chastening, though their cry is to the Lord who chastened them.

40. Christ undertaking the accomplishment of the divine will in perfect obedience; His perfectness shown in waiting, etc. 41. In this last psalm of the book, all the humiliation and bitterness to which He exposed Himself in the accomplishment of it; but in which He is assured to be set before God's face forever.

There is a very distinct principle brought out in the Psalms, that while in connection with the Jews, yet the nation is not the thing owned. The distinction is made by moral character, and not by nation. It is a certain elect remnant in the midst of the mass that is owned, of whom Christ becomes the representative.

As a general principle, it looks for the government of God, and that that government will sanction and establish the righteous in contrast with the ungodly. Another principle comes up, the counsels of God as to His anointed, in spite of the heathen, who rise up against them. As soon, however, as we get these principles laid down, we find that, outwardly, it is not happening so at all. Hence the discussion of this question.

3. Faith in what God is. 7. He sees prophetically that He has done it; therefore He gives praise.

4. Dependence in calling on God. 3. The godly marked out, not the nation.

5 and 6. A great deal more the remnant. In 5, there is more sense of the evil that is pressing on them. 9. Christ's judgment of the then condition of the wicked. It goes on to the last days. 6. Quite in the latter day in Israel; it is a question of cutting off. 3. "How long!" the spirit of prophecy in the remnant, See Isa. 6 The cessation of this indicated in 84, there being no one who knew "How long." They were in circumstances like as if cast off forever; and faith knows that it cannot be so, so says "How long!" 4. In the psalms in which the remnant speaks, mercy comes before righteousness. In Psa. 4, where it is more the Lord Himself, righteousness comes before mercy.

In 3-7 it is much more introductory, and certain general principles. It is Messiah who first speaks, because He has first fully taken, nay, He alone could rightly take apart the place of the remnant, as apart from, and in contrast with, the people. Others had felt it - as having His Spirit, and, as prophets, had portrayed it in Him but He alone could rightly take it by intrinsic righteousness. Yet, in Him, it was as forced to it; that is, this righteousness forced out the wickedness in the others, and He wept over Jerusalem when it was done; but then He entered into all that concerned Israel, according to the purpose, love, and revelation of God. The psalms are the perfect display of all that a divinely perfect heart in the circumstances could feel of, and as to, the relationships of God with Israel, and of Israel with God.

10. The creation testimony is used, as a figure of that now given by the gospel, inasmuch as it is universal. The testimony had been given of God, whether man saw it or not (see Rom. 1) They did not see it as we find. 12, 13. Kept in detail, and so kept from the great apostasy.

9. Is more the heathen, man; 10, more the wicked one.

11-41. The development of faith in Christ, or the remnant as associated during the time of tribulation; but before the last. half week. Therefore 3-10 come in as a kind of general preface.

11:2. Not "privily" in last half week. 4., is the answer to ver. 3.

XII. The holy wisdom of owning Jehovah. 6. The words of the Lord a stay, when every one speaks vanity with his neighbor. 7. The second "them" should be him.

Christ comes in to give its full character to hope and faith. This psalm is like a stake in the midst of all these psalms. The moment we get Christ, we get the spirit of calmness and grace.

Specially Christ in the beginning. 11, The remnant comes in.

In 16, we have Christ's own joy in God; Jehovah shows him the path of life, and at His right hand are pleasures forever more, 17. In presence of the wicked and the prosperity of the men of this world, He beholds God's face in righteousness, and is satisfied in waking up after His image. Most interesting is it to find, that we have put, as analogous in the Church - the taking up for its own joy, and the display in glory as the reward of righteousness.

4, 5, 6. Evidently the death of Christ, The words may have an application, used hyperbolically, to Israel in Egypt. 15. The Red Sea.

21. Human enemies, and judgment..

22. Divine wrath, and perfect grace. 12. Bulls, i.e., violent men, who do their own will. 16. Dogs, i.e., shameless ones. 21. The lion's mouth, i.e., Satan's power over death. 22. The congregation, i.e., the remnant, which afterward became the Church; only here looked at as the remnant of Israel. 25. "The great congregation," as in Solomon's day. 30. The remnant who pass through the trouble. 31. The millennial people.

23, Thesis:-The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. Not:-He has given me good things, and I shall not want; but the Lord is my Shepherd, etc. 3. The weakness of man, which needed restoring. [We need restoring, because of sin as well as weakness],

24:3 and 4. "Who?" 7-10. The King of Glory. 6. The remnant coming in when the earth is the Lord's.

25. Important as shewing that the remnant do not ignore sin, but look from it to God.

26:2, Examine me, O Lord, etc, a For Thy loving kindness is before mine eyes.

27:1-6. Thesis. 7 onward, prayer founded on it.

29. In the midst of all these exercises of the heart of the remnant, God comes in. The voice of the Lord comes in, and puts everything in its place, In the psalms that follow, they have more to do with God,, they are more occupied with the Lord Himself, than with the circumstances.

30. Is more God's anger, so confession; 31, is the enemies, so insisting on integrity. We constantly find these two things.

32. "Be glad," not in the forgiveness, but, "in the Lord," etc.

34. A call to the remnant to bless the Lord in their worst sorrows, " at all times," not when they get the blessing but now.

35. Christ's spirit, in its perfectness, supplying a vent for their feelings in their weakness.

36. The wickedness is such as that there is no conscience in the adversary. 5. The answer - God is above it all.

37:34. " Wait on the Lord, and keep His way." The whole secret of what we have to do.

38. An important principle in this psalm-the difficulty of looking to the Lord for deliverance from the wicked, when sin is on the conscience. Nevertheless, God is the refuge from the enemy. It is beautiful to see this integrity of heart, when he has not a word to say for himself.

39. This leaning on the Lord, with faults, breakings down, and everything, is very beautiful.

40. Beautiful-how, in the midst of all these exercises in the former psalms, waves of every kind-Christ is brought in; and He says, I will tell you how I got on. 17. In Matt. 5, Christ is just giving a description of Himself. And herein is the difference between Matthew and Luke. Matthew tells who enter; Luke says, Ye are the very ones. He gives them the place of the remnant. In this psalm Christ sets aside the Jewish figures, and lays the ground of righteousness Himself.

The second book begins not with Christ, but with the condition of the remnant; and never has more for its subject, the facts of the latter day, Israel being driven out. It is not going through all these states of soul, so as that Christ might be brought in. It is like the position, when Christ went out to a place called Ephraim (John 11:54). There was a kind of hoping for good, from the multitude before; but now He has done with the wicked, and come out. So now, it is not Jehovah, but God. He is cast more simply on God. He is not trusting in the relationship, but on God, in the nature of Elohim.

42. More the Gentiles.

43:1. "Ungodly nation," more the Jews. "The deceitful and unjust man," Antichrist. The whole of this book is applicable to the period during which Antichrist has been received the last three and a-half years.

Book 2

42 and 43. In the two first psalms of this book, Christ takes the place of the godly remnant as cast out of all Jewish privilege by the power of the enemy and the apostasy of the Jews themselves - a nation " Lo-chisid."

44-48. We have the appeal of the remnant to God, as the One who, at the beginning, had delivered them, with all the consequences consequent on the intervention of Messiah in Psa. 45, 49 being a moral comment on human grandeur in view of this.

In 50, God has summoned all in judgment, and shines out of Zion, owned the " perfection of beauty." 51. The Jews own their guilt in connection with the death of Christ.

In 52-58, we see the wickedness and violence within, i.e., among the people. In 59, it is more the heathen without come against them at the same time. But in 60, in the midst of this distress, there is the assurance that God Himself will interfere, and claim His own rights in the midst of them.

In 61, Messiah identifies Himself with the outcast remnant; and, in 62, expresses His confidence in God so as to lead theirs, and that of all men.

All these psalms are to God, and not to the LORD; i.e., depend on what God is in Himself.

In 63, it is the earnest desire of Messiah's soul after God, as He has known Him in the sanctuary. 64. The confidence of the Spirit of Christ in God, though obliged to wait for Him till the judgment is executed. In 65, His faith is pressing: God has only to give the word, and He will have the praise that waits for Him. While in 66, God's intervention in judgment is celebrated, and their state described until it come. In 67, the face of God, shining on His people, carries His saving health among all nations. 68. The heavenly exaltation of Christ, is the source of the blessing of His people. 69. All the depth of His distress as man--not exactly the cup of wrath, though it is on the cross. 70. He looks for deliverance; and that those who seek God may be able to praise God because of it, however needy He may be. In 71, He speaks as the representative of the family of David--all dying out. In 72, the son of David, in his new glorious reign on earth. That closes the book.

74. The cry, the remnant. Their present confidence is in God, through looking for Him to take the place of Jehovah.

Messiah comes in. 6. Then His divine title owned. 9. When we have the kingdom on earth, Jerusalem is the bride. 14. The virgins are the cities of Judah. 16. The old thing is not remembered; but the new, which grace has introduced.

The remnant find that they are owned as the nation, when they have settled in Zion. Messiah having been introduced, God is the God of Jacob.

In 47, He is subduing the peoples under their feet. The consequence of God's establishment in Zion is His stretching out His hand over the nations.

Zion takes her place. She is established in blessedness. 8. "As we have heard, so have we seen." It is not merely that He has come there, He is settled there. Not "I had gone with the multitude," but, "in the midst of thy temple." 10. "According to the name," etc. They had trusted the name, and now so is it. 14. Unto death-that is, all their life long. Death not destroyed. The desire of 42, 43, and 44, is fulfilled in 48.

A moral sermon; a kind of "improvement" of 44-49. 15. Resurrection, or preservation from death.

They now come into the covenant "by sacrifice;" not by obedience, as at Sinai. 3. The way He gets to Zion.

Their confession. 19. When the heart is set right, their "sacrifices of righteousness" are acceptable. Mercy coming before righteousness is always a sign of the remnant.

In 42, we have Israel cast out. In 45, the temporal deliverance. In 51, the deliverance within. The secret of the whole we get in 78 and 49 on to 72. In 50:6. The heavens declare His righteousness; in 68:18, we find that Christ has ascended there; in 69, we learn how He got there: whilst 72, gives His royal place in Zion in Solomon.

The horror of Spirit of Christ at seeing the total iniquity at Jerusalem - Judas and Antichrist. 10. Jerusalem. 20. Antichrist.

More outward. 8. "Wanderings;" that is, up and down, not knowing what to cry.

11. The meaning of judgment.

6. Not within the city yet.

3. "Hard things" shown the people. 4. "A banner " given to them that fear, that it may be displayed because of the truth.

61. All outside; when Jesus went beyond Jordan and abode there. The hill Mizar and Hermon.

The cast-out king. 2. The desire is not as in mysticism after a thing never known, but " to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee," &c. 3. His life was all sorrow, yet, "because Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee."

3. "They bend their bows to shoot their arrows;" but, 7, "God shall shoot at them with an arrow."

4. The Jews blessed. 8. Then all the earth.

18. The secret of it all. Jehovah received up into glory - the mystery of Godliness.

The utmost distress of Christ in the midst of Israel. 26. The fact of atonement, though not directly stated. He is looking at sorrows from the reproachers (not as in psalm 22), therefore the judgment of men..

72:16. Does not touch heaven; so it is not Son of man's dominion, but the King's son's.

Book 3,

I think that the third book gives the ways of God with Israel, not with Judah merely ("unto which [promise] our twelve tribes hope to come"); the result being, Psa. 73, that God is good to Israel, but to the clean-hearted among them; while the prosperity of the wicked is a long, sore trial, to faith. Hence, in 74, all that on which their natural hopes rest, is smashed and broken down. Flesh cannot build up what God has put under the power of judgment; but faith can wait on God, till He glorifies Himself. 75. His judgment is clearly unfolded, and Messiah declares the principles on which He will govern in respect of God.

Thus God is known in Judah, His name great in Israel, and Jerusalem the seat of His power and glory.

The believing heart blames all distrust of this, as its infirmity, and remembers the previous days of God's right hand.

In 78, all the perverse ways of Israel are discussed; and the electing grace of God, in the house of David, presented as its only resource.

In 79, the excesses of the heathen, in the latter days, are brought under God's eye, that He may favor His people, and not remember their iniquities against them.

In 80, the connection of God, as the dweller between the cherubim of old, and the manifestation of His power as Son of man, are brought together as the deliverance of the vine once brought out of Egypt.

81. On the reappearance of Israel, i.e., on the new moon, God shows the rectitude of His ways with that people in judgment.

In 82, He judges among the gods.

In 83, we have the last conspiracy of the Assyrians, and those that dwell within the limits of the land, where judgment displays that Jehovah is Most High over all the earth.

Up to this, we have had God, in His nature and character, as such. Now, 84, the people in connection with Him as Jehovah, thinks of the joy of going up to His sanctuary, i.e., to worship Him.

85. In the favor He has shown to His land, mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, have all been verified and brought together.

86, is a celebration of the character of Jehovah, in respect of the needy, bringing all nations up to worship before Him.

87. The excellency of Zion is celebrated as a defiance to the whole world, specially because Messiah is reckoned amongst her children.

Now we come to what Christ gets amidst all this. 88. The curse of the broken law, which rests on the remnant, entered into by the Spirit of Christ:- while in 89, all the mercies of God are centered in Him.

In the first Book of Psalms, we get Christ more as an object; e.g. 1, 2, 16, 40. In the second book, He is presented more as an answer. So it is more the remnant, and how they are to be delivered; there is as much of Christ, but more in the way of deliverer. In the third book, it is more entirely the remnant, for it is not David, but Asaph. There is a great deal more of grace, here, than of righteousness, for the remnant, and not so much of Christ. We get Israel in the old associations of Egypt, and not Christ Himself in the midst of the thing.

73. Israel beloved for the father's sakes, modified by the necessity of personal righteousness. It forms a kind of thesis for the whole book.

Exercise of soul in this state of things. 13, 19. If you get into the sanctuary, there you will be sure to find God's way; but if you look [for it] outside, it is "in the sea." 16. The Red Sea.

An account of how they behaved under these mercies. 67. The natural heir refused. Even if God is good to Israel, it is God who is good, not that Israel has claim. 68. He chose Judah.

82. If all the deputy-judges go wrong, God judges among the gods.

84:4. The "house" and "praise." 5. The "ways" and "strength;" both "blessed." 6. "Baca" "weeping;" so, "rejoicing in tribulation."

86. David. A great deal more personal; the consciousness of standing in the gap for Israel.

89:1. "Mercies" celebrated. 19, &c. Summed up in the person of Christ. 49. Israel is cast over on the certainty of mercy in God's promise to David.

Book 4

In 90, Jehovah has always been the dwelling-place of Israel; and His greatness, and their nothingness, is used as a plea for His compassion towards them:-while in 91, Messiah comes in, and owns the God of Israel, even Jehovah; and all the blessings of the name of Almighty and Most High, are manifested in connection with Him. This brings in 92, the celebration of His name in the rest-the Sabbath-of Israel.

Then from 93-100, we have the thesis of the Lord's reigning brought out from the cry of the remnant, who seek deliverance from the wicked one; the call to Israel to listen; the call to the heathen; the coming in glory to judge; the execution of the judgment; God's establishment in Zion between the cherubim; the summons of the world to come and worship there with joy.

Then, in 101, the principles of Christ's government; and in 102, the expression of His isolated sorrows, and to the inquiry how He, who was cut off in the midst of His days, could have part in the re-establishment of Zion, it is revealed that He is Himself the everlasting Jehovah.

In 103, He blesses Jehovah as the Forgiver and Healer of His people. In 104, as the glorious Creator. In 105, as faithful to His covenant with the fathers, and [to His] promises.

In 106, His dealings with them in chastening, but His abundant readiness to hear their cry which they now address to Him.

90. A supplication for mercy-a kind of introduction to the book. 9. We are poor, fading things. 14. Make haste to mercy.

91. Now comes the deliberate statement of Messiah's taking up the case of Israel; not merely His being found in the position, but a kind of public announcement of it. 1. Whoever gets the secret place, gets the Almightyness. 2. Messiah says, I will take Jehovah as my refuge, etc. 3. The Spirit declares the consequences of this. 9. The remnant address Messiah. 14. Jehovah comes in, and sets His seal on the whole.

92. The consequence on earth of the trust of 91.

93. Thesis. "The Lord reigneth."

94. Mercy of the remnant.

95. The summons to Israel. " To-day " goes on till Christ comes.

96. Summons to the heathen. The everlasting Gospel of Revelation.

97. He is coming.

98. He has come, and executed salvation or righteousness in favor of Israel.

99. Is actually sitting between the cherubim, taking His place on the throne.

100. Gentiles called to worship Him. "Rejoice ye Gentiles," &c fulfilled.

101. A kind of supplemental psalm. How Christ will guide His house when He takes it.

BOOK 5.

In 102 we get the celebration of the ways of the Lord in the restoration of His people (it is not what they are looking for), which they are specially called to notice; together, with 108, the celebration of His praises as their Redeemer.

We have, then, 109, at once introduced the sufferings of Christ under the apostasy, whether of Judas or Antichrist:-while, in 110, He is called to sit at Jehovah's right hand, until He makes His enemies His footstool, for the accomplishment of the purposes of this redemption-when His power shall go forth from Zion -while, because of His humiliation, He is exalted for the destroying of Him who elevates himself against Him.

111, 112. Then the Lord is praised for this redemption, and the display of His character in it; and the portion of the righteous consequently.

His majesty and grace are celebrated, 113, as high above all, extending everywhere, and considering the poor and needy. 114. God's presence is the real strength of His people. 115. In contrast with idols, all the glory is given to His name.

The afflicted one now praises the Lord before all, whom he had trusted in the time of his distress, when brought low. The Spirit of Christ, in the midst of His people, especially shown.

The nations are then summoned to praise the Lord, because of His abiding mercy and truth to Israel.

In 118, Christ takes up the song of Israel in the great congregation, declaring that " His mercy endureth forever." The enemies encompassed Him, the adversary beset Him, the Lord had chastened Him, but not given Him up. Israel now owns that the stone which the builders had rejected, has become the Head of the Corner, and their heart is prepared to say, " Save now," " Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and they worship with joy.

119. The law is written in Israel's once wandering heart.

120-134. Then we get, in the Psalms of Degrees, various thoughts and feelings of Israel as now restored, whether as looking back and enjoying the blessing; or under the conviction of sin; or as David (i.e. really Christ) establishing the sign of the Lord's presence, in full blessing in Israel - the people being gathered in unity-closing with the blessing of Jehovah from the sanctuary.

In 135 and 136, we have the celebration of Jehovah's praise for His election of Israel, in connection, on the one hand, with the original promise to Abraham, and the mercy connected with His judgments on the other (compare Ex. 3, and Deut. 32); with the formal declaration that His mercy endures forever.

137. Babylon and Edom come up in judgment before God; and 138, God's word, the confidence of His people, is glorified in His ways towards them.

139, None can escape the searching out of God; but if. God creates for blessing, we can praise Him.

140. We have the cry for deliverance from the evil and violent man; the head of the faithful is covered in the day of his conflict, for God maintains his cause, and delivers him.

141. The Lord is trusted to guide them-i.e., the poor-in a right path, according to His mind, so as to avoid the snares of the wicked. In the utmost desolation he trusts Him. Then, 142, however overwhelmed, God knows his path.

143. He pleads not to enter into judgment, for no man can be justified, for the enemy has trodden down his soul; but he still looks to the Lord, and trusts that He will guide him in uprightness, and looks to Him in mercy, to cut off all his enemies, that, 144, full blessing may come in.

In 145, Messiah describes the millennium in the interchange of Jehovah's praises between Him and the people that are blessed.

Then we get the great Hallel.

146. Jehovah is praised as the God of Jacob, as the Creator of all things, the Keeper of truth, the Deliverer of the oppressed, and of all from affliction and distress. He shall reign as the God of Zion through all generations.

147. Then He is praised as the Builder up of Jerusalem, taking pleasure in them that fear Him, ruling every element by His word; but giving His word, His statutes, and His judgments, to Israel.

148. All creation is called upon to praise Him; who exalts the horn of His people (Israel)-a people near unto Him.

149. Israel, above all, is called to praise Him in a new song. Judgment is put into their hands.

The last Psalm, CL., is a kind of chorus. In His sanctuary, the firmament of His power, everything that has breath, is called to praise Him.

In this book we have either the explanation of the Lord's ways, or Hallelujahs. It is a kind of sermon.

110:6. "He shall wound the head over a great country." (Rosh al erez rabba).

116:10. In the presence of death, He goes in and speaks, So Paul 2 Cor. 4

130. In this psalm, they get into the depths, not from circumstances, but from sin. Instead of speaking of enemies as in 124 ("when man rose up against us"), it is between him and God. It is after the new moon they have the day of atonement.

139. The searchings of God throw you back on the thoughts that God had in meeting you in grace; and therefore you can ask God to "search," &c. We are the creatures of His thoughts, as well as the subject of them,

144 is different from 143, in not having the death of Christ as a center; and, moreover, the heathen are not brought in.

Job 35:6-11

If thou sinnest, what doest thou against Him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto Him?

If thou be righteous, what givest thou Him? or what receiveth He of thine hand?

Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.

By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry: they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.

But none saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night;

Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

Philippians

In the Epistle to the Philippians, we find much more of Christian experience and the development of the exercise of the heart than in the generality of the epistles. Doctrine and practice are found in them all, but with the exception of the 2nd to Timothy, which is of another nature, there is none that contains, like this, the expression of the Christian's experience in this toilsome life, and the resources which are open to him in passing through it, and the motives which ought to govern him. We may even say that this epistle gives us the experience of Christian life in its highest and most perfect expression. God has condescended to furnish us with this beautiful picture of it, as well as with the truths that enlighten us, and the rules that direct our walk. The occasion for it was quite natural. Paul was in prison, and the Philippians, who were very dear to him, and who, at the commencement of his labors, had testified their affection for him by similar gifts, had just sent assistance to the apostle by the hand of Epaphroditus; at a moment when, as it appears, he had been for some time in need. A prison, need, the consciousness that the Church was deprived of his watchful care, this expression on the part of the Philippians, of the love that thought of him in his necessities, although at a distance - what could be more adapted to open the apostle's heart, and lead to his expressing the confidence in God that animated him, as well as that which he felt with regard to the Church, now unsupported by his apostolic care, and having to trust in God himself without any intermediate help. And it was most natural that he should pour out his feelings into the bosom of these beloved Philippians, who had just given him this proof of their affection. The apostle, therefore, speaks more than once of the Philippians' fellowship with the gospel: that is to say, they took part in the labors, the trials, the necessities which the preaching of the gospel occasioned to those who devoted themselves to it. Their hearts united them to it-like those of whom the Lord speaks, who received a prophet in the name of a prophet.

This brought the apostle into a peculiarly intimate connection with this Church; and he and Timotheus, who had accompanied him in his labors in Macedonia, his true son in the faith and in the work, address themselves to the faithful and to those who bore office in this particular Church. This is not an epistle which soars to the height of God's counsels like that to the Ephesians, or which regulates the godly order which becomes Christians everywhere, like the two to the Corinthians; nor is it one which lays the foundation for the relationship of a soul with God, like that to the Romans. Neither was it destined to guard Christians against the errors that were creeping in among them, like some of the others which were written by our apostle. It takes the ground of the precious inner life, of the common affection of Christians towards each other, but of that affection as experienced in the heart of Paul, animated and directed by the Holy Ghost. Hence, also, we find the ordinary relationships which existed within a Church; there are bishops and deacons, and it was the more important to remember them, since the immediate care of the apostle was no longer possible. The absence of this immediate care forms the basis of the apostle's instructions here, and gives its peculiar importance to the epistle.

The affection of the Philippians, which expressed itself by sending help to the apostle, reminded him of the spirit they had always shown; they had cordially associated themselves with the labors

and trials of the gospel. And this thought leads the apostle higher, to that which governs the current of thought (most precious to us) in the epistle. Who had wrought in the Philippians this spirit of love and of devotedness to the interests of the gospel? Truly it was the God of the gospel and of love; and this was a security that He who had begun the good work would fulfill it, unto the day of Christ. Sweet thought-now that we have no longer the apostle, that we have no longer bishops and deacons, as the Philippians had in those days. God cannot be taken from us, the true and living source of all blessing remains to us, unchangeable, and above the infirmities, and even the faults, which deprive Christians of all intermediate resources. The apostle had seen God acting in the Philippians. The fruits bore witness of the source. Thenceforth he counted on the perpetuity of the blessing they were to enjoy. But there must be faith in order to draw these conclusions. Christian love is clear-sighted and full of trust with regard to its objects, because God Himself, and the energy of His grace, are in that love.

To return to the principle. It is the same thing with the Church. It may, indeed, lose much, as to outward means, and as to those manifestations of the presence of God, which are connected with man's responsibility; but the essential grace of God cannot be lost. Faith can always count upon it. It was the fruits of grace which gave the apostle this confidence, as in Heb. 6:9,10, and 1 Thess. 1:3,4. He counted, indeed, in 1 Cor. 1:8, and in Gal., on the faithfulness of Christ, in spite of many painful things. The faithfulness of the Lord encouraged him with regard to Christians, whose condition in other respects was the cause of great anxiety. But here-surely a much happier case-the walk itself of the Christian led him to the source of confidence about them. He remembered, with affection and tenderness, the way in which they had always acted towards him, and he turned it into a desire for them that the God who had wrought it, would produce for their own blessing the perfect and abundant fruits of that love. He opens his own heart also to them. They took part, by the same grace acting in them, in the work of God's grace in him, and that with an affection that identified itself with him and his work; and his heart turned to them with an abundant return of affection and desire. God, who created these feelings, and to whom he presented all that passed in his heart, this same God who acted in the Philippians, was a witness between them (now that Paul could give no other by his labor among them) of his earnest desire for them all. He felt their love, but he desired, moreover, that this love should be not only cordial and active, but that it should be guided also by wisdom and understanding from God, by a godly discernment of good and evil, wrought by the power of His Spirit; so that while acting in love, they should also walk according to that wisdom, and should understand that which, in this world of darkness, was truly according to divine light and perfection, so that they should be without reproach until the day of Christ.

Now, the fruits produced were already a sign that God was with them; and He would fulfill the work unto the end. But the apostle desired that they should walk throughout the whole of the way according to the light that God had given, so that when they came to the end there should be nothing with which they could be reproached; but that, on the contrary, set free from all that might weaken or lead them astray, they should abound in the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. A fine practical picture of the Christian's normal condition in his daily walk towards the end; for in the Philippians we are always on the way towards our heavenly rest in-which redemption has set us.

Such is the introduction to this epistle. After this expression of the wishes of his heart for them, reckoning on their affection, he speaks of his bonds, which they had remembered; but he does so in connection with Christ and the gospel, which he had most of all at heart. But before I go beyond the introduction into the matter of the epistle, I would notice the thoughts which lie at the foundation of the sentiments expressed in it.

There are three great elements which stamp their character on it.

1st. It speaks of the Christian's pilgrimage in the wilderness: salvation is viewed as a result to be obtained at the end of the journey. Redemption, accomplished by Christ, is indeed established as the foundation of this pilgrimage (as was the case with Israel at their entrance into the wilderness), but the being presented risen and in glory before God, when victorious over every difficulty, is the subject in this epistle, and is that which is here called salvation.

In the 2nd place, the position is characterized by the apostle's absence, the Church having, therefore, itself to maintain the conflict. It had to overcome, instead of enjoying the victory gained over the enemy's power by the apostle when he was with them, and could make himself weak with all who were weak.

And, 3rdly, the important truth, already mentioned, is set forth, that the Church, in these circumstances, was cast more immediately on God-the inexhaustible source for it of grace and strength, of which it was to avail itself in an immediate way by faith. A resource which could never fail it.

I resume the consideration of the text with ver. 12, which begins the epistle after the introductory portion. Paul was a prisoner at Rome. The enemy appeared to have gained a great victory in thus restraining his activity; but by the power of God, who orders all things and who acted in the apostle, even the devices of the adversary were turned to the furtherance of the gospel. In the first place, the imprisonment of the apostle made the gospel known where it would not otherwise have been preached, in high places at Rome; and many other brethren, stirred up by the apostle's position (as will always be the case when faith is not shaken by it), became more bold to preach the gospel without fear. But there was another way in which this absence of the apostle had an effect. Many-who, in the presence of his power and his gifts, were necessarily powerless and insignificant persons-could make themselves of some importance, when, in the unsearchable but perfect ways of God, this mighty instrument of His grace was set aside. They could hope to shine and attract attention when the rays of this resplendent light were intercepted by the walls of a prison. Jealous, but hidden when he was present, they availed themselves of his absence to bestir themselves - whether false brethren or jealous Christians, they sought in his absence to impair his authority in the Church, and his happiness. They only added to both. God was with His servant; and instead of the self-seeking which instigated these sorry preachers of the truth, there was found in Paul the pure desire for the proclamation of the good news of Christ, the whole value of which he deeply felt, and which he desired above all, be it in what way it might.

Already the apostle finds his resource, for his own case, in God's operating independently of the spiritual order of His house with regard to the means that he uses. The normal condition of the Church is, that the Spirit of God acts in the members of the body, each one in its place, for the manifestation of the unity of the body and of the reciprocal energy of its members. Christ, having

overcome Satan, fills with His own Spirit those whom He has delivered out of the hand of that enemy, in order that they may exhibit at the same time the power of God and the truth of their deliverance from the power of the enemy, and exhibit them in a walk, which being an expression of the mind and the energy of God Himself, leaves no room for those of the enemy. They constituted the army and the testimony of God in this world against the enemy. But then, each member, from an apostle down to the weakest, acts efficaciously in his own place. The power of Satan is excluded. The exterior answers to the interior, and to the work of Christ. He who is in them is greater than he who is in the world. But everywhere power is needed for this, and the single eye. There is another state of things, in which, although all is not in activity in its place, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, yet the restoring energy of the Spirit in an instrument like the apostle, defends the Church, or brings it back into its normal condition, when it has partially failed. The Epistle to the Ephesians, on the one side, and those to the Corinthians and Galatians, on the other, present these two phases of the history of the Church.

The Epistle to the Philippians treats-but with the pen of a divinely inspired apostle-of a state of things in which this last resource was wanting. The apostle could not labor now in the same manner as before, but he could give us the Spirit's view of the state of the Church, when, according to the wisdom of God, it was deprived of these normal energies. It could not be deprived of God. Doubtless, the Church had not then departed so far from its normal condition as it has now done, but the evil was already springing up, and God allowed it to do so during the life of the apostles, in order that we might have the revelation of His thoughts respecting it, and that we might be directed to the true resources of His grace in these circumstances.

Paul, himself, had to experience this truth in the first place. The bonds that united him to the Church and to the work of the gospel, were the strongest that exist on earth, but he was obliged to resign the gospel and the Church to the God to whom they belonged. This was painful; but its effect was to perfect obedience, trust, singleness of eye, and self-renunciation, in the heart, Le., to perfect them according to the measure of the operation of faith. Nevertheless, the pain caused by such an effort, betrays the inability of man to maintain the work of God at its own height. But all this happens in order that God may have the whole glory of the work; and it is needed, in order that the creature may be manifested in every respect according to the truth.

The apostle could do nothing; he had to see the gospel preached without him. By some, through envy, and in a spirit of contention; by others, through love. Encouraged by the apostle's bonds, they desired to alleviate them by continuing his work. Every way Christ was preached, and the apostle's mind rose above the motives which animated the preachers in the contemplation of the immense fact, that a Savior, the deliverer sent of God, was preached to the world. Christ, and even souls, were more precious to Paul, than the work's being carried on by himself. God was carrying it on; and therefore it would be for the triumph of Paul, who linked himself with the purposes of God. He understood the great conflict which was going on between Christ (in His members) and the enemy; and if the latter appeared to have gained a victory by putting Paul in prison, God was using this event for the advancement of the work of Christ by the gospel; and thus, in reality, for the gaining of fresh victories over Satan; victories with which Paul was associated, since he was set for the defense of that gospel. Therefore all this turned to his salvation; his faith being confirmed by these ways of a faithful God, who directed the eyes of his faithful servants more entirely upon Himself. Sustained by the prayers of others, and by the supply

of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, instead of being cast down and terrified by the enemy, he gloried more and more in the sure victory of Christ, in which he shared. Accordingly, he expresses his unchangeable conviction, that in nothing should he be made ashamed, but that it would be given him to use all boldness, and that Christ would be glorified in him, whether by his life or his death; and he had death before his eyes. Called to appear before Caesar, his life might be taken from him by the emperor's judgment: humanly speaking, the issue was quite uncertain. He alludes to this, chaps. 2:17; 3:10; 1:22, 30. But, living or dying, his eye was now more fixed on Christ, than even on the work; high place as that work might have in the mind of one whose life could be expressed in this one word, " Christ." To live, was for him,-not the work in itself, nor only that the faithful should stand fast in the gospel, although this could not be separated from the thought of Christ, because they were members of His body; but, for him, to live was,-Christ; to die was gain; for he should be with Christ.

Such was the purifying effect of the ways of God, who had made him pass through the ordeal, so terrible to him, of being separated for years, perhaps four, from his work for the Lord. The Lord Himself had taken the place of the work-so far, at least, as it was connected with Paul individually and the work was committed to the Lord Himself. Possibly, the fact that he was so engrossed with the work, had contributed to that which led to his imprisonment; for the thought of Christ alone keeps the soul in equilibrium, and gives everything its right place. God caused this imprisonment to be the means through which Christ became his all. Not that he lost his interest in the work, but that Christ alone held the first place; and he saw everything, and even the work, in Christ.

What consolation it is, when we are perhaps conscious that our weakness has been manifested, and that we have failed in acting according to the power of God, to feel that He, who alone has a right to be glorified, never fails.

Now, since Christ was everything to Paul, it was evident gain to die; for he would be with Him. Nevertheless, it was worth while to live (for that is the force of the first part of ver. 21), because it was Christ and His service; and he did not know which to choose. Dying, he gained Christ for himself; it was far better. Living, he served Christ; he had more, as to the work, since to live was Christ. Thus, he was in a strait between the two. But he had learned to forget himself in Christ; and he saw Christ entirely occupied with the Church, according to His perfect wisdom. And this decided the question; for being thus taught of God, Paul lost sight of himself, and thought only of the need of the Church, according to the mind of Christ. It was good for the Church that he should remain-for one Church even-thus, he should remain. And see what peace this looking to Jesus, which destroyed selfishness in the work, gives to the servant of God. After all, Christ has all power in heaven and earth, and He orders all things according to His will. Thus, when His will is known-and His will is love for the Church-I can say that it will be done. Paul decides as to his own fate, without troubling himself either as to what the Emperor would do, or the circumstances of the time. Christ loved the Church; it was good for the Church that Paul should remain; Paul shall then remain. How entirely Christ is everything here. What light, what rest, from a single eye, from a heart versed in the Lord's love!

Now if Christ is all this for Paul, and for the Church, Paul desires that the Church should be that which it ought to be for Christ, and thereby for his own heart, to which Christ was everything. To the Church, therefore, the apostle's heart turns. The joy of the Philippians would be abundant,

through his return to them: only let their conduct, whether he comes or not, be worthy of the gospel of Christ. Two points possessed his mind; whether he should see them, or hear tidings of them; that they might have constancy and firmness in unity of heart and mind among themselves; and be devoid of fear with regard to the enemy, in the conflict they had to maintain against him, with the strength that this unity would give them. This is the testimony of the presence and operation of the Spirit in the Church, when the apostle is absent. He keeps Christians together, by His presence: they have but one heart, and one object. They act in common by the Spirit. And, since God is there, the fear with which the evil spirit and their enemies might inspire them, is not there. They walk in the spirit of love, and power, and a sound mind. Their condition is thus an evident testimony of salvation, entire and final deliverance; since, in their warfare with the enemy, they feel no fear, the presence of God inspiring them with other thoughts. With regard to their adversaries, the discovery of the impotence of all their efforts, produces the sense of the insufficiency of their resources. Although they had the whole power of the world and of its prince; they had met with a power superior to their own-the power of God; and they were its adversaries. A sorrowful conviction on the one side, profound joy on the other, where not only there was thus the assurance of deliverance and salvation, but they were proved to be salvation and deliverance from the hand of God Himself. Thus, that the Church should be in conflict, and the apostle absent (himself wrestling with all the power of the enemy), was a gift. Joyful thought-unto them it was given to suffer for Christ, as well as to believe in Him. They had a further and a precious portion in suffering with Christ; and even for Christ; and communion with His faithful servants in suffering for His sake, united them more closely in Him. The apostle desired that this joy should be full, and that unity, among the Philippians should be perfect; for his absence had allowed some seeds of disunion and disaffection to germinate. Love had been sweetly and powerfully demonstrated by the gift they had sent to the apostle. Consolation in Christ, comfort of love, fellowship of the Spirit, tender mercies, were displayed in it, giving him great joy. Let them, then, make this joy perfect, by the full establishment of this same bond of love among themselves, by being of one accord, of one mind, having the same love for each other, being all like-minded, allowing no rivalry or vain-glory to display itself in any way. Such was the apostle's desire. Appreciating their love towards himself, he wished their happiness to be complete through the perfecting of that love among themselves; thus would his own joy be perfect. Beautiful and touching affection! It was love in him which, sensible to their love, thought only of them.

Now, the means of this union, of the maintenance of this love, was found in the abnegation of self, in humility, in the spirit that humbles itself in order to serve. It was this which perfectly displayed itself in Christ, in contrast with the first Adam. The latter sought to make himself like God, by robbery, when he was in the form of a man, and strove to exalt himself at God's expense; being, at the same time, disobedient unto death. Christ, on the contrary, when He was in the form of God, emptied Himself, through love, and took the form of a man; and even when He was in the form of a man, still humbled Himself. It was a second thing which He did in humbling Himself. As God, He emptied Himself; as man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross. God has highly exalted Him: for he who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted. Perfect love, glorious truth, precious obedience! A man, by the just judgment and act of God, is exalted to the right hand of the throne of the divine Majesty. What a truth is the person of Christ! What a truth is this descent and ascension, by which He fills all things as Redeemer and Lord of glory! God come down in love: man ascended in

righteousness. Entire love in coming down, entire obedience by love also. Worthy from all eternity, as to His person, to be there, He is now as man exalted by God to His right hand. It is an act of righteousness on God's part, that He is there; and our hearts can take part in it, rejoicing in His glory-rejoicing, also, that by grace, we have part in it as to our own place.

His humiliation is a proof that He is God. (God only could leave His first estate in the sovereign rights of His love: it is sin for any creature to do so.) It is also a perfect love. But this proof is given, this love accomplished, in the fact that He is man. What a place has He acquired for us in Himself! But it is of Him, not of us, who are its fruits, that the apostle thinks. He rejoices in the thought of Christ's exaltation. God has exalted Him to the highest place, and given Him a name which is above every name, so that everything in heaven and earth, and even in hell, must bow before this exalted man, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

It will be remarked here, that it is the Lordship of Christ that is presented in this passage, not His divinity in itself. His divinity is indeed the primary point of departure. All, in fact, has its origin there: the love, the self-renunciation, the humiliation, the marvelous condescension. Nothing of all this could have been, or would have its value, without the former; but it is as Lord, complete in His person in the position which He took as man. It is He who humbled Himself, who, when He had come down to the lowest possible place, was exalted by God. It is of Jesus, who could, without exalting Himself, be equal with God; but who emptied Himself, who went down even into death, that the apostle speaks: of Jesus, Lord of all, and who, thus exalted as man, shall be owned as Lord throughout the whole creation, to the glory of God the Father.

The apostle's heart enlarges whenever he speaks of the Lord Jesus; but he turns to the objects of his solicitude; and as he had spoken of the self-renunciation, and the humiliation of Christ, as a means of union which would take all occasion from carnal rivalry, he had also been led to speak of the obedience of Christ in contrast with the first Adam and the flesh. He now applies this principle, also, for the instruction of the Philippians: "Wherefore," he says, "my beloved, as ye have always obeyed." And here the effect of his absence and removal from the work is introduced-"not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for," he adds, "it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do." That is to say, while he was among them he had labored; now they were themselves engaged with the enemy, without the aid of Paul's presence and spiritual energy; but God Himself wrought in them, and they ought to work so much the more earnestly in that they found themselves in such a warfare, God Himself being engaged for them as acting in them for this conflict, and they themselves striving in their own persons, directly with the power of the enemy. This was not the moment to boast in their little gifts, on account of the absence of that which had thrown them into the shade nor to be at strife among themselves. On the other hand, if they were deprived of Paul, they were not deprived of God. God Himself wrought in them. This is the great principle and the great consolation of the epistle. The Christians, deprived of the important aid of the apostle, are cast more immediately on God. The apostle himself, separated from the Church, finds his own consolation in God; and commits the Church, in its lack of his personal care, to God Himself; in whom he had himself found this consolation.

Diligence and earnestness ought to characterize the walk of Christians in these circumstances, in which immediate connection with God and personal conflict with the enemy have to be realized.

The apostle returns to the spirit of meekness and peace, in which the fruits of righteousness are sown. Do all things, he says, without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. Whatever may be the circumstances in which the Church is found, such, as respects itself, should ever be its state and its walk. Grace sufficient for this, is ever there in Christ.

Unity of spirit among themselves by grace, and a walk according to God, in order that they may be as heavenly lights amid the moral darkness of this world, always carrying and thus holding forth the word of life: such was the apostle's desire. They would thus give proof, by the constancy and practical effect of their faith, that the apostle had not run or labored in vain; and they would themselves be his glory in the day of Christ. Oh, if the Church had continued such! Be that as it may, Christ will be glorified. The apostle thus unites his work and his reward in the day of Christ, with the blessing of the Church. He would not be separated from it in his death. This union of heart and faith is very touching. He presents himself as capable of being poured out (that is to say, his life) as a libation, upon the sacrifice and service of the Philippians' faith. They had shown their devotedness to Christ, in thinking even of His servant, and he looks upon all their faith as an offering to the Savior and to God. Perhaps his life would be poured out in the service of the Gospel, to which they consecrated themselves on their part, and be a seal to this offering of theirs, which was dedicated to God by this sacred bond with the apostle. He rejoiced, if it were so, that his life was thus poured out: it would crown His work for the Gentiles. He desires too, that they also in the same spirit should rejoice in the same thing. It was all one thing, their faith and his, and their common service offered to God and well-pleasing to Him; and the most exalted proof of it should be the source of the most sacred joy. This world was not the real scene of that which was going on: what we behold here in connection with the Divine work, is but the outside. The apostle speaks this language of faith, which sees things as before God.

Nevertheless, his watchful care did not cease, although he committed the Philippians to God. It is always thus. The love and the faith which commit everything to God, do not cease to think, according to God, of that which is dear to Him. Thus John, 1 Epistle 2, while saying that the little children in Christ needed not that any one should teach them, yet instructs them with all tenderness and foresight. Here also the apostle, full of holy solicitude for these souls who were dear to Christ, hopes soon to send Timotheus, that he may know their state. But the condition of things is evident. He sends Timotheus because he had no one else in whose heart the same feelings towards them flowed forth from the same spring of love. All sought their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. What an exercise for faith! But what an occasion for its exercise!

Still, with regard to Timotheus, these beloved Philippians might receive him with a heart that responded to the apostle's confidence. They knew how he had served Paul in the Gospel. The bonds of love in the Gospel, are but the stronger-God be praised-when all grows cold. And, observe, that God carried on His work when, as Church testimony, everything failed, through a coldness which oppressed the apostle's heart: for God does not weary in His work. This bond, however, does not fail here with the Philippians either. As soon as Paul knew how it would go with himself, he would send Timotheus to them; but, as he had said, he had confidence in the Lord that he himself should come shortly.

But there was also Epaphroditus, who had come from the Philippians to carry their testimonial of affection to the apostle; and who, the faithful instrument and expression of their love, had risked his own life and suffered from dangerous sickness, in order to accomplish their service. This fine testimony of Christian love, breaks out here on every side. Epaphroditus so counts upon the love of the Philippians, that he is much troubled, because they had 'heard he was sick. He reckons on the feeling they had towards him; the place he had in their affections. Would it not be thus with an affectionate son, who knew that his mother had heard such tidings of him? He would hasten to inform her of his recovery, in order to tranquillize a heart whose love he knew. Such is Christian affection - tender and simple, confiding, because pure and unsuspecting, and walking in the light of God;' walking with Him, and in the affections which Christ has consecrated as man. Divine love, no doubt, goes higher; but brotherly love, which acts before men, and as the fruit among men of that Divine love, displays itself thus in grace.

The apostle responds to this affection of the Philippians for him who taught them and labored in the Lord for them (the Holy Ghost also remembers it here), and he sends back Epaphroditus; encouraging, and seeking to sustain, this feeling in the heart of the Philippians. He takes part in it himself, and brings into it God's own tender love. Paul, would have had sorrow upon sorrow (and he had much already) if the Philippians had lost their beloved servant and messenger, by means of the services he had rendered him; but God had spared Epaphroditus and the apostle himself. He would, however, have them assured of it, by the presence of Epaphroditus again among them, and thus the apostle's own heart, freed from all anxiety, would be also relieved. What a picture of mutual love and kind solicitude! And observe the way in which God, according to the apostle, takes part in it. What is presented to us here, are His compassions, not the counsels of His love, but compassions worthy of God, and affections of which He approves among men. These affections and this value for laborers, are sometimes feared; and so much the more so, because the Church has, in fact, to disentangle itself from all false dependence on man. But it is in the entire failure of manifested strength and outward organized bond, through the apostle's absence, that the Spirit of God develops the play of these inward affections and bonds, for the instruction of the Church; as he acknowledges all that remains of the ruins of its primitive position and its outward bonds. He does not create these anew; but he acknowledges that which still exists. It is only the first verse of the Epistle which speaks of this- no more was needed; but the inward bonds he develops largely, not as doctrine, but in fact. God Himself, the apostle, his faithful Timotheus, the valued servant of the Philippians, who was so dear to them, and the fellow-laborer of Paul, the servant of the Lord, the Philippians themselves, all have their part in this precious and beautiful chain of love.

But, after all, it was in the Lord Himself that they had to rejoice, and the apostle now puts them on their guard against that which had eaten away the life of the Church, and produced the painful fruits that filled his heart with anguish, and the deplorable consequences of which we see at this day, even as he foretold, consequences which will yet ripen for the judgment of God. Be this as it may, the Lord does not change. "Rejoice," he says, "in the Lord." There all is sure.

That which might prevent their thus rejoicing, is developed, as well as the true knowledge of Christ, which preserves us from it: not here, according to the doctrine and the practice that belong to the high position of the Church's union with a glorified Christ as His body, nor according to the unity which flows from it. This is the subject of the Ephesians. Neither is it according to the urgent

necessity of cleaving to the Head, because all fullness is in Him; this is the instruction of the Epistle to the Colossians. But, in accordance with the general character of the Epistle, the subject is here treated, in connection with the personal experiences of the Christian, and in particular, of the apostle. Accordingly as was seen in his personal combats and sorrows-he finds himself on the road to the full enjoyment of this object whom he has learned to know, and the state which his heart desires. This ought to be the Christian's experience, for if I am united, by the Spirit, to the Head as a member of the body of Christ, and if, by faith, I apprehend this union, it is none the less true that my personal experience (although this faith is its basis) is necessarily in connection with the paths which I follow, in order to reach the glory this entitles me to. Not that the sentiments awakened by that which I encounter on this path, either falsify or contradict my position in Christ, or destroy the certainty of my starting point. But, while possessing this certainty, and because I possess it, I know that I have not, in fact, reached the result of this position in glory. Now, in this Epistle, we are on the road, we are individualized in our relations with God; for experience is always individual, although our union to each other, as members of Christ, forms a part of this experience.

In chap. 4 ver. 4, Paul resumes his exhortation; but it was not burdensome to him, and it was safe for them (danger being present and his tender love watchful), to renew his warnings and instructions respecting the admixture of Judaizing principles with the doctrine of a glorified Christ. It was, in fact, to destroy the latter, and to reinstate the flesh (i.e., sin and alienation from God) in its place. It was the first man, already rejected and condemned; and not the second man. Yet it is not in the shape of sin, that the flesh appears here; but in that of righteousness, of all that is respectable and religious, of ordinances which had the venerable weight of antiquity attached to them, and as to their origin - if all had not been done away in Christ - the authority of God Himself.

To the apostle, who knew Christ in Heaven, all this was but a bait to draw the Christian away from Christ, and throw him back again into the ruin out of which Christ had drawn him., And this would be so much the worse; because it would be to abandon a known and glorified Christ, and to return to that which had been proved to be of no value through the flesh. The apostle, therefore, spares neither the doctrine nor those who taught it.

The glory which he had seen, his contests with these false teachers, the state into which they had thrown the Church, Jerusalem and Rome, his liberty and his prison, all had gained him the experience of what Judaism was worth, as to the Church of God. They were dogs, evil workers - i.e., workers of malice and wickedness. It was not the circumcision. He treats it with profound contempt, and uses language, the harshness of which is justified by his love for the Church (for love is severe towards those who, devoid of conscience, corrupt the object of that love). It was the concision.

When evil, without shame, and laboring to produce evil under a disgraceful veil of religion, is manifested in its true character, mildness is a crime against the objects of the love of Christ. If we love Him, we shall, in our intercourse with the Church, give the evil its true character, which it seeks to hide. This is real love, and faithfulness to Christ. The apostle had certainly not failed in condescension to the weak in this respect. He had carried it far; his prison testified it. And now, the Church, deprived of his energy and that spiritual decision which was full of love to all which is good, was more in danger than ever. The experience of a whole life of activity, of the greatest

patience, of four years' reflection in prison, led to these forcible and urgent words, " Beware of dogs, of evil workers, beware of the concision." The doctrine of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the exhortations of that to the Colossians, the affection of that to these Philippians, with the denunciation contained in date from the same epoch, and are marked with the same love. But it sufficed to denounce them. Elsewhere, when they were not well known, he gave details, as in the case of Timotheus, who had still to watch over the Church. It was sufficient now to point out their well-known character. Whatever Judaized, whatever sought to mingle law and gospel, ordinances and the Spirit, was shameless, malicious, and contemptible. But the apostle will rather occupy himself with the power that delivers from it. We are the circumcision, that which is really separate from the evil, that which is dead to sin and to the flesh; we who worship God not in the false pretension of ordinances, but spiritually by the power of the Holy Ghost, who rejoice in Christ the Savior and not in the flesh, but on the contrary, have no confidence in it. We see here Christ and the Spirit in contrast with the flesh and self. Paul might, indeed, boast, if needful, in that which belonged to the flesh. As to all Jewish privileges, he possessed them in the highest degree. He had outstripped every one in holy zeal against innovators. One thing alone had changed it all; he had seen a glorified Christ. All that he had according to the flesh, was thenceforth loss to him; it would place something between him and the Christ of his faith and of his desire, the Christ whom he knew. And, observe, that here it is not the sins of the flesh which Christ expiates and abolishes which he rejects: it is its righteousness. It has none, we may say; but even if the apostle had possessed any righteousness of the flesh-as, in fact, he possessed it outwardly -he would not have it, because he had seen a better. In Christ, who had appeared to him on the way to Damascus, he had seen divine righteousness accomplished for man, and divine glory in man. He had seen a glorified Christ, who acknowledged the Church as a part of Himself. He would have nothing else. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, had eclipsed everything; changed everything which was not that into loss. The stars, as well as the darkness of night, disappear before the sun. The righteousness of the law, the righteousness of Paul, all that distinguished him among men, disappeared before the righteousness of God and the glory of Christ. It was a thorough change in his whole moral being. His gain was now loss to him. Christ was become all. It was not evil which disappeared-everything that belonged to Paul as advantage to the flesh disappeared. It was another who was now precious to him. What a deep and radical change in the whole moral being of man, when he ceases to be the center of his own importance; and another, worthy of being so, becomes the center of his moral existence. A divine person, a man who had glorified God, a man in whom the glory of God shone out, to the eye of faith; in whom His righteousness was realized, His love, His tender mercy perfectly revealed towards men and known by men. This was He whom Paul desired to win, to possess-for here we are still in the paths of the wilderness-he desired to be found in Him: " That I may win Christ and be found in Him." Two things were present to his faith, in this desire. To have the righteousness of God Himself as his, in Christ he should possess it; and then, to know Him and the power of His resurrection-for he only knew Him as risen,-and, according to that power, to have part in the sufferings of Christ, and be made conformable to His death.

It was in His death that perfect love had been demonstrated, that righteousness had been accomplished, that self-renunciation was, practically, entirely, perfectly manifested in Christ, the perfect object, to the apostle, of a faith that apprehended it and desired it according to the new man. Christ had passed through death in the perfection of that life, the power of which was

manifested in resurrection.

Paul having seen this perfection in glory, and being united (weak as he was in himself) to the source of this power, desired to know the power of resurrection, that He might follow Christ in His sufferings. Circumstances held this as a reality before his eyes. His heart only saw or wished to see Christ, that he might follow Him there. This is, indeed, to know Him as completely put to the test, and thus to know all that He was, His perfection-of love, of obedience, of devotedness-fully manifested.

Having seen Him in the glory, the apostle understood the path which had led Him there, and the perfection of Christ in that path. Participating in His life, he desired to realize its power according to His glory, that he might follow Him, in order to be where Jesus was, and in the glory with Him. This is what the Lord said in John 12:23-26. Who had apprehended him like Paul by the grace of God? Observe here, the difference between him and Peter. Peter calls himself, " a witness of the sufferings of Christ and a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed." Paul, a witness of the glory as it is in heaven (" as He is," as John says), desires to share His sufferings. It is the special foundation of the Church, of walking in the Spirit, according to the revelation of the glory of Christ. It is this, I doubt not, which makes Peter say, that in all Paul's epistles-which he acknowledges, moreover, as a part of the Scriptures - there are some things hard to be understood.

Having, then, seen Christ in glory, there were two things for Paul-the righteousness of God in Christ, and the knowledge of Christ-the first entirely eclipsed everything of which the flesh could boast. The one was "mine own," the righteousness of man according to the law; the other was the righteousness of God, which is by faith-i.e., man is nothing in it. It is God's righteousness, man has part in it by believing; that is to say, by faith in Christ Jesus. The believer has his place before God in Christ, in the righteousness of God Himself, which He had accomplished in Christ, having glorified Himself in Him. What a position! Sin, human righteousness, all that is of self, excluded; our place being according to the perfection in which Christ, as man, has perfectly glorified God. But this place is necessarily the place of Him who has accomplished this glorious work. Christ, in His person and in His present position, is the expression of our place: to know Him is to know it. He is there according to divine righteousness. To be there as He is, is that which the fulfillment of divine righteousness has obtained for man, for us, in Christ. Thenceforth, having seen the righteousness of God, in that Christ is there, I desire myself to know what it is to be there: I desire to know Christ. But in truth, this embraces all that He was in accomplishing it. The glory reveals the power and the result. That which He suffered, is the work in which He glorified God; so that divine righteousness has been fulfilled in Him, and in His exaltation, as man, to divine glory. And here, divine love, perfect devotedness to His Father's glory, constant and perfect obedience, the endurance of all things, in order to give testimony of His Father's love for men, perfect patience, unfathomable sufferings, in order that love might be both possible and perfect for sinners,-all, in short, that Christ was, being connected with His person, makes him an object which commands, possesses, delivers, and strengthens the heart, by the power of His grace acting in the new life, in which we are united to Him by the all-powerful link of the Spirit, and causes Him to be the alone object before our eyes.

Accordingly, Paul desires to have that which Christ can give, His cup and His baptism; and to leave to the Father that which Christ left to Him, the disposal of places in the kingdom. He does not

desire, like John and James, the right and left hand, i.e., a good place for himself. He desires Christ; he would win Christ. He does not follow tremblingly, as the disciples did in that chapter (Mark 10); he desires to suffer-not, that is, for the sake of suffering, but to have part in the sufferings of Christ. Instead, therefore, of going away, like the young man in the same chapter, because he had much that could profit the flesh, instead of clinging, like him, to the law for his righteousness, he renounces that righteousness which he had in common with the young man; and all that he had he counted but as dung.

Here, then, we have the practical personal experience of the operation of this great principle, which the apostle has set forth in other epistles, that we have part with a glorified Christ. Also, in telling of the result as to himself, he speaks of his own resurrection according to the character of Christ's. It is not that of which Peter speaks, as we have seen, the simply participating in the glory that was to be revealed. It is that which precedes. Having seen Christ in the glory, according to the power of His resurrection, he desires to participate in that: and this is the force Of his word, " if by any means." He desired to have part in the resurrection from among the dead. If, in order to reach it, it were needful to pass through death (as Christ had done), he would go through it, cost what it might, be it in ever so painful a way-and death was at that time before his eyes with its human terrors-he desired fully to take part with Christ.

Now, it is the character of this resurrection, that it is from among the dead: it is not the resurrection of the dead. It is to come out, by the favor and the power of God (as it regards Christ, by the righteousness of God) from the condition of evil into which sin has plunged men. To come out-after having been dead by sin and to sin-through the favor and power and righteousness of God. What grace! and what a difference! By following Christ according to the will of God, in the place where He has set us (and to be content with the lowest place, if God has given it us, is the same renunciation of self as to labor in the highest-the secret of each is, that Christ is everything and ourselves nothing), we participate in His resurrection: a thought full of peace and joy, and which fills the heart with love to Christ. Joyful and glorious hope, which shines before our eyes in Christ, and in that blessed Savior glorified. The objects of divine favor in Him, we come forth-because the eye of God is upon us, because we are His-from the house of death, which cannot detain those who are His, because the glory and the love of God are concerned in them. Christ is the example and the pattern of our resurrection; the principle (Rom. 8) and the assurance of our resurrection is in Him. The road to it is that which the apostle here traces.

But since resurrection and likeness to Christ in glory, were the objects of his hope, it is very evident that he had not attained it. If that was his perfection, he could not be yet perfect. He was, as has been said, on the road; but Christ had apprehended him for it, and he still pressed onward to lay hold of the prize, for the enjoyment of which Christ had laid hold of him. No, he repeats to his brethren, I count not myself to have attained. But one thing, at least, he could say, he forgot all that was behind him, and pressed on ever towards the goal, keeping it always in sight, to obtain the prize of the calling of God, which is found in heaven. Happy Christian! it is a great thing never to lose sight of it, never to have a divided heart, to think but of one thing; to act, to think, always according to the positive energy wrought by the Holy Ghost in the new man, directing him to this only and heavenly object. It is not his sins, properly, which he here says he forgot-it was his progress that he forgot, his advantages, all that was already behind. And this was not merely the energy that showed itself at the first impulse; he still counted everything but as dung, because he

had still Christ in view. This is true Christian life. What a sad moment would it have been for Rebecca, if, in the midst of the desert with Eliezer, she had forgotten Isaac, and begun to think again of Bethuel and her father's house. What had she, then, in the desert with Eliezer?

Such was the true life and position of the Christian -even as the Israelites, although preserved by the blood from the messenger of judgment, were not in their true place till they were on the other side of the Red Sea, a freed people.

The Christian, until he understands this new position which Christ has taken as risen from the dead, is not spiritually in his true place, is not perfect or full-grown in Christ. But when he has attained this, it is not assuredly that he is to despise others. " If," says the apostle, " they were otherwise minded, God would reveal to them the fullness of his truth; and all were to walk together with one mind in the things to which they had attained. Where the eye was single it would be so: there were many with whom this was not the case-but the apostle was their example. This was saying much. While Jesus lived, the peculiar power of this resurrection-life could not be revealed in the same way, and, moreover, while on earth Christ walked in the consciousness of that which He was with His Father before the world existed, so that although He endured for the joy that was set before Him, although His life was the perfect pattern of the heavenly man, there was in Him a repose, a communion, which had a quite peculiar character; instructive, nevertheless to us, because the Father loves us as He loved Jesus, and Jesus also loves us as the Father loved Him. With Him it was not the energy of one who must run the race in order to attain that which he has never yet possessed. He spoke of that which He knew, and bore witness of that which He had seen, of that which He had forsaken from love to us.

John enters farther into this character of Christ; in his Epistle, therefore, we find more of that which He is in His nature and character, than of what we shall be with Him in the glory. Peter, building on the same foundation as the others, waits, however, for that which shall be revealed: his pilgrimage was, indeed, towards Heaven, to obtain a treasure which was preserved there, which shall be revealed in the last time; but it is more connected with that which had been already revealed. From his point of view, the morning star, on which Paul lived, appeared only on the extreme horizon. For him, practical life was that of Jesus among the Jews. He could not say with Paul, " Be ye followers of me." The effect of the revelation of the heavenly glory of Christ, between His going away and His re-appearance, and that of the union of all Christians to Him in Heaven, was fully realized in him only who received it. Faithful, through grace, to this revelation, having no other object which guided his steps or divided his heart, he gives himself as an example. He truly followed Christ, but the form of his life was peculiar, on account of the way in which God had called him; and it is thus that Christians possessing this revelation ought to walk.

Accordingly, Paul speaks of a dispensation committed to him.

It was not to turn their eyes from Christ: it is on having the eyes constantly fixed upon Him that he insists. It was this which characterized the apostle, and in this he gives himself as an example. But the character of this looking to Jesus was special. It was not a Christ known on earth who was its object, but a Christ glorified, whom he had seen in Heaven. To press ever forward to this end, formed the character of his life; even as this same glory of Christ, as a testimony to accomplished righteousness and to the Church's position, formed the basis of his teaching. Therefore he can say, " Be followers of me." His gaze was ever fixed on the heavenly Christ who had shone before

his eyes, and still shone before his faith. The Philippians were thus to walk together, and to mark those who followed the apostle's example; because (for evidently it was a period in which the Church had much departed from her first love and her normal condition) there were many who, while bearing the name of Christ and having once given good hope, so that the apostle speaks of them with tears, were enemies of the cross of Christ. For the cross on earth in our life, answers to the heavenly glory on high. It is not the Church at Philippi, which is the subject here, but the condition of the outward universal Church.

Many were already calling themselves Christians, who joined to that great name a life which had the earth and earthly things for its object. The apostle did not acknowledge them. They were there; it was not a matter of local discipline, but a condition of Christianity, in which even all were seeking their own interest; and spirituality being thus lowered, the Christ of glory little realized, many who had no life at all might walk among them without being detected by those who had so little life themselves, and scarcely walked better than they did. For it does not appear that they who were minding earthly things committed any evil that required public discipline. The general low tone of spirituality among the real Christians, left the others free to walk with them; and the presence of the latter debased still more the standard of godliness of life.

But this state of things did not escape the spiritual eye of the apostle, which, fixed on the glory, discerned readily and clearly all that had not that glory for its motive: and the Spirit has given us the Divine judgment, most grave and solemn, with regard to this state of things. No doubt it has grown enormously worse since then, and its elements have developed and established themselves in a manner and in proportions that are very differently characterized; but the moral principles with regard to walk remain ever the same for the Church. The same evil is present to be avoided, and the same efficacious means for avoiding it. There is the same blessed example to follow, the same heavenly Savior to be the glorious object of our faith, the same life to live, if we desire to be Christians indeed.

That which characterized these persons who professed the name of Christ, was, that their hearts were set upon earthly things; thus the Cross had not its practical power - it would have been a contradiction. Their end, therefore, was destruction. The true Christian was not such; his conversation was in Heaven and not on the earth; his moral life was spent in Heaven, his true relationships were there. From thence, he expected Christ as a Savior, that is to say, to deliver him from earth, from this earthly system far from God here below. For salvation is always viewed in this Epistle as the final result of the conflict, the result due to the almighty power of the Lord. Then, when Christ shall come to take the Church to Himself, Christians, truly heavenly, shall be like Him in His heavenly glory, a likeness which is the object of their pursuit at all times (compare John, chap. 3, ver. 2). Christ will accomplish it in them, conforming their bodies of humiliation to His glorious body, according to the power whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. Then the apostle and all Christians will have attained the end, the resurrection from among the dead.

Such is the tenor of this chapter. Many have inquired whether the aim was a spiritual assimilation to Christ here, or a complete assimilation to Him in the glory. This is rather to forget the import of what the apostle says, namely, that the sight and the desire of the heavenly glory, the desire of possessing Christ Himself, thus glorified, was that which formed the heart here below. An object here below, in oneself, could not be found, since Christ is on high: it would be to separate the heart

from the object which forms it to its own likeness. But although we never reach the mark here below - since it is a glorified Christ and resurrection from among the dead - yet its pursuit assimilates us more and more to Him. The object in the glory, forms the life which answers to it here below. Were a light at the end of a long straight alley, I never have the light itself till I am arrived there; but I have ever increasing light in proportion as I go forward; I know it better, I am more in the light myself. Thus it is with a glorified Christ, and such is Christian life. (Compare 2 Cor. chap. 3)

The Philippians were therefore to stand fast in the Lord. This is difficult when the general tone is lowered; painful also, for one's walk becomes much more solitary, and the hearts of others are straitened. But the Spirit has very plainly given us the example, the principle, the character, and the strength of this walk. With the eye on Christ all is easy, and communion with Him gives light and certainty, and is worth all the rest which, perhaps, we lose.

The apostle, nevertheless, spoke gently of those persons: they were not like the false Judaizing teachers who corrupted the sources of life, and stopped up the path of communion with God in love. They had lost this life of communion, or had never had more than the appearance of it. He wept for them.

I think that the apostle sent his letter by Epaphroditus, who probably also wrote it from the apostle's dictation; as was done with regard to all the epistles, except that to the Galatians, which, as he tells us, he wrote with his own hand. When, therefore, he says (chap. 4, ver. 3): " true, or faithful, yokefellow," he speaks, as I think, of Epaphroditus, and addresses him.

But he notices also, two sisters even, who were not of one mind, in resisting the enemy. In every way he desired unity of heart and mind. He entreats Epaphroditus (if it is indeed he), as the Lord's servant, to help those faithful women who had labored in concert with Paul to spread the Gospel. Euodias and Syntyche were, perhaps, of the number-the connection of thought makes it probable-their activity having gone beyond the measure of their spiritual life, betrayed them into an exercise of self-will which set them at variance. Nevertheless, they were not forgotten, together with Clement and others, who were fellow-laborers with the apostle himself, whose names were in the Book of Life. For love for the Lord remembers all that His grace does; and this grace has a place for each of His own.

The apostle returns to the practical exhortations addressed to the faithful, with regard to their ordinary life, that they might walk according to their heavenly calling. "Rejoice in the Lord." If he even weeps over many who call themselves Christians, he rejoices always in the Lord; in Him is that which nothing can alter. This is not an indifference to sorrow which hinders weeping, but it is a spring of joy which enlarges when there is distress, because of its immutability, and which becomes even more pure in the heart the more it becomes the only one; and it is in itself the only spring that is infinitely pure. When it is our only spring, we thereby love others. If we love them besides Him, we lose something of Him. When, through exercise of heart, we are weaned from all other springs, this joy remains in all its purity, and our concern for others partakes of this same purity. Nothing, moreover, troubles this joy, because Christ never changes. The better we know Him, the better are we able to enjoy that which is ever enlarging through knowing Him. But he exhorts Christians to rejoice: it is a testimony to the worth of Christ, it is their true portion.

Now this same thing will make them moderate and meek; their passions will not be excited by other things, if Christ is enjoyed. Moreover, He is at hand, A little while, and all for which men strive, will give place to Him whose presence bridles the will (or rather puts it aside) and fills the heart. We are not to be moved by things here below until He shall come. When He comes, we shall be fully occupied with other things.

Not only are the will and the passions to be bridled and silenced, but anxieties also. We are in relationship with God, in all things He is our refuge; and events do not disturb Him, He knows the end from the beginning. He knows everything, He knows it beforehand; events shake neither His throne nor His heart; they always accomplish His purposes. But to us He is Love; we are through grace, the objects of His tender care. He listens to us and bows down His ear to hear us. In all things, therefore, instead of disquieting ourselves, and weighing everything in our own hearts, we ought to. present our requests to God with prayer, with supplication, with a heart that makes itself known, for we are human beings, but with a knowledge of the heart of God, for He loves us perfectly; so that even while making our petition to Him, we can already give thanks, because we are sure of the answer of His grace, be it what it may; and it is our requests that we are to present to Him. This is trust- and His peace, the peace of God Himself, shall keep our hearts. It does not say that our hearts shall keep the peace of God, but having cast our burthen on Him, whose peace nothing can disturb, His peace keeps our hearts. Our trouble is before Him, and the constant peace of the God of love who takes charge of everything and knows all beforehand, quiets our unburdened hearts, and imparts to us the peace which is in Himself and which is above all understanding, even as He Himself is above all the circumstances that can disquiet us, and above the poor human heart that is troubled by them. Oh, what grace that even our anxieties are a means of our being filled with this marvelous peace, if we know how to bring them to God, and How true He is. May we learn, indeed, to maintain this intercourse with God, and its reality, in order that we may converse with Him, and understand His ways with believers.

Moreover, the Christian, although walking, as we have seen, in the midst of evil and of trial, is to occupy himself with all that is good, to live in this atmosphere, so that it shall pervade his heart, that he shall be habitually where God is to be found. This is an all-important command; we may be occupied with evil, in order to condemn it; we may be right, but this is not communion with God in that which is good. But if occupied, through His grace, with that which is good, with that which comes from Himself; the God of peace is with us. In trouble, we shall have the peace of God; in our ordinary life, if it be of this nature, we shall have the God of peace. Paul was the practical example of this: with regard to their walk, by following him in that which they had learned and heard from him, and seen in him, they should find that God was with them.

Nevertheless, although such was his experience, he rejoiced, greatly that their loving care of him had flourished again. He could indeed take refuge in God, but it was sweet to him in the Lord to have this testimony on their part. It is evident that he had been in need, but it was the occasion of more entire trust in God. We can easily gather this from his language; but, he delicately adds, he would not, by saying that their care of him had now at last flourished again, imply that they had forgotten him. The care for him was in their hearts; but they had not the opportunity of giving expression to their love. Neither did he speak in regard of want: he had learned-for it is practical experience and its blessed result we find here-to be content under all circumstances, and thus to depend on no one. He knew how to be abased; he knew how to abound; in every way he was

instructed both to be full, and to be hungry; to be in abundance, and to suffer want. He could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. Sweet and precious experience: not only because it gives ability to meet all circumstances which is of great price, but because the Lord is known the constant, faithful, mighty friend of the heart. It is not "I can do all things," but "I can do all through Christ who strengthens me." It is a strength which continually flows from a relationship with Christ; a connection with Him maintained in the heart. Neither is it only, "one can do all things." This is true; but Paul had learned it practically. He knew what he could be assured of and reckon on what ground he stood on. Christ had always been faithful to him; had brought him through so many difficulties, and through so many seasons of prosperity, that he had learned to trust in Him, and not in circumstances. And Christ was the same ever. Still the Philippians had done well, and it was not forgotten. From the first, God had bestowed this grace upon them, and they had supplied his need, even when he was not with them. He remembered it with affection, not that he desired a gift, but fruit to their own account. "But," he says, "I have all;" his heart turning back to the simple expression of its love. He was in abundance, having received by Epaphroditus that which they had sent him, an acceptable sacrifice of sweet odor, well-pleasing to God.

His heart rested in God: his assurance with regard to the Philippians expresses it. My God, he says, shall richly supply all your need. He does not express a wish that God may do so. He had learned what his God was, by his own experience. My God, he says, He whom I have learned to know in all the circumstances through which I have passed, shall fill you with all good things. And here he returns to His character as he had known Him. God would do it according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. There he had learned to know Him at the beginning; and such he had known Him all along his varied path, so full of trials here, and of joys from above. Accordingly he thus concludes: "Now unto our God and Father" -for such he was to the Philippians also- "be glory forever and ever." He applies his own experience of that which God was to him, and his experience of the faithfulness of Christ to the Philippians. This satisfied his love, and gave him rest with regard to them. It is a comfort when we think of the Church.

He sends the greeting of the brethren who were with him, and of the saints in general, especially those of Caesar's household; for even there God had found some who, through grace, had listened to His voice of love.

He ends with the salutation which was a token in all his epistles, that they were from himself.

The present state of the Church, of the children of God, dispersed anew, and often as sheep without a shepherd, is a very different condition of ruin from that in which the apostle wrote; but this only adds more value to the experience of the apostle which God has been pleased to give us; the experience of a heart which trusted in God alone, and which applies this experience to the condition of those who are deprived of the natural resources that belonged to the organized body, to the body of Christ as God had formed it on earth.

A Verse of Praise

To Thee, who hast loved us, and saved us by blood,
And brought us as kings and priests to Thy God,
To Thee, be dominion, strength, glory, and power,
All blessing, and honor, and praise, evermore.

T.

Relative Order of Three Synoptical Gospels

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are arranged in three parallel columns in the following tables, in their relative order. There are five tables. On the outer margins of each table are consecutive numbers, for more easy reference to any parallel passages required. Each table is numbered in Roman numerals. Observe the following direction:-

0 - Put before any text shows that no parallel passage occurs in the other two Gospels. 1,2 or 1,3 or 2,3 indicate the columns in which parallels occur. The headings introduced, e.g. M. 1. 6; L. 2. 8, (e.g. Matthew, table, 1, line number 6; Luke, table 2, line number 8) refer not to chapters and verses, but to the table and the marginal numbers opposite the line in which the passage referred to is to be found.-Ed.]

NOTE.

Mark is the most strictly chronological.

Luke follows him closest where he is so; hut the middle of the gospel is a collection of instructions not chronological, but morally connected.

Matthew orders his materials, or the Holy Spirit by him, to show the dealing with the Jews, as come to them according to promise, and the change to the new thing; and, though prophetically speaking of Church as well as kingdom, leads Christ, at close, to Galilee, with the residue, and does not follow the history to the ascension, but he alone gives the history of the resurrection itself. Harmonies lose the distinctive power of the gospel.

I believe Matt. 28:1, to mean the evening of Saturday, the crepuscule of evening not morning; ver. 5 is a new paragraph. Luke 24:34 alludes to the appearing to Peter, of which Paul speaks. Luke's account as to women is quite general. Mary Magdalene was at the sepulcher when it was dark. Peter and John go, and go away home. Mary remains and sees Jesus. When the women come they see the angels and flee. Mary Magdalene, taught of Jesus, goes and tells disciples. As the others went, Jesus meets them, and desires them to tell disciples He was going into Galilee. Mary Magdalene was to tell them He was going to the Father. It was only in their flight the women said nothing to any one. After meeting Jesus they were probably re-assured; and, at any rate, afterward they told what the angels told them, as we learn from the Lord going to Emmaus, and see Luke 24:9. But he unites all in a general statement, as often, and adds other women. Ver. 12 is apart; the Greek has not "then." The accounts are very brief, and refer to object of gospel. Several saw Him. See Mark 16:14; and 1 Cor. 15.

Table 1|

Line|Matthew (M.)|Mark (Mk.)|Luke (L.)|

1|Matt. 1:1-17. 0. Genealogy to David and Abraham.||Luke 1:5-25. 0. Zachariah's vision as to John's birth.|

2|Matt. 1:18-25. 1, 3. Birth of Jesus.||Luke 1:26-80. 0. Visitation of Mary, goes to see Elizabeth, birth of John, hymn of Zacharias.|

3|Matt. 2:1-12. 0. Arrival of Magi in Jerusalem and Bethlehem.||Luke 2:1-20. 0. Decree of Caesar, birth of Jesus, chorus of angels with shepherds.|

4|Matt. 2:13-23. 0-Flight to Egypt and return to Nazareth.||Luke 2:21-40. 0. Circumcision of Jesus - Simeon - Anna - return of Joseph to Nazareth.|

5|Matt. 3. 3. John the Baptist - Christ baptized.|Mark 1:1-11. 3. John the Baptist - Christ baptized.||Luke 2:41-52. 0. With the doctors in temple at twelve years old.|

6|Matt. 4:1-11. 3. Temptation. Mk. 1. 6; L. 1. 8.|Mark 1:12, 13. 3-Temptation (briefly)||Luke 3:1-22. 3. 15th of Tiberius - Annas and Caiaphas, John preaches, etc. - Christ baptized.|

7|Matt. 4:12-17. 1, 2. After John in prison - 1, 3. leaves Nazareth - 0. to dwell in Capernaum.|Mark 1:14, 15. 1, 2. After John in prison - Jesus preaches in Galilee. M. & L. 1. 9.||Luke 3:23-38. 0. Genealogy to Adam Son of God.|

8|Matt. 4:18-22. 3. Calls Andrew, Simon, James, John. Mk. 1. 8; L. 1. 12.|Mark 1:16-20. 3-Calls Andrew, Simon, James, and John. M. 1. 8; L. 1. 12.||Luke 4:1-13. 0. Full of the Holy Ghost. 3. Temptation. M. & Mk. 1. 6.|

9|Matt. 4:23-25. 3. Goes about all Galilee healing and preaching. Mk. 1. 7; L. 1. 9.|Mark 1:21, 28. 2, 3. Synagogue in Capernaum - casts out devil. L. 1. 10.||Luke 4:14-30 3. Teaches in synagogues of Galilee. 0. Preaches in Nazareth.|

10|Matt. 5-7. 1, 3. Seeing the multitudes. Sermon on the mount. L. 1. 20; 2. 22. (see Mk. 1. 17)||Mark 1:29, 39. 3. Heals Simon's wife's mother, and many in desert.||Luke 4:31-37. 2, 3. Synagogue in Capernaum, casts out devil. Mk. 1. 9.|

11|Matt. 8:1-4. 3. (Comes down). Heals leper.||Mark 1:40-45. 3. Heals leper. M. 1. 11; L. 1. 13.||Luke 4:40-44. 3. Heals Simon's wife's mother and many in desert. M. 1. 13; Mk. 1. 10.|

12|Matt. 8:5-13. 1, 3. Enters into Capernaum. Heals centurion's servant. L. 1. 21.|Mark 2:1-13. 3. Heals paralytic in Capernaum after days. M. 1. 16; L. 1. 14.||Luke 5:1-11. 3. Teaches the people, calls Andres, Simon, James, John. M. 1. 8; Mk. 1. 8.|

13|Matt. 8:14-17. 3. In Peter's house heals his wife's mother and many. Mk. 1. 10; L. 1. 11.|Mark 2:14-29. 3. Calls Levi. Grace to sinners, bridegroom here, wine in new bottles. M. 1. 17; L. 1. 15.||Luke 5:12-15. 3. Heals Leper. M. & Mk. 1. 11.|

14|Matt. 8:18-27. 3. Crosses the sea in a storm - foxes have holes - dead to bury their dead. Mk. 1. 20; L. 2. 5.|Mark 2:23, 28. 3. Sabbath in corn fields, etc. Son of Man Lord of it. M. 2. 1.||Luke 5:16-26. 3. Heals paralytic (a certain day). M. 1. 16; Mk. 1. 12|

15|Matt. 8:28-34. 3. Cures two in country of Gergenses. Devils go into swine. Mk. 1. 20; L. 2. 5.|Mark 3:1, 6. 3. Sabbath - withered hand healed in synagogue. Pharisees would kill him. M. 2. 1, 2; L. 1. 17.||Luke 5:27-39. Calls Levi, grace to sinners, bridegroom, wine in new bottles. M. 1. 17; Mk. 1. 13.|

16|Matt. 9:1-8. 3. Heals sick of the palsy in Capernaum (own city). Mk. 1. 12; L. 1. 14.|Mark 3:7-12. 0. General position and career of Christ.|Luke 6:1-5. 3. Second after first Sabbath in corn fields. Son of man Lord of it. M. 2. 1; Mk. 2. 14.]

17|Matt. 9:9-17. 3. Matthew called - grace to sinners - bridegroom there - wine in new bottles. Mk. 1. 13; L. 1. 15.|Mark 3:13, 20. 3. Goes up into the mountain - 2, 3. Appoints twelve apostles. M. 1. 10; L. 1. 18.|Luke 6:6-11. 3. Sabbath, withered hand healed in synagogue - Scribes and Pharisees filled with rage, would kill Him. M. 2. 1, 2; Mk. 1. 15.]

18|Matt. 9:18-26. 3. Ruler's daughter raised - woman healed on way. Mk. 1. 21; L. 2. 6.|Mark 3:21-35. 0. People come together, friends treat him as beside himself. 3. Full blasphemy of Pharisees against Holy Spirit - no forgiveness - owns disciples, not natural ties. M. 2. 2; L. 2. 20; M. 2. 4; L. 2. 4.|Luke 6:12-16. 2, 3. On the mountain in prayer - morning chose twelve - names them apostles. Mk. 1. 17 (see M. 1. 10).]

19|Matt. 9:27-34. 0. Two blind healed (Son of David) 1, 3-Dumb healed - Pharisees blaspheme. L. 2. 19.|Mark 4:1-34. 3. Parables from the ship. M. 2. 5; L. 2. 4, 22; 3. 10.|Luke 6:17-19. 0. Comes down - multitude there seek to touch, for virtue goes out to heal.]

20|Matt. 9:35-38. Goes everywhere healing and preaching - harvest plenty, laborers few.|Mark 4:35-41. 3. Crosses the sea in the storm (5:1, 20). Heals Legion. M. 1. 14; L. 2. 5.|Luke 6:20-49. 1, 3. Addresses His disciples in Sermon (on the mount). M. 1. 10.]

21|Matt. 10. 3-Sends out twelve - (to Israel only). Mk. 2. 1; L. 2. 7.|Mark 5:21-43. 3. Jairus' daughter - woman healed on the way. M. 1. 18; L. 2. 6.|Luke 7:1-10. 1, 3. Enters into Capernaum, heals centurion's servant. M. 1. 12.]

22|Matt. 11. 1, 3-Message of John - and principles of change of dispensation. L. 2. 1.|Mark 6:1, 6. 1, 2. Despised as Carpenter's Son. M. 2. 5.|Luke 7:11-18. 0. Widow of Nain's son raised.]

Table 2|

Line|Matthew|Mark|Luke|

1|Matt. 12:1-13. 3. Sabbath in corn fields, another Sabbath, withered hand healed. Mk. 1. 14; L. 1. 16.|Mark 6:7-13. 3. Twelve sent out. M. 1. 21; L. 2. 7.|Luke 7:19-35. 1, 3. Message of John, Jews judged, wisdom justified of her children. M. 1. 22.]

2|Matt. 12:14-32. 3. Pharisees seek to kill, afterward blaspheme against Holy Ghost, for this no forgiveness. Mk. 1. 15; L. 1. 17; Mk. 1. 18.|Mark 6:14-29. 3. Herod's thought, Christ is John. 1, 2. Account of John Baptist's death. L. 2. 7; M. 2. 6.|Luke 7:36-50. Simon and the woman that was a sinner with Jesus.]

3|Matt. 12:33-45. 3. Nation judged, sign of Jonas, Nineveh, Queen of Sheba, evil spirit and seven more, their last state. L. 2. 21.|Mark 6:20-44. 3. (On Twelve's return) goes into desert - feeds 5,000. M. 2. 7; L. 2. 8.|Luke 8:1-3. Goes preaching, twelve and devoted women with Him.]

4|Matt. 12:46-50. 3. Disowns relationship by nature in flesh. His disciples His brethren. Mk. 1. 18; L. 2. 4.|Mark 6:45-56. 1, 2. Walks on the sea - heals in Gennesaret. M. 2. 8.|Luke 8:4-21. 3. Parables - Disciples not natural relations His brethren. M. 2. 5; Mk. 1. 19; M. 2. 4; Mk. 1. 18.]

5|Matt. 13. 3. Parables - despised as Carpenter's son. L. 2. 4; 3. 10; Mk. 1. 19, 22.|Mark 7:1-23. 1, 2. Judgment on tradition and Pharisees. M. 2. 9.|Luke 8:22-40. 3. Crosses sea in storm asleep, heals Legion in Gadarenes, effect on Legion. M. 1. 14; Mk. 1. 20.|

6|Matt. 14:1-12. 1, 2. History of John Baptist's death. M. 2. 2 (see L. 1. 6.).|Mark 7:24-30. 1, 2. Syrophoenician woman. M. 2. 10.|Luke 8:41-56. 3. Jairus' daughter, woman healed. M. 1. 18; Mk. 1. 21.|

7|Matt. 14:13-21. 3. Account of 5,000 fed. Mk. 2. 3; L. 2. 8.|Mark 7:31, 37. 0. Heals deaf, could hardly speak aside, with Ephphatha.|Luke 9:1-9. 3. Twelve sent out, Herod's surprise, believes it's John. M. 1. 21; Mk. 2. 1 (Mk. 1. 22. not here). M. 2. 6; Mk. 2. 2.|

8|Matt. 14:22-36. 1, 2. Walks on sea - heals in Gennesaret. Mk. 2. 4.|Mark 8:1-9. 1, 2. Feeds 4,000. M. 2. 11.|Luke 9:10-17. 3. Twelve return - feed's 5,000. M. 2. 7; Mk. 2. 3.|

9|Matt. 15:1-20. 1, 2. Judgment on tradition and Pharisees. Mk. 2. 5.|Mark 8:10-21. 1, 2. Leaves Pharisees judged, Twelve slow of heart. M. 2. 12.|Luke 9:18-27. 3. Peter confesses Him, Cross to be taken up. M. 2. 13; Mk. 2. 11.|

10|Matt. 15:21, 28. 1, 2. Woman of Canaan & her daughter. M. 2. 6.|Mark 8:22-26. 0. Blind man gradually healed, aside.|Luke 9:28-43. 3. Transfiguration and what follows. M. 2. 14; Mk. 2. 12.|

11|Matt. 15:29, 39. 1, 2. Feeds 4,000 near sea of Galilee. M. 2. 8.|Mark 8:27-38. 3. Peter confesses Christ, the cross to be taken up (not Church). M. 2. 13; L. 2. 9.|Luke 9:43-45. 3. Sayings to sink down in ears - of Cross. M. 2. 15; Mk. 2. 13.|

12|Matt. 16:1-12. 1, 2. Leaves Pharisees and Sadducees judged. Twelve slow of heart. Mk. 2. 9.|Mark 9:1-29. 3. Transfiguration and what follows. M. 2. 14; L. 2. 10.|Luke 9:46-50. 3. Children a pattern, not to forbid casting out, those not against, with. M. 2.16; Mk. 2. 14 (not all in Matthew).|

13|Matt. 16:13-28. 3. Confession of Peter, Son of living God, the Church, the Cross. Mk. 2. 11; L. 2. 9.|Mark 9:30-32. 3. Teaches the cross. M. 2. 15; L. 2. 11.|Luke 9:51-56. 0. Among Samaritans going to Jerusalem, come to save not destroy.|

14|Matt. 17:1-21. 3. Transfiguration. Elias, unbelief, Devil cast out by Jesus. Mk. 2. 12; L. 2. 10.|Mark 9:33-50. 2. Children a pattern, not to forbid the caster out of devils - not against, with - warns against offenses, all salted with fire, sacrifices with salt. M. 2. 16; L. 2. 12 (first part only partially in Matthew).|Luke 9:57, 62. 1, 3. Nowhere to lay His head, the dead to bury their dead, not to look back. M. 1. 15.|

15|Matt. 17:22-27. 3. Teaches the cross. 0. Didrachma. Mk. 2. 10; L. 2. 11.|Mark 10:1-16. 1, 2. Question of divorce, children owned, of such Kingdom of God. M. 2. 18.|Luke 10:1-16. 0. Seventy sent out, judgment on Chorazin, Tire, etc. - despising of Christ - despising Him who sends. M. 1. 22; Mk. 2. 1.|

16|Matt. 18:1-14. 0. Children owned as regarded of God, Kingdom of Heaven of such, those like them great - warns against offenses. Mk. 2. 14; L. 2. 12.|Mark 10:17-27. 3. Young ruler loved, danger of riches, salvation possible to God. M. 2. 19; L. 4. 2.|Luke 10:17-21. 0. Best portion, names written in heaven - 3. all given to Son, their eyes blessed who saw what they saw. M. 1. 22;

Mk. 2. 5.]

17|Matt. 18:15-35. 0. Church. Two or three met in Jesus' name take place of Synagogue, directions given, forgiveness in grace.|Mark 10:28-34. 3. Leaving all, hundred fold and eternal life - disciples follow amazed to Jerusalem, Jesus to be rejected - His place in resurrection. M. 2. 20; L. 4. 3.|Luke 10:25-37. 0. Lawyer's question on eternal life, neighbor, grace, good Samaritan.]

18|Matt. 19:1-15. 1, 2. Natural relationship rests on divine ordinance, but something above, not universal, in marriage, question of divorce, in children. Mk. 2. 15.|Mark 10:35-45. 1, 2. Zebedee's sons - M. 2. 21 3. lowliness disciples' place. M. 2. 22; L. 4. 17.|Luke 10:38-42. 0. Mary hears His word - Martha cumbered.]

19|Matt. 19:16-26. 3. Young man of upright amiable nature, but rests on it for goodness, danger of riches - salvation God's work - impossible to man. Mk. 2. 16; L. 4. 2.|Mark: Nothing.|Luke 11:1, 15. 1, 3. Prayer, gift of Holy Spirit. Dumb healed - Pharisees blaspheme. M. 1. 10.]

20|Matt. 19:27; 20:19. 3. Cross to be taken up, leaving all, fruit in regeneration, all grace, hiring of laborers, Jesus to be rejected, has his place in resurrection. Mk. 2. 17; L. 4. 3.||Luke 11:15, 26. 3. Blasphemy against Holy Spirit. Unclean spirit goes out - takes seven more. M. 2. 2; Mk. 1. 18.]

21|Matt. 20:20-23. 1, 2. Zebedee's sons. Christ gives share in cross necessary place in the kingdom for those for whom prepared of Father. Mk. 2. 18.||Luke 11:27-32. Reception of the word better than natural relationship 1, 3. Judgment of generation by Jonas, Nineve, Queen of Sheba. M. 2. 3.]

22|Matt. 20:24-28. 3. Lowliness disciples' place. Mk. 2. 18; L. 4. 17.||Luke 11:33-36. 3. Light set on candlestick - 0. but what is eye to receive it. M. 1. 10; Mk. 1. 19.]

23|||Luke 11:37, 54. 3. Judgment of Pharisees, lawyers. Scribes press Him. M. 4. 14; Mk. 4. 14; 2. 9.]

Table 3]

Line|Matthew|Mark|Luke|

1|All this (in column 3) is either only in Luke or morsels from various parts of the history put morally together.|Luke 12:1-7. Discourse. God to be feared not man, all will be known. M. 1. 21; Mk. 1. 19.]

2||Luke 12:8-12. Disciples speak by Holy Ghost, speaking against Him not forgiven. M. 1. 21; Mk. 1. 18; 4. 15.]

3||Luke 12:13-21. No judge or divider, avoid covetousness, life not in possessing.]

4||Luke 12:22-34 Not to be thoughtful, God their Father cares for disciples as precious - Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom. M. 1. 10.]

5||Luke 12:35-40. To wait for their Lord, girded till then, then Christ's love will serve them. M. 4. 18.]

6||Luke 12:41-48. They rulers over all found serving faithfully, unfaithful judged according to knowledge of will.]

7||Luke 12:49-59. Does not bring peace, time to be discerned by people. Adversary to be agreed with, else go into prison. M. 1. 21, 10.|

8||Luke 13:1-10. They must all repent, or be destroyed, God's patience with His fig-tree closes.|

9||Luke 13:11-17. He will act in grace in Israel on Sabbath in spite of hypocrisy. See M. 2. 1; Mk. 1. 14.|

10||Luke 13:18-22. Kingdom will be like grain of mustard seed and leaven. M. 2. 5; Mk. 1. 19.|

11||Luke 13:23-30. Are remnant few? Strait gate for the nation rejected, Last first, First last. M. 1. 10.|

12||Luke 13:31-33. In spite of cunning to get rid of Him in Galilee, must perish at Jerusalem in God's time when His work is done.|

13||Luke 13:34-35. O Jerusalem! Jerusalem!|

14||Luke 14:1-6. Their own selfish conduct shows God may be good not rest on Sabbath.|

15||Luke 14:7-14. In new system, grace takes lowest place, deals in grace recompensed in resurrection.|

16||Luke 14:15-24. Invitation (character of Kingdom) rejected, lanes gone to, then highways, nation invited rejected. M. 4. 11.|

17||Luke 14:25-35. Forsake relations and life to be His disciples, cost to be counted, salt must have its savor. M. 1. 21 (see M. 2. 11).|

18|(Column 3) Only in Luke.|Luke 15. Parables of lost sheep, piece of silver, prodigal son, grace seeking, receiving grace.|

19||Luke 16:1-18. Grace reckoning on the future in use of present things. Unjust steward.|

20||Luke 16:19, 31. The future things opened in contrast with present - Dives and Lazarus. Jews won't hear even if one rise from the dead.|

21||Luke 17:1-10. Offenses, power of faith, but only service. M. 2. 16; Mk. 2. 12.|

22||Luke 17:11-19. Samaritan healed, owning God in Christ, not bound to temple.|

23||Luke 17:20, 18:8. Judgment of Jerusalem in the days of the Son of Man like Noah and Lot, but God will hear His elect who cry. M. 4. 16; Mk. 4. 15.|

Table 4|

Line|Matthew|Mark|Luke|

1||Here history resumed.|Luke 18:9-17. Lowliness as a sinner - 3. Lowliness as a child. M. 2. 18; Mk. 2. 15.|

2||Luke 18:18-23. 3. Life by law if kept - young ruler - perfection - leave all and follow Christ. M. 2. 19; Mk. 2. 16.|

3|||Luke 18:24-30. 3. Salvation possible with God - leaving all, more now and eternal life. M. 2. 19; Mk. 2. 10.|

4||Last scene begins.|Luke 18:31-34. 3. Son of man REJECTED - has His place in resurrection. M. 2. 20; Mk. 2. 17.|

5|Matt. 20:30-34. 3. Blind man going out of Jericho, Son of David. Mk. 4. 5; L. 4. 5.|Mark 10:46-52. 3. Blind man healed going out of Jericho, Son of David. M. 4. 5; L. 4. 5.|Luke 18:35-43. 3. Blind man near Jericho healed - Son of David. M. 4. 5; Mk. 4. 5.|

6|Matt. 21:1-11. 3. Rides into Jerusalem on the ass's colt. Mk. 4. 6; L. 4. 8.|Mark 11:1-11. 3. Rides into Jerusalem on ass's colt - (looks round). M. 4. 6; L. 4. 8.|Luke 19:1-10. 0. History of Zacchaeus.|

7|Matt. 21:12-16. 3. (Cleanses temple) (introduced not necessarily in order). Mk. 4. 8; L. 4. 9.|Mark 11:12-14. 1, 2. On the morrow curses fig-tree. M. 4. 8.|Luke 19:11-27. 0. Parable of nobleman gone to receive a Kingdom leaving ten pounds to ten servants, message after him, will judge His enemies.|

8|Matt. 21:17-22. 1, 2. Next morning curses fig-tree, faith can do everything. Mk. 4. 7, 8.|Mark 11:15, 26. 3. Cleanses temple. 1, 2. Fig-tree withered - faith can do everything - praying with forgiveness. M. 4. 7; L. 4. 9.|Luke 19:28-44. 3. Rides into Jerusalem on ass's colt. 0. Weeps over city, will not stop children. M. 4. 6; Mk. 4. 6.|

9|Matt. 21:23-27. 3. On question of authority, Baptism of John, whence? Mk. 4. 9; L. 4. 10.|Mark 11:27-33. 3. On question of authority. Baptism of John, whence?|Luke 19:45-48. 3. Cleanses temple. M. 4. 7; Mk. 4. 8.|

10|Matt. 21:28-46. 0. Sons sent into vineyard, 3. Fruit sought from husbandmen, destroys them. Mk. 4. 10; L. 4. 11.|Mark 12:1-12. 3. Fruit sought from husbandmen. M. 4. 10; L. 4. 11.|Luke 20:1-8. 3. On question of whence authority, Baptism of John, whence? M. 4. 9; Mk. 4. 9.|

11|Matt. 22:1-14. 1, 3. Marriage for the King's Son (invited in from highways). L. 3. 16.|Mark 12:13-27. 3. Herodians and Pharisees as to tribute - Sadducees, resurrection.|Luke 20:9-18. 3. Fruit sought from husbandmen. M. 4. 10; Mk. 4. 10.|

12|Matt. 22:15-40. 3. Herodians and Pharisees as to tribute - Sadducees, resurrection - Mk. 4. 11; L. 4. 12. 1, 2. Great commandments of law. Mk. 4. 12.|Mark 12:28-34. 1, 2. Great commandments of the law. M. 4. 12.|Luke 20:19-40. 3. Spies as to tribute to deliver Him to Governor - Sadducees as to resurrection. M. 4. 12; Mk. 4. 11.|

13|Matt. 22:41-46. 3. How is Christ David's Son? Mk. 4. 13; L. 4. 13.|Mark 12:35-37. 3. How is Christ David's son? M. 4. 13; L. 4. 13.|Luke 20:41-44. 3. How is Christ David's son? M. 4. 13; Mk. 4. 13.|

14|Matt. 23:1-33. 0. Disciples to mind scribes in Moses' chair, 1, 2. But woe to these Pharisees. Mk. 4. 14.|Mark 12:38-44. 3. Beware of scribes. 2, 3. Widows' mite true charity. M. 4. 14 (different) L. 4. 14.|Luke 20:45-47. 2, 3. Beware of scribes - widow's mite (21:1, 4.) Mk. 4. 14 (Matt. different).|

15|Matt. 23:34-39. 0. Such to be sent - O Jerusalem, Jerusalem - all blood on that generation.|Mark 13. 3. Jews - witness and judgment - Christ appears - watch. M. 4. 16; L. 4. 15.|Luke 21:5-38. 3. Jews - witness, Jerusalem surrounded, given up to Gentiles till, end of age, Christ appears, watch. M. 4. 16; Mk. 4. 15.]

16|Matt. 24, 25. 3. Jews - witness and judgment - Christ appears - watch. Mk. 1. 15; L. 4. 15. 0. Church - servants, virgins, talents - Gentiles - sheep & goats.|Mark 14:1-2. 3. After two days Passover - priests consult. M. 4. 18; L. 4. 16.|Luke 22:1-6. 3. Passover near, priests consult, Judas goes to them. M. 4. 18; Mk. 4. 16.]

17||Mark 14:3, 11. 1, 2. Woman anoints Him - Judas covenants to betray. M. 4. 19.|Luke 22:7-30. 3. Eats passover, who greatest? - M. 4. 20; Mk. 4. 18. 1, 3. But to sit on thrones judging twelve tribes of Israel. M. 2. 10.]

18|Matt. 26:1-5. 3. After two days passover, Son of man betrayed, priests consult. Mk. 4. 16; L. 4. 16.|Mark 14:12-52. 3. Eats Passover, Peter's confidence, Gethsemane. M. 4. 20; L. 4. 17.|Luke 22:31-38. 0. Satan would sift, 3. Peter's confidence, to shift for themselves now without Him. M. 4. 20; Mk. 4. 18.]

19|Matt. 26:6-16. 1, 2. Woman anoints Him - Mk. 4. 17. 3. Judas covenants to betray. Mk. 4. 17; L. 4. 16.|Mark 14:53-72. 3. Before Caiaphas, etc. - Peter's denial. M. 4. 21; L. 4. 19.|Luke 22:39-71. 3. Gethsemane, High Priest's house, Peter's denial. M. 4. 20, 21; Mk. 4. 18, 19.]

20|Matt. 26:17-56. 3. Eats Passover - Peter's confidence - Gethsemane. Mk. 4. 18; L. 4. 17; L. 4. 18, 19.|Mark 15:1-15. 3. Brought before Pilate - given up on Jews' demand. M. 4. 22; L. 4. 20.|Luke 13:1-25. 3. Brought before Pilate, Herod, Pilate, given up to Jews. M. 4. 22; Mk. 4. 20.]

21|Matt. 26:57-75. 3. Before Caiaphas - Peter's denial of Him - wept. Mk. 4. 19; L. 4. 19.|Mark 15:16-41. 3. Crucified - veil rent - Centurion, women there. M. 5. 1; L. 4. 21.|Luke 23:26-49. 3. Let out and crucified between malefactors (one repents) women. M. 5. 1; Mk. 4. 21.]

22|Matt. 27:1-26. 3. Brought before Pilate, Judas brings back money - Potters' field - Jesus before Governor - given up on Jews' demand. Mk. 4. 20; L. 4. 20.|Mark 15:42-47. 3. Joseph places Him in the tomb - day of preparation. M. 5. 2; L. 4. 22.|Luke 23:50-56. 3. Joseph places Him in tomb, day of preparation. M. 5. 2; Mk. 4. 22.]

Table 5]

Line|Matthew|Mark|Luke|

1|Matt. 27:27-56. 3. He is crucified. Mk. 4. 21; L. 4. 21. 1, 2. The veil rent. Mk. 4. 21 0. Graves opened - Centurion - women there.|Mark 15:47. 3. Women at sepulcher. M. 5. 2, 6; L. 5. 1.|Luke 23:55-56. 3. Women at sepulcher to behold. M. 5. 2, 6; Mk. 5. 1.]

2|Matt. 27:57-61. 3. Joseph places His body in tomb - women at sepulcher. Mk. 4. 22; L. 4. 22; Mk. 5. 1; L. 5. 1.|Mark 16:1. 1, 2. Sabbath past, women come to see sepulcher. M. 5. 2.|Luke 24:1-3. 2, 3. First day of week, come to sepulcher very early (stone rolled away). Mk. 5. 3.]

3|Matt. 27:62-66. 0. Day after preparation - priests place a guard.|Mark 16:2-4. 2, 3. Early in morning come to see sepulcher, at rising of sun, see stone rolled away. L. 5. 2.|Luke 24:4-8. 3.

Angels tell women He is risen as He said. M. 5. 6; Mk. 5. 4.]

4|Matt. 28:1. 1, 2. Close of Sabbath, Women come to Sepulcher. Mk. 5. 2.|Mark 16:5, 7. 3. Women reassured by angels, to say He was going into Galilee. M. 5. 6; L. 5. 3.|Luke 24:9-12. 3. They return, tell disciples, Peter goes and departs wondering. M. 5. 7; Mk. 5. 5.]

5|Matt. 28:2-3. 0. Earthquake, Angel rolls back the stone.|Mark 16:8. 3. Flee from sepulcher. M. 5. 7; L. 5. 4.|Luke 24:13-35. 3. Interview with two going to Emmaus, opens Scripture, they return and find eleven. Mk. 5. 7.]

6|Matt. 28:4-7. 0. The guards tremble - 3. Women reassured - Jesus going into Galilee. Mk. 5. 4; L. 5. 3.|Mark 16:9-11. 0. Jesus appears first to Mary Magdalene, she tells disciples. (See John's Gospel.)|Luke 24:36-43. 2, 3. Jesus appears in their midst and eats. Mk. 5. 7.]

7|Matt. 28:8. 3. Go to tell His disciples. Mk. 5. 5; L. 5. 4.|Mark 16:12-14. 2, 3. Appears to two going into the country, to eleven at meat. L. 5. 6, 5.|Luke 24:44-45. 0. Explains Scriptures and opens their understandings.]

8|Matt. 28:9-10. 0. Jesus meets the women, they are to say they would meet Him in Galilee where they were to go.|Mark 16:15-18. 0. Sends them all into the world to preach to every creature.|Luke 24:46-48. 0. How repentance and remission of sins was to be preached, beginning at Jerusalem.]

9|Matt. 28:11-15. 0. Guards take money to say He was stolen.|Mark 16:19. 2, 3. The Lord received up into heaven. L. 5. 10.|Luke 24:49. 0. To tarry in Jerusalem for power.]

10|Matt. 28:16-18. 0. Disciples go into Galilee.|Mark 16:20. 0. They go and preach everywhere, the Lord working with them.|Luke 24:50-51. 2, 3. Leads them to Bethany, while blessing them taken up to heaven. Mk. 5. 9.]

11|Matt. 28:19-20. 0. Mission founded on all power in heaven and earth given to them (no ascension near Jerusalem).|Luke 24:52-53. 0. They worship, return to Jerusalem with joy, continually in Temple.]

Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 1:1-10; Colossians 3:24-27

Now to Him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for the obedience of faith. To God only wise be glory, through Christ Jesus forever. Amen.

There should a little criticism enter here; the words translated writings of the Prophets," is in the original γραφῶν προφητικῶν, i.e. prophetic writings. The Hebrew idiom is to put the genitive of a substantive for the adjective, it often translated adjectively in the common translation does not apply here; the case is reversed, and there is no warrant for the word "Prophets," nor would it be true, because the Prophets of the Old Testament did not give a hint of the mystery here spoken of. The earth is the object of their prophecy. Judah, Israel, the nations, judgments, blessings, the glory of the Son of Man. There has also arisen an interesting question as to the admission of the word "and" (re), which, I believe is justly retained, and makes, therefore, the prophetic writings more as but one of the methods in the Divine counsels; and the revelation of which, by which means, was according to the commandment of the everlasting God. The word "Prophets," therefore, being inapplicable, where shall we look for the prophetic writings which relate to the mystery. The ancient Scriptures were written for our instruction, and there are many prophecies not exactly contained in the body called the Prophets. Moses was a prophet, David was a prophet, but not in the sense of the prophets of the Old Testament. Moses, and the Psalms, and the Prophets are distinguished by the Lord; and we shall find the mystery hid in the writings of Moses and other books, and which became known by the reflection of the Holy Ghost, upon them, but which had remained till such was cast on them. To no Jew was it granted to read in Adam and Eve the type of the mystery revealed to Paul, and such can be traced in writings thereby, even prophetic at the time appointed of God. "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and His church." There are other types of the same, but it is enough to show that from the first God was pointing out a counsel in His mind before all ages. Thus darkly intimated, and known only when the reflection of the Spirit at the time of the revelation of it was to make it manifest, the glory of the church (the ministration of the Spirit) was told of in the New Testament. It was no prophecy of the mystery which it revealed but of the glory of the church. There are many treatises happily, I believe, familiar to many on the truth of the church, but it is the exegesis of the places separately that have engaged the attention of the writer.

The second place is as follows: "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward, how, that by revelation, He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which, in other ages, was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and of the same body, and partakers of His promise by the Gospel, whereof I am made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the effectual working of His power-unto me, who am less

than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see (φωτισαι παντας) what is the fellowship (οικονομια) of the mystery, which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that now unto principalities and powers, in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold (πολυποικιλος) wisdom of God."

There appear three parts to this: that which was not in other ages revealed unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles, etc. Here then, first, we have that which was not revealed in particular to Paul, but to the apostles and prophets, and to him, as one of them, it was not revealed as it is now revealed. There was more revealed in the Old Testament, than that the Gentiles should be called in in the day of Christ [see preceding note], but whatever was given came first to the Jew, even to the highest; and the Gentiles, when they trusted in Christ, came in on a perfect level with them in the one new man - fellow-heirs, of the same body, and partakers of promise. This is very general, and does not amount to all given to Paul. Secondly,- it was union with Christ and the unsearchable riches to the soul of His indwelling (in Col. Christ in you) that he was given to preach (and the first is only said to be revealed.). To himself, the least of all saints, is this grace given. Thirdly,-That which was yet more special, it was to enlighten all men-apostles and prophets-on the order of the rule and feeding of the house, its manner of holding together, its joints and bands, its gifts, and their service. We find πρεσβυτας, &c. &c., to the assembly and eldership in other places, but not these as in the Church, being the πολυποικιλος, wisdom of God; intimating variety in the wisdom of God in the frame of the mystery, a wonder of beauty and symmetry and variety, working and fulfilling unity (how different from uniformity the forced work of the enemy in denial of the Church and the Spirit), and the object of the wonder of the principalities and powers in heaven.

Oh! how the heart sighs amidst this desolation! But still is the "grace given" that Christ should dwell (κατα, deeply) in the heart by faith, that the saints being rooted and grounded in love, they should know the love of Christ, and be filled with all the fullness of God. The Church, and the blessing above, essentially remain and never cease.

The next place is Col. 1:24...The church, whereof I am made minister, according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me for you, to fulfill (πληρωσαι) the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to (εν) His saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ " in you, the hope of glory whom we preach, warning every man," &c. This is more confined to a special object, the mystery, generally, being mentioned to introduce it. Great, beyond all thought, is the nature of the glory that the saints reap by Christ; but the riches of it, is Christ Himself in them-" The unsearchable riches of Christ." How we may bless God that FAITH is the way of possession; the object effecting, to faith, all that it is in such kind to receive.

This is the second point; that is, the purpose of the Spirit in the Epistle to the Colossians, which Epistle is an introduction of the Church to Christ, as Lord, to Christ the head' of the Church (and is a sequel to the Epistle to the Ephesians), as Lord over all, and over the Church, as here in the kingdom; and as the relationship was in the Ephesians of the saints in Christ: here it is Christ in them; and we have, it strikes me, the obedience in the different relationships to Christ, as Lord, and Christ as indwelling; so wondrous are the depths still open to our study and use: and we have

to bless the grace that keeps them so; and how confident we ought to be in the Lord, being still with His people, that nothing shall be wanting, even in an evil day, to perfect them in the stature of Christ. How it ought to rejoice, while it humbles the heart, to find God so busy about our salvation, as to reveal, in His "wisdom and prudence," all that may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Comparison of the Epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians

An attentive consideration of the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Ephesians, will afford us some interesting light on the question of the position of the believer in Christ. The whole question of our place in Christ is viewed under a different aspect in the two Epistles. I would briefly consider this. The doctrine of redeeming grace may be viewed in two ways. God's own purposes as to His children in glory, may be developed on the one hand, or the condition of man portrayed, and met by grace visiting them in mercy to deliver them on the other. The Epistle to the Ephesians follows the first of these methods, the Epistle to the Romans the second.

In Ephesians, we have at once the saints blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ -- placed in the blessed image of God before Him, and adopted to be His children. Redemption itself comes as a means in the second place. The knowledge of the mystery- the gathering together in one all things in. Christ - and our sealing as heirs till the redemption of the purchased possession follows. The Romans, after some introductory verses, commences by the description of the dreadful state in which fallen man was, unfolds the depravity of the Gentiles, the hypocrisy of those who pretended to moralize, and were personally no better; and, finally, the sad condition of the Jews, who if they had the law, broke it. In the third chapter, at the close, grace meets this state. But this leads to the consideration of the work of grace, in each Epistle, in a different way.

To speak first of the Ephesians. The sinner is seen dead in trespasses and sins -walking, doubtless, in them, but, before God, wholly dead. But even here this is not the first object presented. As the first chapter presents the position in which the saint is placed, so the second, the work which brings him into it. With this view, what is first brought before us is, God's power toward us manifested in what was wrought in Christ. God had raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His right hand, far above all principality and power, above and beyond all created glory, not only in this age, but in that to come, where all hierarchies will be in their true glory and unclouded elevation, but He above and out of them all. Divine power in its exceeding greatness had brought Him from death up there.

As the origin of our life is before all worlds (John 1, 1 John 1), so our place before God is out of and above all worlds and creature powers. It is to be remarked here, however, that Christ Himself is first looked at as already dead. The whole work is thus of God; for Christ being dead, is looked at of course as man, and this wondrous power is exerted, and He, as man, is at God's right hand. Then the saints are brought before us, Gentiles or Jews, as alike children of wrath by nature, and are seen once utterly dead in trespasses and sins, quickened together with Him, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. The whole is entirely God's work. We are created again. It is not living men who have to be dealt with, who are without law and under law, must die in Christ, and are set free by death. They are found dead in sin, and we get the perfect full blessing of the work, because it is entirely God's. Man is for nothing therein, for what has he to do with creation? He is created; all that man, i.e., the believer is, is God's work.

Hence, also, remark, we have peace, making nigh, reconciling, exalting to sit in heavenly places in Christ, but not justifying, because it is a living, responsible existing man who has to be justified before God. But we have Christ exalted, and ourselves exalted in Him. It is God's work in Christ and in us, not our being justified before God.

If I turn now to the Romans, it is otherwise. I get Christ alive on the earth, made of the seed of David, according to the flesh - and declared Son of God with power by resurrection. Still, flesh could not live unto God, nor they that are in it please Him. Hence we find Christ as come in grace for them, not dead but dying, and then alive to God. I get the condition and quality of man, not simply the work of God as to one dead. So as to men; I get the means of standing in righteousness before God, and not an absolute work. Nor is this all. In the Romans, the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God is not contemplated, nor the union of the Church with Him. Hence we are not said to be quickened together with Him, nor made to sit in heavenly places in Him. His exaltation is just mentioned in the eighth chapter, with " who even is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us"-which last thought does not of course contemplate union.

In the twelfth chapter, the practical effects of union among ourselves is spoken of; but, in general, these topics form no part of the instruction of the Epistle. Men are living, guilty beings, the whole world guilty before God; and to learn, that in the remediless state of their nature, death is the only remedy; in itself fatal, doubtless, but perfectly saving when in Christ. It is atonement for all sin, and deliverance from the position in which we were; for death is evidently the end of that, and our life thus wholly new Christ being risen from the dead, and we to walk as alive to God through Him. We are justified by His blood; and the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. But the Romans, as teaching the justification of a sinner, necessarily first views him as the sinner to be justified. Hence, it goes through the whole question of law; and we have the experiences of the man not justified, though convinced of sin, and then justified from the sin- alive in conscience without law, dying under law, and alive in Christ, where there is no condemnation. The practical process is gone through. The effect is this, that he is brought up to the point where the Epistle to the Ephesians begins with him. He finds that there is no escape from the condition he is in, as a child of Adam, or a Jew, but by death. Yet, were it his own, it would, of course, lead him to judgment, not to justification, but where all guilt is proved. It is Christ who dies, and is set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood; so that God is just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. That meets the case of guilt, but is not life; for so Christ would be dead, and we brought, in Him, into death. This could not in any way be. For not only would there be no life, but it would even prove, as the apostle skews in 1 Cor. 15, that there was no remedy. Our faith would be vain; we should be yet in our sins. But we believe that God has raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. The consequence of this different view of things, is seen in the practical result in man under the operation of God's spirit. In the Romans, we have experiences flowing from the conflict of the newly introduced principle of life with flesh, or the effect of deliverance from it, by the knowledge of the power of deliverance in Christ. The former we find in the seventh chapter, where the conflict of the new nature with the lusts and will of the old, under law, are depicted; and the second in the eighth, where the spiritual blessings of one who is made free from the law of sin and death, by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, are drawn out before us in a way to produce the profoundest interest in the soul that enters into it. In the Ephesians, the man is dead in sins, and transported

into heavenly places by the operation of God; being created anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God has afore prepared, that we might walk in them. The works belong to the new place and condition in which alone we are known in the Ephesians. God has afore prepared works for his afore prepared new created ones. Hence, we have no experience. of passing through conflict, and deliverance, and its results; but there is a demand to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and a desire that the saints, rooted and grounded, may realize in their hearts, by Christ's dwelling in them by faith, the full effect, even to filling, to all the fullness of God, the greatness of the infinite scene of glory into which they are brought, and know that love of Christ which passeth knowledge.

In result, the general principle of the difference is this. In the Romans, the man is found alive in sin. Convicted of it, and has, Christ having died for him to put it away, to come, in the conviction of the hopeless badness of his nature, to death, and then rising again, alive through Jesus Christ, be thus justified before God, and by God, on the one hand, and alive in a new life on the other; then nothing shall separate him from the love of Christ. In the Ephesians the man is found dead in sin; but then he is raised up, and set in heavenly places in Christ, according to the power in which Christ, when dead, was raised of God, and set in the heavenly places, far above principalities and powers, and every name that is named, and brought as a new creation, children withal, and heirs, into immediate nearness to God. The additional truth is brought out, that we are united to Christ in this place, as members of His body, and His heavenly bride. I cannot here - time does not allow it do more than draw out the great general principles of the different aspects of truth presented by the two Epistles. He who searches as a devout learner into the truth of God, will, I am sure, find in what I here notice in these Epistles, elements of deep and profitable instruction, as to his own relationship with God, the Christianity of his soul and of the word, and of his soul according to the word. Perhaps some one, for his own and our edification, may furnish us with further results which flow from it.

The Sea Bird

I've watch'd the sea bird calmly glide
Unruffled o'er the ocean tide;
Unscared she heard the waters roar
In foaming breakers on the shore.
Fearless of ill, herself she gave
To rise upon the lifting wave,
Or sink, to be awhile unseen -
The undulating swells between -
Till, as the evening shadows grew,
Noiseless, unheard, aloft she flew;
While, soaring to her rock-built nest,
A sunbeam lighted on her breast,
A moment glitter'd in mine eye,
Then quickly vanish'd through the sky.
While by the pebbly beach I stood,
That sea-bird, on the waving flood,
Pictured to my enraptured eye,
A soul at peace with God: - Now high,
Now low, upon the gulf of life,
Raised or depress'd, in peace or strife,
Calmly she kens the changeful wave,
She dreads no storm - she fears no grave:
To her, the world's tumultuous roar,
Dies like the echo on the shore.
"Father," she cries, "Thy pleasure all fulfill,
I gladly yield me to thy sovereign will

Let earthly joys, let comforts ebb or rise,
Tranquil on thee, my God, my soul relies."
Then, as advance the shades of night,
Long-plumed, she takes her heavenward flight;
But, as she mounts, I see her fling
A beam of glory from her wing -
A moment-to my aching sight
Lost in the boundless fields of light!

Temptation

It has been much the fashion, of late, to extol and set forth the peculiar advantages of our day and generation. It has been advanced, that the spirit of inquiry is generally diffused, that objects of utility engross attention, that the industrial classes are advancing in the scale of social improvement, and, in fact, that the world is decidedly and steadily marching onward to a pitch of civilization never yet attained in the former ages of its history.

There are those who seek to counteract this movement, and set up old-fashioned prejudices as a sort of breakwater against them. Men of one idea, which, if threatened with destruction, have no other to replace it with. There are, again others who are seeking to combine the old and new together. Men of a past age, who were fast when the world was slow, now find themselves out of breath in the efforts to keep pace with the present. And again, there are others who are going with the stream, and think they are progressing, because they are going fast, and that they are making good speed, because they are rushing onwards.

That we live in exciting times no one can for a moment doubt; that we live in eventful times will be readily granted, and that there is a fast spirit abroad, and a hurry and excitement in everything is apparent; but we need the word of caution not to allow the times, nor the events either, to be so uppermost in our thoughts as to displace the due consideration of our own conduct in them. A man in a house which was on fire, would be well occupied in seeking his own safety and getting out of it. A man on a plain, threatened with inundation, would do well to make for rising ground. To be occupied with the progress of the flames or the rapid increase of the waters, to the neglect of his own safety, would be surely suicidal. However circumstances may change and the pursuits of any age be more or less stirring, yet man as man in his nature, remains the same. Antecedent to the Deluge the wickedness of man was great in the earth; so great as to call for Divine interference in judgment. The building of the Tower of Babel was another manifestation of what man would dare to do, and other events in sacred as well as profane history, bear witness to the unchangeable energy of man in evil. Circumstances might moderate or excite; but the nature was there to be acted upon and was affected by them.

In the history of this country, different- epochs gave rise to different phases in the development of character, national and individual. When long journeys were performed on horseback, over dangerous and ill-conditioned roads, and internal communications were but little enjoyed; when traveling from London to Chester occupied a week, and the man who courageously ventured upon it, did well to set his house in order before undertaking it, such times, contrasted with our present accelerated means of intercourse, so that the opposite extremes of the United Kingdom can be approached in few hours, and a network of railways embraces the whole country, and the magnetic wire conveys instantaneous intelligence, we need not wonder if such different associations give rise to development of character in man, or rather the manifestation of it, somewhat novel in its aspect though one in its nature; nor are these modern innovations in locomotion to be regarded as having arisen from attention to that science alone: far from it. They

owe their development to the increase of knowledge in every department of science, elementary and practical. The application to purposes of utility is the phase of our day, and we do but cursorily allude to it, as being part of a grand chain of circumstances upon which man's mind has been first brought to bear, in order to their manifestation, and which, being manifested, bear back again upon man's mind, and bring out what is in him, giving birth to ideas with galvanic rapidity, which again are as speedily called forth into action.

Everywhere the world is in motion. That command from God to Adam and his race "to replenish the earth and subdue it," seems as if at this epoch only to be comprehended. We live in a busy and active era, not evil because it is active and busy, but because of the end of its activities, the exaltation of man, the "Go to now" spirit of the associated masses at Babel, and the daring impiety which is a growing characteristic. Sober men of the world are not indifferent or unmoved spectators of what is passing around them. Dismal forebodings occupy many minds; others indulge cheering anticipations. "We shall see what all this will come to by and bye," is the ominous language of some; "We shall see what man is capable of," the exulting conclusion of others.

Now the child of God, in the midst of it all, is encompassed by snares on every hand. The Bible is his book emphatically, yet has become of common appeal to others, who have not the token of brotherhood or family marks. Modern Christianity has taken its form from modern characteristics. The age has features of its own, and would fashion a religion of its own. Revelation leaves no field for invention; its authenticity invulnerable, the ingenuity of man is occupied in its perversion. God deals in His Word with men as they are. Man would begin with men as they ought to be. Hypocrisy was the first-born of sin. Man's fallen nature, ignorant of God's remedy, seeks refuge in disguise. The Grace of God apprehended, brings the sinner into His presence about the very sins thus discovered. Where everything is to be gained by confession, concealment is wanton folly. In communion, where the basis of all intercourse is founded on the fact of necessity and the acknowledged need of everything, the best recommendation to obtain grace to meet it, it follows, as an obvious truism, that our greatest wisdom is to seek whatever would encourage confidence in the God of all Grace, and whatever would convince of the absolute necessity of dependence upon this Grace.

Confidence in God, known as the God of all Grace, "who spared not. His only Son," to forgive all our sins, and confidence in God as the God of all Grace, to sustain and help us to struggle against sin.

Sin is itself absolutely evil; but that evil is known only by the judgment of it upon Christ's person. God's Holy abhorrence of it brought fully before us in the fact, that when Christ was, through grace, numbered amongst the transgressors, he could not escape until he had paid the utmost farthing. Though the fact of his having paid it, proved by His resurrection, is the assurance to the believer that he will never be called in question about it.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life;" "This is life eternal to know God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent."

Now it is just because the Believer has' this Divine life, is a partaker of the Divine nature, has his life hid with Christ in God, that he is called upon to put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and that ye put on the new man, which,

after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. As He that hath called you is Holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation and Godliness.

There is present happiness in practical holiness; "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness." There is positive misery in a sinful course; "There is a way which seemeth right in a man's eyes, but the end thereof is bitter as death."

To help to the one, if God permit, and warn off the other, is the object of the Writer in considering the various temptations to which we are by nature exposed; and the very positive provocation of our nature in the novel and exciting circumstances of our day and generation. And as we have before remarked, the truest wisdom is to seek whatever would encourage confidence in the God of all Grace, and whatever would convince of the absolute necessity of dependence upon that Grace.

The power of Jehovah was made known to Israel in their redemption out of Egypt. Their necessities in the Wilderness gave occasion for the display of his resources, to supply them. In relationship with the Holy Lord God, and with the revelation of His will, as to the conduct which became His people, they learned themselves in the light of it.

What they should do was laid down for them; what they did is on record. "These things are written for our learning" (1 Cor. 10:11).

They were not redeemed because they knew God, but that they might know Him. We are not redeemed because we are what we ought to be, but to become so. As with them, so with us. We have the standard of conduct. "He left us an example, that we should follow in His steps." In "the Light of His Life," we learn the darkness of our own. Beholding what is spiritual, we detect what is carnal; but it is because we are redeemed.

Nothing answers for us before God but what Christ is; "as He is so are we in this world." "Our life is hid with 'Christ in God." We have (because we believe in Him) passed from Death unto Life. We have waded through the Red Sea, and are out of Egypt in the Wilderness, to learn, as Israel of old, what resources we have in Christ, and what need we have of Him. "That which is flesh, is flesh," and remains so. Saints were sinners; as sinners, were led by the Spirit of God to rely on the work of the Lord Jesus for them, and became saints. Their seed remaineth in them. God planted it. It is eternal life to know Him and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Yet because saints, they enter into conflict. "Then came Amalek and fought against Israel in Rephidim."

Moses, for the people, found out his weakness. "As long as his hands were held up, Israel prevailed." Aaron and Hur sustained them, even as the Intercession of the High Priest and His kingly power, support his feeble saints.

Doctrinally, we apprehend it; in conflict we forget it. Our hearts grow much discouraged because of the way. Things that happen to us in the way divert us from it. Circumstances arise to make manifest what is in ourselves, and when we see it at home, we are taken by surprise. We could condemn the act in another, judge the sin in the action, and so far it is right; but to judge ourselves as having the seed of that sin in us, and to use the occasion of its manifestation in another, for the bewailing our own liability to it, is a moral safeguard against falling into it, and puts the soul right before the God of all Grace in pleading with Him, on behalf of any who have gone astray. "Ye have not rather mourned," was the apostolic rebuke to the Church at Corinth. "Rivers of waters

ran down mine eyes because they kept not Thy law," (is the language of David).

The science of Chemistry resolves itself into very few, simple, and primary elements. However compounded or mixed, yet the analysis separates it into comparatively few divisions. And much the same may be advanced of "Temptations." However diversified in their aspect, or different in development, affected by climate, or colored by circumstances, yet they too are resolved into primary elements; and the triple classification of Scripture, "the world, the flesh, and the devil, embraces them all."

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