

What Manner of Love

by Thomas Bradbury

The sermon explores the theme of love in John's Gospel, highlighting the spontaneous and independent nature of God's love, and its consequence of calling us the sons of God.

Topics: "Gods Love", "Trinity"

Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches on the profound love of the Father as highlighted in 1 John 3:1, emphasizing that this love is found in the harmony of the Triune God. The sermon delves into the different aspects of God's love - spontaneous, eternal, uninfluenced, infinite, immutable, inexhaustible, and invincible - showcasing how this love is freely given, unchanging, and conquers all obstacles. Believers are called the sons of God, a privilege that the world does not understand due to its ignorance of God. The world's lack of knowledge of God is attributed to its failure to recognize Him, leading to a misunderstanding of His children.

Transcript

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." (1 John 3:1)

The theme upon which John was never weary to meditate and to proclaim was LOVE. We find it in each of his writings. His Gospel, sent out by the inspiration of God the covenant Three-in-One. Love is here declared in that glorious harmony existing in the Three Persons of the One glorious Godhead. In chapter 3., verse 16, we read--"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Which world did God love? Chapter 1., verse 10, reveals the fact, which carnal reason is determined not to understand. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." See! In this verse we have the word "world" three times, and each has a different meaning. "He was in the world;" He trod this earth of ours. "And the world was made by Him;" all created things are the production of His hand. "And the world knew Him not;" the greater portion of mankind, not everybody, because there was a few waiting for the consolation of Israel, a few on the look-out for the Redeemer who should come. He came to His own possessions, but His own brethren after the flesh received Him not; while His brethren after the Spirit received Him, and thus were manifested as the sons of God. (John 1:11,12) "God so loved the world." Did God love the reprobate mass that hated His Son, cast Him out, crucified Him, and threw their vile aspersions into His face? These persons loved by Him? O, yes, say some; the Saviour says, "God so loved the world." The world of the

Father's love is the world of the Son's love and salvation. See John 4:42, "We have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." The Saviour of that world loved by the Father with an everlasting love. Turn to John 16:8. Speaking of the Spirit of truth, Jesus said, "And when He is come, He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me." This cannot mean the whole mass of mankind, for common sense would show that such are not convinced of sin because of unbelief. But we who are convinced by the indwelling power of God the ever-blessed Spirit mourn because of our unbelief. We find that with the faith of the operation of God, the faith of God's elect, the faith that overcometh the world, we are still unbelieving. We are convinced of sin, but still we feel and know that the world has been overcome, and will be overcome again and again. The world overcome yesterday may overcome us today. Such will be the conflict to the end of our brief existence here upon earth. The world loved by the Father in election, is loved by the Son in redemption, is loved by the Spirit in regeneration, and will be loved by the covenant Three-in-One throughout eternity.

Love is the theme of John's Gospel. "The Father loveth the Son." (chap. 5:20) "Now Jesus loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus." (chap. 11:5) "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." (chap. 13:1) "If a man love Me he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (chap. 14:23) "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in My love." (chap. 15:9) "For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God." (chap. 16:27) "Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (chap. 17:24-26) Here we see the love of the covenant Three to all the election of grace, and the love of the election of grace to an eternally-loving God. Now look at John's first epistle. Each chapter sounds forth the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (chap. 3:1-14) "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. We love Him because He first loved us." (chap. 4:7,19) Look at his second epistle: "The elder into the elect lady and her children whom I love in the truth." (Verse 1) Read his third epistle: The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth." (Verse 1) Come to the book of the Revelation, (1:5,6) "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

What kind of love is this? Mark you! It is not a mere spasmodic feeling or mawkish sentimentality. It is not that figment with which Satan lulls to sleep unstable souls, which men call "universal charity." John knew nothing of this, for with all the love that God had bestowed upon him, he expressed a spirit of intense hatred to Satan, to Satan's brood, and to Satan's lies. The love which God shed abroad in John's heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him was of that sterling nature which caused him to look at facts, not fancies, and speak of them just as he found them, without any human gloss, false charity, or foolish yielding to men's notions for the sake of peace at any price. See! He declared the love of God as revealed in the everlasting Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, not in His own words, but in those of God's giving, ever separating between the precious and the vile, the elect and the reprobate, the redeemed and the unredeemed, the regenerate and the unregenerate. Does he write to one whom he loved in the truth? He styles her "the elect lady." You may rely upon this, she was no Arminian. Writes he concerning the two seeds? He says, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." (1 John 3:10) The

language is plain--nothing dark or ambiguous here--no necessity for any explanation whatever--"the children of God, and the children of the devil." The children of the devil are manifest by their professed love to everybody, which is rank hypocrisy. The children of God are manifest by their love to God and to one another. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 John 3:14) These love those who are loved by the same Father, saved by the same Saviour, quickened by the same Spirit, and enjoy the same privileges which were secured to them in their great Head and Surety before the worlds were framed. The love of which John writes is not a wanton or adulterous love flying about from one object to another, but a love fixed on the persons of God's eternally loved ones, not for anything in them naturally, but because of the revelation of God's Christ in them, and the manifestation of God's sovereign mercy to them. Wherever this is experienced there is humility--no presumption or vain boasting--no taking possession of that which the child of God is not entitled to--no parading of an experience which God has not bestowed, conveyed, and applied by the power of His indwelling Spirit.

This brings to my mind a little melting of heart I experienced last Thursday afternoon, in the tent at the Camberwell Aged Pilgrims' Asylum. I thank God I was there, with all the rubbish the children of God are called upon to bear from liberal, large-hearted, broad-gauge Christians. While I was there, a man whose name I know not, but whose face I often-times see here, came to me and said, "I was down at Grays the other day, and, while reading a sermon of yours, a man asked me if that was one of Mr. Bradbury's sermons, when, upon my answering in the affirmative, he began to open up to me the experience of his heart. He said, 'The last time I spent a few days in London I went to Grove Chapel. After nine years of despair and almost of desperation, I sat in darkness and doubt listening to that dear man preach, or rather to God's gracious testimony to my soul through him. I walked out of Grove Chapel a free man in Christ. My chains were broken, my burden was gone, and the sweetness of that liberty I have not lost to this day.'" In listening to this my heart was melted, and my eyes moistened with tears of God's own giving. Such precious testimonies to the love and grace of God do not inflate God's ministers with vain conceit, or set them on the stilts of pride and presumption. They humble the soul to the dust, and bring forth cries and sighs for the ears of Him who hears in secret and rewards openly. Yes, and I believe that in Grove Chapel He will do it yet. Lord, send forth Thy light and Thy truth, that Thy poor prisoners yet in the dark may be made manifest. Send forth Thy love, that the enmity in the hearts of many of Thy eternally-loved ones may be slain. Send forth Thy life, that elect ones dead in trespasses and sins may hear the voice of Incarnate Love, and live before Him. This is the burden of the Word of the Lord in this exercised spirit of mine. Let us now, in humble dependence upon the guidance and grace of God the ever-blessed Spirit, look at the portion which I have read for our instruction, comfort, and edification. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not."

We will consider it in the following order:--

- I. The call to attention--"Behold!"
- II. The Father's love--"What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."
- III. The consequence of love bestowed--"That we should be called sons of God."
- IV. Its effect upon the world--"Therefore the world knoweth us not."
- V. The secret of the world's ignorance--"Because it knew Him not."

I. The call to attention--"Behold!" In dwelling upon these particulars, may God enable us to pick up a few crumbs, and discover here and there a ray of His own sunshine that our hearts may rejoice and be glad in Him. One has well said, that when the word "Behold" stands at the door of any portion of God's Word, we may expect to find something wonderful within. Mark well a few portions of God's most Holy Word, to which I direct your prayerful attention. The first (Isaiah 7:14) expresses wonder and admiration: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

Behold, admire, and adore the riches of Divine grace, love, and mercy in the provision of a Saviour, in the person of the Incarnate God. "Behold!" It is a Scriptural exclamation denoting joy and gladness, as you find in Matt. 21:5. "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Here we see cause for joy and gladness to those who saw in the Despised and Rejected of men, their King and their God. "Behold" is also a sign or token of obedience, as you see in the case of Ahimelech in 1 Sam. 22:12, or as you will find in a passage more familiar to you, recorded in Isaiah 6:8.

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I;" or, as you read in the margin, "Behold Me." An expression of willing obedience. "Behold" is a word of solemn affirmation. Turn with me to Gen. 28:15, and read how God positively affirms to Jacob: "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."

"Behold" is a call to observation and consideration. See John 1:29. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "Behold" also denotes certainty, as seen in the declaration of the angel to Zacharias. (Luke 1:20) "And, behold, thou shalt be dumb." Look then at the word "Behold" in the light of each of these Scriptural significations. First--Admiration. Is there not something that fills my heart with wonder and admiration when I am brought to see, and know, and feel the everlasting, unchanging, spontaneous, uninfluenced, inexhaustible love of JEHOVAH?

This fills all heaven with rapture, the whole Church with praise, and all hell with dismay. Second--Joy and gladness. What is it that fills the heart of elect and redeemed sinners with joy and gladness? Is it not the communication of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord? See Rom. 5:5. "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." Third--Obedience. The apostle calls it the obedience of faith. The moment I experience the faith of the Son of God in me, I find that that faith works by love.

Where God-begotten faith exists, there love also dwells in sweetest harmony. There may be faith in deep mysteries, marvellous truths, sound doctrine, and concerning God in creation, providence, and sovereignty over all things, where there is not one particle of love. You see this in the case of Balaam, who prophesied most wondrous truth, yet was bound to confess, "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh." (Num. 24:17) You see it in the case of devils. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble." (James 2:19) This is more than thousands of professing Christians do. They believe, but they have no cause to tremble. They believe, and are full of joy and cheerfulness all the day long. But listen--

"Devils believe and tremble too,

But devils cannot love."

Oh no! It is the revelation of Incarnate Love in our hearts that begets willing and eager obedience to His gracious commands. Fourth--Affirmation. JEHOVAH has sworn to love with an everlasting love the objects of His choice, and they are brought in His own time to observe, consider, and understand the certainty of those things written in their hearts by the Spirit of love. Now let us notice,

II. The Father's love--"What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Who are the parties meant by that word "us?" We, who have seen That which was from the beginning. We, who have spiritually handled a precious Christ. We, who have fellowship with the Father as His own children. We, who are saved by Jesus alone. We, who are anointed in Christ. We, who bow in loving obedience to our Sovereign and Lord. We, who have been taught to wait in the dark and to walk in the light.

If we walk in the dark, we are liable to stumble: "but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7) We, little children, young men, fathers, who sometimes sigh and mourn over our manifold sins, and at other times rejoice to know that we have an Advocate before the throne of God, who will carry to a successful issue all heavenly and gracious things concerning us.

We, who are the children of God, not the children of the devil. What occasion have we to boast in this matter? None whatever, for "we were by nature the children of the devil? No, look at that expression in its connection, and read it carefully. Eph. 2:2,3. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," or, disobedient children. "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."

Or, we were wrathful children by nature, and disobedient ones too. This wrathful disposition exists where there is apparent meekness, gentleness, and amiability. The application of God's righteous law, by the power of the Holy Ghost, reveals the wrath and enmity of wretched human nature. See Rom. 4:15. "The law worketh wrath." Where? In that heart, where, previous to the application of the law, quietness and peace reigned. Mark you this! A polished exterior, a plausible address, smooth words, and honeyed expressions flow from hearts which are wholly enmity against God.

Augustine, bishop of Hippo (not the Italian monk, whom Gregory sent over here to papalize this country), has a beautiful illustration of Rom. 7:9, "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." He says, "Before the commandment came, I lay like a piece of quick-lime, calm quiet, still, free from motion or disturbance; but the moment God's law came, like rain upon the lime, my calmness, quietness, and stillness disappeared, and all was commotion, disturbance, and strife."

Such is the effect of the operation of God's law upon a quickened sinner's soul. The children are thus brought to see their true state before Him; and in the light of His glory, which shines in the person of Jesus Christ, they find nothing in themselves, but bitterness, enmity, and opposition to God, to God's truth, and to God's people. Only evil, and always evil, is the Divine judgment on human nature. Only enmity, and always enmity, is God's description of the natural state and condition of all His children. But let us away from this.

"What manner of love the Father bestowed upon us." Look at that word "bestowed." Freely given, conveyed, and applied without money and without price. What manner of love is this? Angels can never experience it; none but favoured redeemed, and saved sinners, those concerning whom one so correctly

says,

"And only man is vile;"

yes, vile men, wretched sinners, enemies to God, aliens from His home, and strangers to His life, are brought to experience and enjoy the love of the eternal and unchanging God. Well may we have a note of admiration at the commencement of this precious portion: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

1. SPONTANEOUS LOVE. Here we see it in its spring or source. Love is of God, for God is love. Wherever true love exists, it is from God alone, because it exists in its purity alone in God. As I have endeavoured to point out to you the human heart is full of wrath, enmity, hatred, and malice, so, if I am a partaker of Divine love, it must come down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (James 1:17) Spontaneous love! It springs up and flows forth of itself to its objects independently of any extraneous influence. From the heart of JEHOVAH it flows to an innumerable company of Adam's lost race, and, like a mighty river with its many streams, brings life, and joy, and refreshment wherever it comes. Here we may notice the difference existing between the love of God and those affections of His which flow to His poor children in their varied spots of want and necessity just as fully, freely, and liberally. See! There is a difference between love and grace--between love and mercy--between love and compassion--between love and pity--between love and patience. What difference can there be say you? See! Mercy has respect to misery. Misery calls for His mercy. Grace always has respect to unworthiness. A sense of unworthiness is a cry for His grace. Compassion has respect to necessity. The child's necessity calls forth the compassion of the parent. Pity has respect to helplessness and infirmity. The helplessness of the loved one is an irresistible appeal to the pity of the one who loves. Patience has respect to obstinacy, provocation, stubbornness, and rebelliousness, and these as they exist in us are so many calls upon the patience and long-suffering of our God. But when we come to contemplate His love we are lost in wonder and adoration. What has the love of a covenant God respect to? It has respect to what He was in Himself to His covenant people before the worlds were framed. Look at this: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16) The first display of this love was in the setting up of Christ as the Head of His mystical body, the Husband of His bride, the Surety of His covenant people, and their Preserver and Upholder before any of them had an actual existence, or Satan had wrought his hellish work of sin and death upon the sons and daughters of men.

"Thus in His eyes she ever stood

From wrinkle and from blemish free;

Loved with the dateless love of God,

And blest by the Great Sacred Three."

In Christ He sees Himself and His people eternally one. In the glass of His decrees He sees Christ and His Church eternally united in all the perfections of Deity, and shining in all the glorious splendors of Godhead. The love of His heart is ineffable, and can only be poured forth upon, and shed abroad in the hearts of, the recipients thereof in grace, mercy, compassion, pity, and patience during their sojourn in these wilds of sin and sorrow.

2. ETERNAL LOVE. Dear old John Kent sweetly sings:--

"'Twas with an everlasting love

That God His own elect embrac'd,

Before He made the worlds above,

On earth on her huge columns plac'd."

Love eternal is JEHOVAH Himself, the Great I AM. Self-existence is love. I AM LOVE. As is His life, so is His love, without beginning, without end. To the sorrowing soul of His exercised prophet He sweetly whispered, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3) To such a communication the adoring response from every heart melted into nothingness under its power is, Amen, Lord, Amen.

3. UNINFLUENCED LOVE.

"What was there in me that could merit esteem,

Or give the Creator delight?

'Twas 'Even so, Father!' I ever must sing,

Because it seemed good in Thy sight."

You see I have learned that verse at last. That God's love is uninfluenced is evident from the fact that the only reason Jesus could find was, "For so it seemed good in Thy sight." (Matt. 11:26) What was there in me to call forth any expression of "love so great, so full, so free?" Nothing. I was a wrathful child. I was a wayward child. I was a rebellious child, determined to be damned, and bent upon my own destruction. Not one redeeming feature or compensating quality could be found, but everything to call forth the everlasting condemnation and vengeance of JEHOVAH in the darkest spot in hell. Yet, in the face of all this, He has given me to experience a little of His love in my heart. Look at John 15:25, where you find a quotation from Psalms 35:19, 69:4, and 109:3: "They hated Me without a cause." Jesus could say, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me." There was no fault, failure, or flaw in our precious Lord for Satan to work upon. I stated last Friday evening to those who love to come to our prayer meeting, that some one well described the human heart as a tinder-box, and human nature as the tinder, waiting for the devil's spark of temptation; but I find my wretched nature more like gunpowder, for the moment Satan's spark is applied I find my nature worse than his. I recollect hearing the late rector of Openshaw say, "The devil never committed adultery, the devil never got drunk, and many of you cannot say so much for yourselves." The carnal mind continues in one continuous course of enmity and opposition to the sovereign love and grace of a covenant God in Christ; and as there is no cause to be found in Christ for the world's hatred, so there can be found no cause in us why He should love us with a love so great. I can look up with a little confidence and say, Lord, Thou hast warmed my heart with Thy love, but it is without a cause in myself; there was nothing in me to merit it, but everything to deserve Thy eternal wrath against me. Why me, Lord? Why me? But look still further.

4. INFINITE LOVE. What do we mean by that? It is love that knows no bounds or constraint concerning those who are the objects thereof. It matters not what may be the want, necessity, sin, or guilt of the child

of God, infinite love is ever ready with both relief and remedy. Great fears and little faith are never disdained by love Divine. This love is so infinite in its nature, manifestation, and communication, that it meets not only the deep necessities of the heart, but the weak faith and fainting hope of despised and hidden ones. It delights in the long loud chorus of everlasting praise in the halls of the glorified, while it is ever ready to minister to the sigh and cry which arises from the anxious spirit of the weakest child in the chosen family. Infinite love put a period to the sinful course of that devil of a man, Manasseh, slew his enmity, and brought him to the feet of his covenant God; and it is the same love that takes the babe from its mother's womb into the very bosom of its God. Still further we search and find it,

5. IMMUTABLE LOVE. Unchangeable! Unvariable!

"Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above,
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death."

Look at those two precious chapters, Jer. 31, and Ezek. 16. I do love them. God appears to weeping, complaining Jeremiah and says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3) Now look at the glorious declaration at the end of that chapter which reminds me so much of Romans 8: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name. If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." (Jer. 31:35-37) Look at Ezek. 16., where God's extraordinary love to Jerusalem is shown in the first fourteen verses. Then look at the rest of the chapter up to the sixtieth verse, where sin, adultery, idolatry, and every abomination abounds. Does this turn him from His love? Never. Read from the sixtieth verse to the end, and you will see that JEHOVAH rests in His love. Blessed be His name,

"Zion's Friend in nothing alters,
Though all others may and do;
His is love that never falters,
Always to its object true:
Happy Zion,
Crowned with mercies ever new."

6. INEXHAUSTIBLE LOVE. It is the fountain from whence Abel drank of its rich and blessed streams; the fountain from whence flowed the waters of life, light, cleansing, and salvation to the poor, despised harlot, Rahab, whom your circumspect, consistent, pious, and proper professors will not deign to touch with the end of their pretty fingers. Yet, she fell into the bosom of everlasting love, and there she is today. It is the same love that gently stopped the blaspheming and reviling lips of the poor thief as he beheld in the

person of his dying companion, INCARNATE LOVE. It is the love which has saved, succoured, and sustained the whole election of grace up to this very moment without diminution. See! Yonder sun pours its bright beams of fructifying power upon this earth of ours and shines as brightly now as it did the first moment when God created it. Yonder clouds still drop their fatness at His command, and will till time shall be no more. These are faint illustrations to show forth the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is an all-fullness which neither sin, death, or hell, nor all combined can ever decrease or diminish.

"His love no end or measure knows,

No change can turn its course,

eternally the same its flows,

From one eternal source."

7. INVINCIBLE LOVE. Before the force of this love all obstacles are swept away, all hindrances are driven from the way of access to the presence of our God and Father. Love humbles our pride, purges away our sins, subdues our will, melts our hard hearts, sweetens our cup, conquers death, triumphs over hell; and when we murmur and repine, and find fault with His providence, we hear the rumbling of its chariot wheels as it hastens over the mountains of doubt and fear, and ere we are aware He is here. His kiss of fond affection assures us of an abiding place in the very heart of a covenant God. O how blessed it is to be brought into the enjoyment of such love. Electing love in covenant. Incarnate love in Bethlehem. Redeeming love on Calvary. Interceding love before the throne. Preserving love all the way through the wilderness. Sustaining love in weariness. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Now notice,

III. The consequence of love bestowed--"That we should be called the sons of God." Called! By whom are we called? By the Father in His voice of pure electing love. By the Son in every act of His redeeming work. By the Spirit as He bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Called into His family, to His house, to His table, to His rest, to His glory, and to Himself. O what a precious call! By it the children feel and know they have a right, a privilege, and a title sealed with blood to enter into their Father's house, where they hear the sweet commanding voice of the King, their Elder Brother, saying, "Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." (Songs 5:1) As pardoned, justified, and accepted sons, we share with Him His reign and His reproach; for we must experience the call in,

IV. Its effect upon the world--"Therefore the world knoweth us not." The world knows nothing of the calling and privileges of the children of God, and is a stranger--in fact, an alien--and an enemy to the language of Canaan. This language is sometimes expressed in sighs and tears, and sometimes we can neither sigh, nor cry, and all the evidence of life we have is a little breathing for life. By these things men live, and the realization thereof produces the fear of God's own giving, which in His eyes and ears, is most eloquent and preveiling. The world knows nothing of sonship, hence it looks upon all those who glory in God's regenerating and adopting love as so many fools and fanatics. The cheerful religious world counts the true-born children as mournful, morose, bitter, and uncharitable. Well, thank God we can, in the spirit of Him who the world hates, cheerfully bear all this. We now glance briefly at,

V. The secret of the world's ignorance--"Because it knew Him not." "The world by wisdom knows not God" the Father in His electing love, while of God's Wisdom it is said, "Which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But the natural man receiveth

not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:8,14) "The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not; but, blessed be His holy name, we know Him by the Spirit which He has given unto us, and we grieve because we do not know and love Him more.

May He add His blessing. Amen.

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