

Exposition of the Gospel of John CHAPTER 48

CHRIST COMFORTING HIS DISCIPLES

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Transcript

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John 14:1-11

Below is an Analysis of the passage which is to be before us: — 1. Christ's call to faith in Himself, verse 1. 2. Christ's teaching about Heaven, verse 2. 3. Christ's precious promises, verses 3, 4. 4. Thomas' question, verse 5. 5. Christ perfectly suited to us, verses 6, 7. 6. Philip's ignorance, verse 8. 7. Christ's reproof, verses 9-11. It is in the fourteenth chapter of John that the Lord Jesus really begins the Paschal Discourse, a discourse which for tenderness, depth, and comprehensiveness is unsurpassed in all the Scriptures. The circumstances under which it was delivered need to be steadily borne in mind. This heart-melting Address of Christ was given to the Eleven on the last night before He died, affording a manifestation of Him which has been strikingly likened to the "glorious radiance of the setting sun, surrounded with dark clouds, and about to plunge into darker, which, fraught with lightning, thunder, and tempest, wait on the horizon to receive him." Most blessedly do His words here bring out the perfections of the God-man. Any other man, even a man of superior strength of mind and kindness of heart, placed, so far as he could be placed in our Lord's circumstances, would have had his mind thrown into such a state of uncontrollable agitation, and most certainly would have been too entirely occupied with his own sufferings and anxieties to have any power or disposition to enter into and soothe the sorrows of others. But though completely aware of all that awaited Him, though feeling the weight of the awful load laid upon Him, though tasting the bitter cup which He must drain, He not only retained full self-possession, but took as deep an interest in the fears and sorrows of the apostles as if He Himself had not been a sufferer. Instead of being occupied with what lay before Himself, He spent the time in comforting His disciples: He "loved them unto the end." During His public ministry and in His private intercourse with them, the apostles had heard repeated statements from His lips concerning His approaching sufferings and death, statements which appear to us simple and plain, but which perplexed and amazed them. It is most charitable, and perhaps most reasonable, to conclude that His disciples regarded His references to His coming passion as parables, which were not to be understood literally; and that, at any rate, He could not mean anything inconsistent with His immediately restoring the kingdom to Israel. They were fully convinced that He was

the Messiah, and their only idea in connection with the Messiah was that of an illustrious Conqueror, a prosperous king; therefore, whatever was obscure in their Master's sayings, must be understood in the light of these principles. And it is probable that their hopes had never risen higher than when they had seen Him ride into Jerusalem amid the joyous acclamations of the multitudes hailing Him as the Son of David. But right after His entry into Jerusalem they had heard Him speak of Himself as the "corn of wheat" which must fall into the ground and die, and this, at least, must have awakened dark forebodings. And, too, His conduct and sayings during the pass-over-supper, and what followed, must have deeply perplexed and distressed them. "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?" must have filled them with painful misgivings. He had said, "Yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." This was, indeed, sufficient to fill them with anxiety and sorrow. They dearly loved Him. The thought of Him dying, and of their parting with Him, was unbearable. Moreover, they must have asked themselves, How can this be reconciled with His Messiah-ship? Are we, after all, to give up our hope that this is He who would redeem Israel? And what is to become of us! We have forsaken all to follow Him, will He now forsake us, leaving us amid enemies, as sheep in the midst of wolves, to suffer the fierce malignity of His triumphant foes! "Our Lord, who knew what was in man, was well aware of what was passing in the minds of His disciples. He knew how they were troubled, and what anxious, desponding, and despairing thoughts were arising in their hearts, and He could not but be touched with the feeling of their infirmities. There lay on His own mind a weight of anguish which no being in the universe could bear along with Him. He could not have the alleviation of sympathy. He must tread the winepress alone. They could not enter into His feelings; but He, the magnanimous One, could enter into theirs. There was room in His large heart for their sorrows, as well as His own. He feels their griefs, as if they were His own; and kindly comforts those whom He knew were soon to desert Him in the hour of His deepest sorrows! 'In all their afflictions, He was afflicted;' and He shows in the address which He made to them that 'the Lord who anointed Him to comfort those who mourn,' and to bind up the brokenhearted, had indeed 'given to Him the tongue of the learned that He might speak a word in season to them who were weary' (Isa. 61:1; 50:4)". (Dr. John Brown). "Let not your heart be troubled" (John 14:1). It was the sorrows of their hearts which now occupied the great heart of love. "Troubled" they were; deeply so. They were troubled at hearing that one of their number should betray Him (John 13:21). They were troubled at seeing their Master "troubled in spirit" (John 13:21); troubled because He would remain with them only a "little while" (John 13:33); troubled over the warning He had given to Peter, that he would deny His Lord thrice. Thus this little company of believers were disquieted and cast down. Wherefore the Savior proceeded to comfort them. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). Commentators have differed widely as to the precise meaning of these words. The difficulty arises from the Greek. Both verbs are exactly the same, and may be translated (with equal accuracy) either in the imperative or the indicative mood. Either will make good sense, and possibly each is to be kept in mind. The R.V. reads: "Believe in God, believe also in me." Thus translated, it is a double exhortation. The force of it would then be: Your perturbation of spirit arises from not believing what God has spoken by His prophets concerning My sufferings and the glory which is to follow. God has announced in plain terms that I was to be despised and rejected of men, that I am to be wounded for your transgressions and bruised for your iniquities. These are the words of Jehovah Himself; then doubt them not. "Believe also in me." I too have warned you what to expect. I have told you that I am to suffer many things at the hands of the chief priests and scribes and be killed. These things must be. Then hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end: be not "offended" in Me, even though I go to a criminal's cross. But it should be remembered that the Lord was speaking not only to the Eleven, but to us as well. Even so, the above interpretation supplies an exhortation which we constantly need. "Believe in

God," O Christian. Let not your heart be troubled, for thy Father is possessed of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. He knows what is best for thee, and He makes all things work together for thy good. He is on the Throne, ruling amid the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay His hand. Why, then, art thou cast down, O my soul? God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swellings thereof. What though trials come thick and fast, what though I am misunderstood and unappreciated, what though Satan roar and rage against me? "If God be for us who can be against us?" Believe in God. Believe in His absolute sovereignty, His infinite wisdom, His unchanging faithfulness, His wondrous love. "Believe also in me." I am the One who died for thy sins and rose again for thy justification; I am the One who ever liveth to make intercession for thee. I am the same, yesterday, and to-day, and forever. I am the One who shall come again to receive you unto Myself, and ye shall be forever with Me. Yes, "believe also in me!" While the above interpretation is fully justified by the Greek, while the double exhortation was truly needed both by the Eleven and by us to-day, and while many able expositors have advanced it, yet we cannot but think that the A.V. gives the truer force of our Lord's words here, rendering the first verb in the indicative and the second in the imperative. "Believe also in me." What, then, did Christ mean? The apostles had already, by Divine illumination, recognized Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is clear, then, that He was not here challenging their faith. We take it that what the Lord had in view was this: the apostles already believed in Him as the Messiah, and as the Savior, but their confidence reposed in One who dwelt in their midst, who went in and out among them in the sensible relationship of daily companionship. But He was about to be removed from them, and He whom they had seen with their eyes and had handled with their hands (1 John 1:1) was to be invisible to the outward eye. Now, says He, "Ye believe in God," who is invisible; you believe in His love, though you have never seen His form; you are conscious of His care, though you have never touched the Hand that guides and protects you. "Believe, also, in me"; that is to say, In like manner you must have full confidence in My existence, love, and care, even though I am no longer present to sight. This comfort remains for us; this is the faith in which we are now to live: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet. 1:8). "Believe also in me." The "also" here brings out the absolute Deity of Christ in a most unmistakable manner. "Here thou seest plainly that Christ Himself testifies that He is equal with God Almighty; because we must believe in Him even as we believe in God. If He were not true God with the Father, this faith would be false and idolatrous" (Dr. Martin Luther). "In my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2). The Father's "house" is His dwelling-place. It is noteworthy that the Lord Jesus is the only one who ever referred to the "Father's house," and He did so on three occasions. First, He had said of the temple in Jerusalem, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise" (John 2:16). Then He had mentioned it in connection with the "prodigal son" and his elder brother: "As he came and drew nigh to the house (the 'father's') he heard music and dancing"; here it is presented as the place of joy and gladness. In John 14 Christ mentions it as the final abode of the saints. The glories and blessedness of Heaven are brought before us in the New Testament under a variety of representations. Heaven is called a "country" (Luke 19:12; Hebrews 11:16); this tells of its vastness. It is called a "city" (Heb. 11:10; Revelation 21; this intimates the large number of its inhabitants. It is called a "kingdom" (2 Pet. 1:11); this suggests its orderliness. It is called "paradise" (Luke 23:43; Revelation 2:7); this emphasizes its delights. It is called the "Father's house," which bespeaks its permanency. The temple at Jerusalem had been called the Father's "house" because it was there that the symbol of His presence abode, because it was there He was worshipped, and because it was there His people communed with Him. But before the Lord Jesus closed His public ministry He

disowned the temple, saying, "Behold your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:38). Therefore does the Savior now transfer this term to the Father's dwelling-place on High, where He will grant to His redeemed a more glorious revelation of Himself, and where they shall worship Him, uninterruptedly, in the beauty of holiness. The "Father's house" has been the favourite term for Heaven with most Christians. It speaks of Home, the Home of God and His people. Sad it is that in this present evil age one of the most precious words in the English language has lost much of its fragrance. Our fathers used to sing, "There is no place like home." To-day the average "home" is little more than a boarding-house—a place to eat and sleep in. But "home" used to mean, and still means to a few, the place where we are loved for our own sakes; the place where we are always welcome; the place whither we can retire from the strife of the world and enjoy rest and peace, the place where loved ones are together. Such will Heaven be. Believers are now in a strange country, yea, in an enemy's land; in the life to come, they will be at Home! "In my Father's house are many mansions." The many rooms in the temple prefigured these (see 1 Kings 6:5, 6; Jeremiah 35:1-4, etc.). The word for "mansions" signifies "abiding-places"—a most comforting term, assuring us of the permanency of our future home in contrast from the "tents" of our present pilgrimage. Blessed, too, is the word "many"; there will be ample room for the redeemed of the past, present, and future ages; and for the unfallen angels as well. "If it were not so, I would have told you" (John 14:2). Had there been no room for believers in the many mansions of the Father's House, Christ would have said so. He had never deceived them; truth was His only object—"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (John 18:37). It was because full provision had been made for their complete and eternal happiness that He encouraged them to entertain such high hopes. He would never have brought them into such an intimacy with Himself if that was now to end forever. "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). "He does not explain how the place in the Father's House should be prepared for them; nor were they yet, perhaps, able to understand. The Epistle to the Hebrews will show us, if we turn to it, that the heavenly places had to be purified by the better sacrifices which He was to offer, in which all the sacrifices of the law would find their fulfillment. Ephesians speaks similarly of the 'redemption of the purchased possession'; and Colossians of the 'reconciliation of things in heaven' (Heb. 9:23; Ephesians 1:14; Colossians 1:20). Such thoughts are even now strange to many Christians; for we are slow to realize the extent of the injury that sin has inflicted, and equally, therefore, the breadth of the application of the work of Christ. This is not the place to enlarge upon it; but it is not difficult to understand that wherever sin has raised question of God—and it has done so, as we know, in Heaven itself—the work of Christ as bringing out in full His whole character in love and righteousness regarding that which had raised the question, has enabled Him to come in and restore, consistently with all that He is, what had been defiled with evil. Thus our High Priest, to use as the apostle does, the figure of Israel's day of atonement, has entered into the Sanctuary to reconcile with the virtues of His sacrifice the holy places themselves, and make them accessible to us" (Numerical Bible). "I go to prepare a place for you." We also understand this to mean that the Lord Jesus has procured the right—by His death on the Cross—for every believing sinner to enter Heaven. He has "prepared" for us a place there by entering Heaven as our Representative and taking possession of it on behalf of His people. As our Forerunner He marched in, leading captivity captive, and there planted His banner in the land of glory. He has "prepared" for us a place there by entering the "holy of holies" on High as our great High Priest, carrying our names in with Him. Christ would do all that was necessary to secure for His people a welcome and a permanent place in Heaven. Beyond this we cannot go with any degree of certainty. The fact that Christ has promised to "prepare a place" for us—which repudiates the vague and visionary ideas of those who would reduce Heaven to an intangible nebula—guarantee that it will far surpass anything down here. "I go to prepare a place for you." God never has, and never will, take His people into a place un-prepared for them. In Eden

God first "planted a garden," and then placed Adam in it. It was the same with Israel when they entered Canaan: "And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swear unto thy father, to Abraham, to Isaac, and Jacob, to give them great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not, and houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees which thou plantedst not" (Deut. 6:10, 11). And what can we say of the grace manifested by the Lord of glory going to prepare a place for us? He will not entrust such a task to the angels. Proof, indeed, is this that He loves us "unto the end." "And if I go and prepare a place for you" (John 14:3). "A special people taken from the earth in a risen Christ must have a special place. A new thing was to take place, men brought into Heaven! Man was not made for Heaven, but for the earth, and so placed here to till the earth and live upon it. By sinning he lost the earth and the earth shared his ruin. But by sinning he brought down the Son of God from Heaven, who by His descent opened Heaven as the normal place for those believing on Christ, and so in Him" (Mr. Malachi Taylor). "I will come again." The Lord will not send for us, but come in person to conduct us into the Father's House. How precious we must be to Him! "The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). "And receive you unto myself." Notice, not "take" but receive. The Holy Spirit has charge of us during the time of our absence from the Savior; but when the mystical body of Christ is complete then is His work clone here, and He hands us over to the One who died to save us. "And receive you unto myself." To have us with Himself is His heart's desire. To the dying thief He said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." To the Church it is promised that we shall "ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). "That where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). The place which was due the Son is the place which grace has given to the sons. This is the blessed sequel to what was before us in John 13. There Christ said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." There, it is the Savior maintaining His own on earth in communion with Himself. Here, in due time, we shall be with Him, to enjoy unbroken fellowship forever. This had been promised before: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am there shall also my servant be" (John 12:26). Here it is formally declared. In John 17:24 it is prayed for: "Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Here then, is the Divine specific for heart-trouble; here, indeed, is precious consolation for one groaning in a world of sin. First, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Second, the assurance that the Father's House on high will be our eternal Home. Third, the realization that the Savior has done and is doing everything necessary to secure us a welcome there and fit that Home for our reception. Fourth, the blessed hope that He is coming in person to receive us unto Himself. Finally, the precious promise that we are to be with Him forever. But, and mark it well, it is only in proportion as we are "troubled" by our absence from Him, that we shall be comforted and cheered by these precious words! Here is solid ground for consolation, conclusive arguments against despondency and disquietude in the present path of service and suffering, the Savior lives and loves and cares for us! He is active, promoting our interests, and when God's time arrives He shall come and receive us unto Himself. "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know" (John 14:4). To understand this verse it is necessary to keep in mind the connection. Only a very short time before, Peter had asked, "Lord whither goest thou?" (John 13:36), and when He replied, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards," he rejoined, "Why cannot I follow thee now?" Both of these questions of Peter, and they probably expressed the thoughts of all the apostles, were answered by our Lord in the verses which have just been before us. "It is as if He had said, You are troubled in spirit because you know not whither I go; and because I have said, ye cannot follow Me now. I am going to My Father; to His House of many mansions; let not, therefore, these fears about Me distress you; and as to your following Me—as to the reason why you

cannot follow Me now—and as to the way in which you are to follow Me hereafter, know that arrangements must be made for your coming to where I am going. I go to make these arrangements, and when they are completed I will come and take you to Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. That is whither I am going—that is the reason why you do not go with Me, or follow Me now—that is the way in which you are afterwards to come where I am going: and, i.e. thus 'ye know', for I have plainly told you 'whither I go' and the 'way' in which you are to come whither I shall have gone" (Dr. John Brown). The "whither" was unto the Father; the "way" was the process by which they would arrive there. It was not simply the goal, but the path to it; not simply the whither but the how which Christ had just revealed to them. "Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5). Our Lord had spoken very simply and plainly, yet was He misunderstood. The Father, His House, its many mansions, Christ going there to prepare a place and His promise to come and receive His people unto Himself and share His place with us—these things were dim and unreal to the materialistic and rationalistic Thomas. His mind was on earthly things. Did the "father's house" mean some palace situated outside Palestine, and did Christ's "going away" signify His removing to that palace? He was not sure, and tells the Lord so. Well, if we brought our difficulties unto Him. But let us not forget that the Spirit of truth had not yet been given to the disciples to show them "things to come" (John 16:13). He has been given to us, therefore is our ignorance the more excuseless. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Before sin entered the world Adam enjoyed a threefold privilege in relation to God; he was in communion with his Maker; he knew Him, and he possessed spiritual life. But when he disobeyed and fell, this threefold relationship was severed. He became alienated from God, as the hiding of himself painfully demonstrated; having believed the Devil's lie, he was no longer capable of perceiving the truth, as the making of fig-leaf aprons clearly evidenced; and he no longer had spiritual life, for God's threat "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" was strictly enforced. In this same awful condition has each of Adam's descendants entered this world, for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh"—a fallen parent can beget nought but a fallen child. Every sinner, therefore, has a three-fold need—reconciliation, illumination, regeneration. This threefold need is perfectly met by the Savior. He is the Way to the Father; He is the Truth incarnate; He is the Life to all who believe in Him. Let us briefly consider each of these separately. "I am the way." Christ spans the distance between God and the sinner. Man would fain manufacture a ladder of his own, and by means of his resolutions and reformations, his prayers and his tears, climb up to God. But that is impossible. That is the way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Prov. 14:12). It is Satan who would keep the exercised sinner on his self-imposed journey to God. What faith needs to lay hold of is the glorious truth that Christ has come all the way down to sinners. The sinner could not come in to God, but God in the person of His Son has come out to sinners. He is the Way, the Way to the Father, the Way to Heaven, the Way to eternal blessedness. "I am the truth." Christ is the full and final revelation of God. Adam believed the Devil's lie, and ever since then man has been groping amid ignorance and error. "The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble" (Prov. 4:19). "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4:18). A thousand systems has the mind devised. "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Ecclesiastes 7:29). "There is none that understandeth" (Rom. 3:11). Pilate voiced the perplexity of multitudes when he asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). Truth is not to be found in a system of philosophy, but in a Person—Christ is "the truth": He reveals God and exposes man. In Him are hid "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). What tremendous folly to ignore Him! What will it avail you in Hell, dear reader, even though you have mastered all the sciences of men, were acquainted with all the events of history, were versed in all the languages of mankind, were thoroughly

acquainted with the politics of your day? O, how you will wish then that you had read your newspapers less and your Bible more; that with all your getting you had got understanding; that with all your learning you had bowed before Him who is the Truth! "I am the life." Christ is the Emancipator from death. The whole Bible bears solemn witness to the fact that the natural man is spiritually lifeless. He walks according to the course of this world; he has no love for the things of God. The fear of God is not upon him, nor has he any concern for His glory. Self is the center and circumference of his existence. He is alive to the things of the world, but is dead to heavenly things. The one who is out of Christ exists, but he has no spiritual life. When the prodigal son returned from the far country the father said, "This, my son, was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (Luke 15:24). The one who believes in Christ has passed out of death into life (John 5:24). "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). Then turn to Him who is the Life. "I am the way." Without Christ men are Cains-wanderers. "They are all gone out of the way" (Rom. 3:12). Christ is not merely a Guide who came to show men the path in which they ought to walk: He is Himself the Way to the Father. "I am the truth." Without Christ men are under the power of the Devil, the father of lies. Christ is not merely a Teacher who came to reveal to men a doctrine regarding God: He is Himself the Truth about God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I am the life." Without Christ men are dead in trespasses and sins. Christ is not merely a Physician who came to invigorate the old nature, to refine its grossness, or repair its defects. "I am come," said He, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). "No man cometh unto the Father but by me" (verse 6). Christ is the only way to God. It is utterly impossible to win God's favor by any efforts of our own. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:6). Let every Christian reader praise God for His unspeakable Gift, and "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath newly-made for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb. 10:19-22). "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him" (verse 7). This is intimately connected with the whole of the immediate context. The reason why the apostles found it so hard to understand the Lord's references to the Father, the Father's House, and His and their way there, was because their views respecting Himself were so defective and deficient. The true knowledge of the Father cannot be obtained but by the true knowledge of the Son; and if the Son be really known, the Father is known also. The Father is known just so far as the Son is known; no farther. Christ was more than a manifestation of God; He was "God manifest in flesh." He was the Only-begotten, who fully declared Him. "From henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." "These words of our Lord are a prediction, which, like many predictions, is uttered in the present tense—the event not only being as certain as if it had already taken place, but appearing as accomplished to the mind of the prophet, rapt into the future by the inspiring impulse. It is equivalent to, 'yet a very little while and ye shall know Him—know Him so clearly that it may be said you see Him? The prediction was accomplished on the day of Pentecost. From the time these words were uttered, a series of events took place, in close succession, in which through the atoning sufferings, and death, and glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus, the character of God the Father, was gloriously illustrated. But, till after the resurrection, the disciples saw only the dark side of the cloud in which Jehovah was; and even till 'the Spirit was poured out from on High,' they but indistinctly discerned the true meaning of these events. Then, indeed, 'the darkness was passed, and the true light shone.' The Holy Spirit took of the things of Christ and showed them unto them" (Dr. John Brown). "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us" (John 14:8). What the Lord

had just said to Thomas, Philip was unable to thoroughly grasp. With that strange faculty of the human mind to pass over the most prominent and important points of a subject and to seize only on that on which our own mind had been running, this disciple can think only of "seeing" the Father, not how He is to be seen. Possibly Philip's mind reverted to the experience of Moses on the Mount, when, in answer to earnest prayer, he was placed in a cleft of the rock and permitted to see the retiring glory of Jehovah as He passed by; or, he may have remembered what Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and the seventy elders of Israel were permitted to witness when "they saw the God of Israel, and under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone, and, as it were the body of heaven in his clearness" (Ex. 24:10). He may have recalled that prophecy, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together" (Isa. 40:5). "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (John 14:9). This was a rebuke, the more forceful by being addressed to Philip individually. He had said, "Show us the Father." Christ replied, "Hast thou not known me, Philip?" The force of this was: Have you never yet apprehended who I am? The corporeal representation of God, such as Philip desired, was unnecessary; unnecessary because a far more glorious revelation of Deity was there right before him. The Word, made flesh, was tabernacling among men, and His glory was "the glory of the only-begotten of the Father." He was the visible Image of the invisible God. He was the "brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me he doeth the works" (John 14:10). Christ was in the Father and the Father was in Him. There was the most perfect and intimate union between Them. Both His words and His works were a perfect revelation of Deity. It is very striking to note here that the Son refers to His "words" as the Father's "works." His words were works, for they were words of power. "He spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast"! He said "Lazarus, come forth"; and he that was dead came forth. "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (John 14:11). This is solemn. The Lord has to descend to the level that He took when speaking to His enemies—"Though ye believe not me believe the works that ye may know, and believe that the Father is in me and I in him" (John 10:38). So now He says to Philip, If ye will not, on My bare word, believe that I am One with the Father, at least acknowledge the proof of it in My works. How thankful we should be that the Holy Spirit has been given to us, to make clear what was so dark to the disciples. Let us praise God that "we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true" (1 John 5:20). Let the interested student carefully ponder the following questions:— 1. For whom are the promises in verse 12 intended? 2. Who has ever done anything "greater" than Christ did, verse 12? 3. What does it mean to ask "in the name of" Christ, verse 13? 4. How is verse 14 to be qualified? 5. Is obeying God's commandments "legalism," verse 15? 6. Why cannot "the world" receive the Holy Spirit, verse 17? 7. What is the meaning of verse 20?

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