The Master's Indwelling 主的内住

Andrew Murray 慕安得烈 (1828 – 1917)

来源 CCEL christian classics ethereal library
版权 Public Domain

本书由 localkin.ai 书房整理排印，免费分发，不作售卖。正文逐字保留。

The MASTER'S INDWELLING

ANDREW MURRAY

1953

The following papers were in substance delivered by the author in a series of addresses at the Northfield Conference of 1895, but later rewritten and revised by him for this permanent and authorized publication.

CONTENTS

1. CARNAL CHRISTIANS 2. THE SELF LIFE 3. WAITING ON GOD 4. ENTRANCE INTO REST 5. THE KINGDOM FIRST 6. CHRIST OUR LIFE 7. CHRIST'S HUMILITY OUR SALVATION 8. THE COMPLETE SURRENDER 9. DEAD WITH CHRIST 10. JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST 11. TRIUMPH OF FAITH 12. THE SOURCE OF POWER IN PRAYER 13. THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL

CARNAL CHRISTIANS.

I.

1 Corinthians 3:1. – And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.

The apostle here speaks of two stages of the Christian life, two types of Christians: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." They were Christians, in Christ, but instead of being spiritual Christians, they were carnal. "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye able, for ye are yet carnal." Here is that word a second time. "For whereas" – this is the proof – "there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal,

and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" Four times the apostle uses that word carnal. In the wisdom which the Holy Ghost gives him, Paul feels: – I cannot write to these Corinthian Christians unless I know their state, and unless I tell them of it. If I give spiritual food to men who are carnal Christians, I am doing them more harm than good, for they are not fit to take it. I cannot feed them with meat, I must feed them with milk. And so he tells them at the very outset of the epistle what he sees to be their state. In the two previous chapters he had spoken about his ministry being by the Holy Spirit; now he begins to tell them what must be the state of a people in order to accept spiritual truth, and he says: "I have not liberty to speak to you as I would, for you are carnal, and you cannot receive Spiritual truth." That suggests to us the solemn thought, that in the Church of Christ there are two classes of Christians. Some have lived many years as believers, and yet always remain babes; others are spiritual men, because they have given themselves up to the power, the leading and to the entire rule of the Holy Ghost. If we are to obtain a blessing, we must first decide to which of these classes we belong. Are we, by the grace of God, in deep humility living a spiritual life, or are we living a carnal life? Then, let us first try to understand what is meant by the carnal state in which believers may be living.

We notice from what we find in Corinthians, four marks of the carnal state. First: It is simply a condition of protracted infancy. You know what that means. Suppose a beautiful babe, six months old. It cannot speak, it cannot walk, but we do not trouble ourselves about that; it is natural, and ought to be so. But suppose a year later we find the child not grown at all, and three years later still no growth; we would at once say: "There must be some terrible disease;" and the baby that at six months old was the cause of joy to every one who saw him, has become to the mother and to all a source of anxiety and sorrow. There is something wrong; the child cannot grow. It was quite right at six months old that it should eat nothing but milk; but years have passed by, and it remains in the same weakly state. Now this is just the condition of many believers. They are converted; they know what it is to have assurance and faith; they believe in

pardon for sin; they begin to work for God; and yet, somehow, there is very little growth in spirituality, in the real heavenly life. We come into contact with them, and we feel at once there is something wanting; there is none of the beauty of holiness or of the power of God's Spirit in them. This is the condition of the carnal Corinthians, expressed in what was said to the Hebrews: "You have had the Gospel so long that by this time you ought to be teachers, and yet you need that men should teach you the very rudiments of the oracles of God." Is it not a sad thing to see a believer who has been converted five, ten, twenty years, and yet no growth, and no strength, and no joy of holiness?

What are the marks of a little child? One is, a little child cannot help himself, but is always keeping others occupied to serve him. What a tyrant a baby in a house often is! The mother cannot go out, there must be a servant to nurse it; it needs to be cared for constantly. God made a man to care for others, but the baby was made to be cared for and to be helped. So there are Christians who always want help. Their pastor and their Christian friends must always be teaching and comforting them. They go to church, and to prayer-meetings, and to conventions, always wanting to be helped, – a sign of spiritual infancy.

The other sign of an infant is this: he can do nothing to help his fellow-man. Every man is expected to contribute something to the welfare of society; every one has a place to fill and a work to do, but the babe can do nothing for the common weal. It is just so with Christians. How little some can do! They take a part in work, as it is called, but there is little of exercising spiritual power and carrying real blessing. Should we not each ask, "Have I outgrown my spiritual infancy?" Some must reply, "No, instead of having gone forward, I have gone backward, and the joy of conversion and the first love is gone." Alas! They are babes in Christ; they are yet carnal.

The second mark of the carnal state is this: that there is sin and failure continually. Paul says: "Whereas there is strife and division among you, and envying, are ye not carnal?" A man gives way to temper. He may be a minister, or a preacher of the Gospel, or a Sunday-school teacher, most earnest at the prayer-meeting, but yet strife or bitterness or envying is often shown by him.

Alas! Alas! In Gal. 3:5 we are told that the works of the flesh are specially hatred and envy. How often among Christians, who have to work together, do we see divisions and bitterness! God have mercy upon them, that the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, is so frequently absent from His own people. You ask, "Why is it, that for twenty years I have been fighting with my temper, and cannot conquer it?" It is because you have been fighting with the temper, and you have not been fighting with the root of the temper. You have not seen that it is all because you are in the carnal state, and not properly given up to the Spirit of God. It may be that you never were taught it; that you never saw it in God's Word; that you never believed it. But there it is; the truth of God remains unchangeable. Jesus Christ can give us the victory over sin, and can keep us from actual transgression. I am not telling you that the root of sin will be eradicated, and that you will have no longer any natural tendency to sin; but when the Holy Spirit comes not only with His power for service as a gift, but when He comes in Divine grace to fill the heart, there is victory over sin; power not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. And you see a mark of the carnal state not only in unlovingness, self-consciousness and bitterness, but in so many other sins. How much worldliness, how much ambition among men, how much seeking for the honor that comes from man – all the fruit of the carnal life – to be found in the midst of Christian activity! Let us remember that the carnal state is a state of continual sinning and failure, and God wants us not only to make confession of individual sins, but to come to the acknowledgment that they are the sign that we are not living a healthy life, – we are yet carnal.

A third mark which will explain further what I have been saying, is that this carnal state may be found in existence in connection with great spiritual gifts. There is a difference between gifts and graces. The graces of the Spirit are humility and love, like the humility and love of Christ. The graces of the Spirit are to make a man free from self; the gifts of the Spirit are to fit a man for work. We see this illustrated among the Corinthians. In the first chapter Paul says, "I thank God that you are enriched unto all utterance, and all knowledge, and all wisdom." In the 12th and 14th chapters we see that the gifts of prophecy and of

working miracles were in great power among them; but the graces of the Spirit were noticeably absent.

And this may be in our days as well as in the time of the Corinthians. I may be a minister of the Gospel; I may teach God's Word beautifully; I may have influence, and gather a large congregation, and yet, alas! I may be a carnal man; a man who may be used by God, and may be a blessing to others, and yet the carnal life may still mark me. You all know the law that a thing is named according to what is its most prominent characteristic. Now, in these carnal Corinthians there was a little of God's Spirit, but the flesh predominated; the Spirit had not the rule of their whole life. And the spiritual men are not called so because there is no flesh in them, but because the Spirit in them has obtained dominance, and when you meet them and have intercourse with them, you feel that the Spirit of God has sanctified them. Ah, let us beware lest the blessing God gives us in our work deceive us and lead us to think that because he has blessed us, we must be spiritual men. God may give us gifts that we use, and yet our lives may not be wholly in the power of the Holy Ghost.

My last mark of the carnal state is that it makes a man unfit for receiving spiritual truths. That is what the apostle writes to the Corinthians: "I could not preach to you as unto spiritual; you are not fit for spiritual truth after being Christians so long; you cannot yet bear it; I have to feed you with milk." I am afraid that in the church of the nineteenth century we often make a terrible mistake. We have a congregation in which the majority are carnal men. We give these men spiritual teaching, and they admire it, understand it, and rejoice in such ministry; yet their lives are not practically affected. They work for Christ in a certain way, but we can scarce recognize the true sanctification of the Spirit; we dare not say they are spiritual men, full of the Holy Spirit.

Now, let us recognize this with regard to ourselves. A man may become very earnest, may take in all the teaching he hears; he may be able to discern, for discernment is a gift; he may say, "That man helps me in this line, and that man in another direction, and a third man is remarkable for another gift;" yet, all the time, the carnal life may be living strongly in him, and when he gets

into trouble with some friend, or Christian worker, or worldly man, the carnal root is bearing its terrible fruit, and the spiritual food has failed to enter his heart. Beware of that. Mark the Corinthians and learn of them. Paul did not say to them, "You cannot bear the truth as I would speak it to you," because they were ignorant or a stupid people. The Corinthians prided themselves on their wisdom, and sought it above everything, and Paul said: "I thank God that you are enriched in utterance, in knowledge, and in wisdom; nevertheless, you are yet carnal, your life is not holy; your life is not sanctified unto the humility of the life of the Lamb of God, you cannot yet take in real spiritual truth."

We find the carnal state not only at Corinth, but throughout the Christian world to-day. Many Christians are asking, "What is the reason there is so much feebleness in the Church?" We cannot ask this question too earnestly, and I trust that God Himself will so impress it upon our hearts that we shall say to Him, "It must be changed. Have mercy upon us." But, ah! that prayer and that change cannot come until we have begun to see that there is a carnal root ruling in believers; they are living more after the flesh than the Spirit; they are yet carnal Christians.

There is a passage "from carnal to spiritual." Did Paul find any spiritual believers? Undoubtedly he did. Just read the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians! That was a church where strife, and bitterness, and envy were terrible. But the apostle says in the first verse: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." There we see that the marks of the spiritual man are that he will be a meek man; and that he will have power, and love to help and restore those that are fallen. The carnal man cannot do that. If there is a true spiritual life that can be lived, the great question is: Is the way open, and how can I enter into the spiritual state? Here, again, I have four short answers.

First, we must know that there is such a spiritual life to be lived by men on earth. Nothing cuts the roots of the Christian life so much as unbelief. People do not believe what God has said about what He is willing to do for His children. Men do not believe that when God says, "Be filled with the Spirit," He means

it for every Christian. And yet Paul wrote to the Ephesians each one: "Be filled with the Spirit, and do not be drunk with wine." Just as little as you may be drunk with wine, so little may you live without being filled with the Spirit. Now, if God means that for believers, the first thing that we need is to study, and to take home God's Word, to our belief until our hearts are filled with the assurance that there is such a life possible which it is our duty to live; that we can be spiritual men. God's Word teaches us that God does not expect a man to live as he ought for one minute unless the Holy Spirit is in him to enable him to do it.

We do not want the Holy Spirit only when we go to preach, or when we have some special temptation of the devil to meet, or some great burden to bear; God says: "My child cannot live a right life unless he is guided by my Spirit every minute." That is the mark of the child of God: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In Romans V. we read: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us." That is to be the common, every-day experience of the believer, not his life at set times only. Did ever a father or mother think, "For to-day I want my child to love me?" No, they expect the love every day. And so God wants His child every moment to have a heart filled with love of the Spirit. In the eyes of God, it is most unnatural to expect a man to love as he should if he is not filled with the Spirit. Oh, let us believe a man can be a spiritual man. Thank God, there is now the blessing waiting us. "Be filled with the Spirit." "Be led by the Spirit." There is the blessing. If you have to say, "Oh, God, I have not this blessing," say it; but say also, "Lord, I know it is my duty, my solemn obligation to have it, for without it I cannot live in perfect peace with Thee all the day; without it I cannot glorify Thee, and do the work Thou wouldst have me do." This is our first step from carnal to spiritual, – to recognize a spiritual life, a walk in the Spirit, is within our reach. How can we ask God to guide us into spiritual life, if we have not a clear, confident conviction that there is such a life to be had?

Then comes the second step; a man must see the shame and guilt of his having lived such a life. Some people admit there is a spiritual life to live, and that they have not lived it, and they are sorry for themselves, and pity

themselves, and think, "How sad that I am too feeble for it! How sad that God gives it to others, but has not given it to me!" They have great compassion upon themselves, instead of saying, "Alas! it has been our unfaithfulness, our unbelief, our disobedience, that has kept us from giving ourselves utterly to God. We have to blush and to be ashamed before God that we do not live as spiritual men."

A man does not get converted without having conviction of sin. When that conviction of sin comes, and his eyes are opened, he learns to be afraid of his sin, and to flee from it to Christ, and to accept Christ as a mighty deliverer. But a man needs a second conviction of sin; a believer must be convicted of his peculiar sin. The sins of an unconverted man are different from the sins of a believer. An unconverted man, for instance, is not ordinarily convicted of the corruption of his nature; he thinks principally about external sins, – "I have sworn, been a liar, and I am on the way to hell." He is then convicted for conversion. But the believer is in quite a different condition. His sins are far more blamable, for he has had the light and the love and the Spirit of God given to him. His sins are far deeper. He has striven to conquer them and he has grown to see that his nature is utterly corrupt, that the carnal mind, the flesh, within him, is making his whole state utterly wretched. When a believer is thus convicted by the Holy Spirit, it is specially his life of unbelief that condemns him, because he sees that the great guilt connected with this has kept him from receiving the full gift of God's Holy Spirit. He is brought down in shame and confusion of face, and he begins to cry: "Woe is me, for I am undone. I have heard of God by the hearing of the ear; I have known a great deal of Him and preached about Him, but now mine eye seeth Him." God comes near him. Job, the righteous man, whom God trusted, saw in himself the deep sin of self and its righteousness that he had never seen before. Until this conviction of the wrongness of our carnal state as believers comes to each one of us; until we are willing to get this conviction from God, to take time before God to be humbled and convicted, we never can become spiritual men.

Then comes the third mark, which is that out of the carnal state into the spiritual is only one step. One step; oh, that is a blessed message I bring to you –

it is only one step. I know many people will refuse to admit that it is only one step; they think it too little for such a mighty change. But was not conversion only one step?

So it is when a man passes from carnal to spiritual. You ask if when I talk of a spiritual man I am not thinking of a man of spiritual maturity, a real saint, and you say: "Does that come in one day? Is there no growth in holiness?" I reply that spiritual maturity cannot come in a day. We cannot expect it. It takes growth, until the whole beauty of the image of Christ is formed in a man. But still I say that it needs but one step for a man to get out of the carnal life into the spiritual life. It is when a man utterly breaks with the flesh; when he gives up the flesh into the crucifixion death of Christ; when he sees that everything about it is accursed and that he cannot deliver himself from it; and then claims the slaying power of Christ's cross within him, – it is when a man does this and says: "This spiritual life prepared for me is the free gift of my God in Christ Jesus," that he understands how one step can bring him out of the carnal into the spiritual state.

In that spiritual life there will be much still to be learned. There will still be imperfections. Spiritual life is not perfect; but the predominant characteristic will be spiritual. When a man has given himself up to the real, living, acting, ruling power of God's Spirit, he has got into the right position in which he can grow. You never think of growing out of sickness into health; you may grow out of feebleness into strength, as the little babe can grow to be a strong man; but where there is disease, there must healing come if there is to be a cure effected. There are Christians who think that they must grow out of the carnal state into the spiritual state. You never can. What could help those carnal Corinthians? To give them milk could not help them, for milk was a proof they were in the wrong state. To give them meat would not help them, for they were unfit to eat it. What they needed was the knife of the surgeon. Paul says that the carnal life must be cut out. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh." When a man understands what that means, and accepts it in the faith of what Christ can do, then one step can bring him from carnal to spiritual. One simple act of

faith in the power of Christ's death, one act of surrender to the fellowship of Christ's death as the Holy Spirit can make it ours, will make it ours, will bring deliverance from the power of your efforts.

What brought deliverance to that poor condemned sinner who was most dark and wretched in his unconverted state? He felt he could do nothing good of himself. What did he do? He saw set before him the almighty Saviour and he cast himself into His arms; he trusted himself to that omnipotent love and cried, "Lord, have mercy upon me." That was salvation. It was not for what he did that Christ accepted him. Oh, believers, if any of us who are conscious that the carnal state predominates have to say: "It marks me; I am a religious man, an earnest man, a friend of missions; I work for Christ in my church, but, alas! temper and sin and worldliness have still the mastery over my soul," hear the word of God. If any will come and say: "I have struggled, I have prayed, I have wept, and it has not helped me," then you must do one other thing. You must see that the living Christ is God's provision for your holy, spiritual life. You must believe that that Christ who accepted you once, at conversion, in His wonderful love is now waiting to say to you that you may become a spiritual man, entirely given up to God. If you will believe that, your fear will vanish and you will say: "It can be done; if Christ will accept and take charge, it shall be done."

Then, my last mark. A man must take that step, a solemn but blessed step. It cost some of you five or ten years before you took the step of conversion. You wept and prayed for years, and could not find peace until you took that step. So, in the spiritual life, you may go to teacher after teacher, and say, "Tell me about the spiritual life, the baptism of the Spirit, and holiness," and yet you may remain just where you were. Many of us would love to have sin taken away. Who loves to have a hasty temper? Who loves to have a proud disposition? Who loves to have a worldly heart? No one. We go to Christ to take it away, and he does not do it; and we ask, "Why will he not do it? I have prayed very earnestly." It is because you wanted Him to take away the ugly fruits while the poisonous root was to stay in you. You did not ask Him that the flesh should be nailed to

His cross, and that you should henceforth give up self entirely to the power of His Spirit.

There is deliverance, but not in the way we seek it. Suppose a painter had a piece of canvas, on which he desired to work out some beautiful picture. Suppose that piece of canvas does not belong to him, and any one has a right to take it and to use it for any other purpose; do you think the painter would bestow much work on that? No. Yet people want Jesus Christ to bestow His trouble upon them in taking away this temper, or that other sin, though in their hearts they have not yielded themselves utterly to His command and His keeping. It cannot be. But if you will come and give your whole life into His charge, Christ Jesus is mighty to save; Christ Jesus waits to be gracious; Christ Jesus waits to fill you with His Spirit.

Will you not take the step? God grant that we may be led by His Spirit to a yielding up of ourselves to Him as never before. Will you not come in humble confession that, alas! the carnal life has predominated too much, has altogether marked you, and that you have a bitter consciousness that with all the blessing God has bestowed, He has not made you what you want to be – a spiritual man? It is the Holy Spirit alone who by His indwelling can make a spiritual man. Come then and cast yourself at God's feet, with this one thought, "Lord, I give myself an empty vessel to be filled with Thy Spirit." Each one of you sees every day at the tea table an empty cup set there, waiting to be filled with tea when the proper time comes. So with every dish, every plate. They are cleansed and empty, ready to be filled. Emptied and cleansed. Oh, come! and just as a vessel is set apart to receive what it is to contain, say to Christ that you desire from this hour to be a vessel set apart to be filled with His Spirit, given up to be a spiritual man. Bow down in the deepest emptiness of soul, and say, "Oh, God, I have nothing!" and then surely as you place yourself before Him you have a right to say, "My God will fulfill His promise! I claim from Him the filling of the Holy Spirit to make me, instead of a carnal, a spiritual Christian." If you place yourself at His feet, and tarry there; if you abide in that humble surrender and that childlike trust, as sure as God lives the blessing will come.

Oh, have we not to bow in shame before God, as we think of His whole Church and see so much of the carnal prevailing? Have we not to bow in shame before God, as we think of so much of the carnal in our hearts and lives? Then let us bow in great faith in God's mercy. Deliverance is nigh, deliverance is coming, deliverance is waiting, deliverance is sure. Let us trust; God will give it.

THE SELF LIFE.

II.

Matt. 16:24. – If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

In the 13th verse we read that Jesus at Caesarea Philippi asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" When they had answered, He asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?" And in verse 16 Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Jesus answered and said unto him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Then in verse 21 we read how Jesus began to tell His disciples of His approaching death; and in verse 22 how Peter began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." But Jesus turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me, for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Then said Jesus unto His disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

We often hear about the compromised life and the question comes up, What lies at the root of it? What is the reason that so many Christians are wasting their lives in the terrible bondage of the world instead of living in the manifestation and the privilege and the glory of the child of God? And another question perhaps comes to us: What can be the reason that when we see a thing is wrong and strive against it we cannot conquer it? What can be the reason

that we have a hundred times prayed and vowed, yet here we are still living a mingled, divided, half-hearted life? To those two questions there is one answer: it is self that is the root of the whole trouble. And therefore, if any one asks me, "How can I get rid of this compromise life?" the answer would not be, "You must do this, or that, or the other thing," but the answer would be, "A new life from above, the life of Christ, must take the place of the self-life; then alone can we be conquerors."

We always go from the outward to the inward; let us do so here; let us consider from these words of the text the one word, "self." Jesus said to Peter: "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, his own self, and take up the cross and follow me." That is a mark of the disciple; that is the secret of the Christian life – deny self and all will come right. Note that Peter was a believer, and a believer who had been taught by the Holy Spirit. He had given an answer that pleased Christ wonderfully: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Do not think that that was nothing extraordinary. We learn it in our catechisms; Peter did not; and Christ saw that the Holy Spirit of the Father had been teaching him and He said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas." But note how strong the carnal man still is in Peter. Christ speaks of His cross; He could understand about the glory, "Thou art the Son of God;" but about the cross and the death he could not understand, and he ventured in his self-confidence to say, "Lord, that shall never be; Thou canst not be crucified and die." And Christ had to rebuke him: "Get thee behind me, Satan. Thou savorest not the things that be of God." You are talking like a mere carnal man, and not as the Spirit of God would teach you. Then Christ went on to say, "Remember, it is not only I who am to be crucified, but you; it is not only I who am to die, but you also. If a man would be my disciple, he must deny self, and he must take up his cross and follow me." Let us dwell upon this one word, "self." It is only as we learn to know what self is that we really know what is at the root of all our failure, and are prepared to go to Christ for deliverance.

Let us consider, first of all, the nature of this self life, then denote some of its works and then ask the question: "How may we be delivered from it?"

Self is the power with which God has created and endowed every intelligent creature. Self is the very center of a created being. And why did God give the angels or man a self? The object of this self was that we might bring it as an empty vessel unto God; that He might put into it His life. God gave me the power of self-determination, that I might bring this self every day and say: "Oh, God, work in it; I offer it to thee." God wanted a vessel into which He might pour out His divine fullness of beauty, wisdom and power; and so He created the world, the sun, and the moon, and the stars, the trees, and the flowers, and the grass, which all show forth the riches of His wisdom, and beauty, and goodness. But they do it without knowing what they do. Then God created the angels with a self and a will, to see whether they would come and voluntarily yield themselves to Him as vessels for Him to fill. But alas! they did not all do that. There was one at the head of a great company, and he began to look upon himself, and to think of the wonderful powers with which God had endowed him, and to delight in himself. He began to think: "Must such a being as I always remain dependent on God?" He exalted himself, pride asserted itself in separation from God, and that very moment he became, instead of an angel in Heaven, a devil in hell. Self turned to God is the glory of allowing the Creator to reveal Himself in us. Self turned away from God is the very darkness and fire of hell.

We all know the terrible story of what took place further; God created man, and Satan came in the form of a serpent and tempted Eve with the thought of becoming as God, having an independent self, knowing good and evil. And while he spoke with her, he breathed into her, in those words, the very poison and the very pride of hell. His own evil spirit, the very poison of hell, entered humanity, and it is this cursed self that we have inherited from our first parents. It was that self that ruined and brought destruction upon this world, and all that there has been of sin, and of darkness, and of wretchedness, and of misery; and all that there will be throughout the countless ages of eternity in hell, will be nothing but the reign of self, the curse of self, separating man and turning him away from his God. And if we are to understand fully what Christ is to do

for us, and are to become partakers of a full salvation, we must learn to know, and to hate, and to give up entirely this cursed self.

Now what are the works of self? I might mention many, but let us take the simplest words that we are continually using, – self-will, self-confidence, self-exaltation. Self-will, pleasing self, is the great sin of man, and it is at the root of all that compromising with the world which is the ruin of so many. Men cannot understand why they should not please themselves and do their own will. Numbers of Christians have never gotten hold of the idea that a Christian is a man who is never to seek his own will, but is always to seek the will of God, as a man in whom the very spirit of Christ lives. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, oh, my God!" We find Christians pleasing themselves in a thousand ways, and yet trying to be happy, and good, and useful; and they do not know that at the root of it all is self-will robbing them of the blessing. Christ said to Peter, "Peter, deny yourself." But instead of doing that, Peter said, "I will deny my Lord and not myself." He never said it in words, but Christ said to him in the last night, "Thou shalt deny Me," and he did it. What was the cause of this? Self-pleasing. He became afraid when the woman servant charged him with belonging to Jesus, and three times said, "I know not this man, I have nothing to do with Him." He denied Christ. Just think of it! No wonder Peter wept those bitter tears. It was a choice between self, that ugly, cursed self, and that beautiful, blessed Son of God; and Peter chose self. No wonder that he thought: "Instead of denying myself, I have denied Jesus; what a choice I have made!" No wonder that he wept bitterly.

Christians, look at your own lives in the light of the words of Jesus. Do you find there self-will, self-pleasing? Remember this: every time you please yourself, you deny Jesus. It is one of the two. You must please Him only, and deny self, or you must please yourself and deny Him. Then follows self-confidence, self-trust, self-effort, self-dependence. What was it that led Peter to deny Jesus? Christ had warned him; why did he not take warning? Self-confidence. He was so sure: "Lord, I love Thee. For three years I have followed Thee. Lord, I deny that it ever can be. I am ready to go to prison and to death." It was simply self-confidence.

People have often asked me, "What is the reason I fail? I desire so earnestly, and pray so fervently, to live in God's will." And my answer generally is, "Simply because you trust yourself." They answer me: "No, I do not; I know I am not good; and I know that God is willing to keep me, and I put my trust in Jesus." But I reply, "No, my brother; no; if you trusted God and Jesus, you could not fall, but you trust yourself." Do let us believe that the cause of every failure in the Christian life is nothing but this. I trust this cursed self, instead of trusting Jesus. I trust my own strength, instead of the almighty strength of God. And that is why Christ says, "This self must be denied."

Then there is self-exaltation, another form of the works of self. Ah, how much pride and jealousy is there in the Christian world; how much sensitiveness to what men say of us or think of us; how much desire of human praise and pleasing men, instead of always living in the presence of God, with the one thought: "Am I pleasing to Him?" Christ said, "How can ye believe who receive honor one of another?" Receiving honor of one another renders a life of faith absolutely impossible. This self started from hell, it separated us from God, it is a cursed deceiver that leads us astray from Jesus.

Now comes the third point. What are we to do to get rid of it? Jesus answers us in the words of our text: "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." Note it well. – I must deny myself and take Jesus himself as my life, – I must choose. There are two lives, the self life and the Christ life; I must choose one of the two. "Follow me," says our Lord, "make me the law of your existence, the rule of your conduct; give me your whole heart; follow me, and I will care for all." Oh, friends, it is a solemn exchange to have set before us; to come and, seeing the danger of this self, with its pride and its wickedness, to cast ourselves before the Son of God, and to say, "I deny my own life, I take Thy life to be mine."

The reason why Christians pray and pray for the Christ life to come in to them, without result, is that the self life is not denied. You ask, "How can I get rid of this self life?" You know the parable: the strong man kept his house until one stronger than he came in and cast him out. Then the place was garnished

and swept, but empty, and he came back with seven other spirits worse than himself. It is only Christ Himself coming in that can cast out self, and keep out self. This self will abide with us to the very end. Remember the Apostle Paul; he had seen the Heavenly vision, and lest he should exalt himself, the thorn in the flesh was sent to humble him. There was a tendency to exalt himself, which was natural, and it would have conquered, but Christ delivered him from it by His faithful care for His loving servant. Jesus Christ is able, by His divine grace, to prevent the power of self from ever asserting itself or gaining the upper hand; Jesus Christ is willing to become the life of the soul; Jesus Christ is willing to teach us so to follow Him, and to have heart and life set upon Him alone, that He shall ever and always be the light of our souls. Then we come to what the apostle Paul says; "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." The two truths go together. First "Not I," then, "but Christ liveth in me."

Look at Peter again. Christ said to him, "Deny yourself, and follow me." Whither had he to follow? Jesus led him, even though he failed; and where did he lead him? He led him on to Gethsemane, and there Peter failed, for he slept when he ought to have been awake, watching and praying; He led him on towards Calvary, to the place where Peter denied Him. Was that Christ's leading? Praise God, it was. The Holy Spirit had not yet come in His power; Peter was yet a carnal man; the Spirit willing, but not able to conquer; the flesh weak. What did Christ do? He led Peter on until he was broken down in utter self-abasement, and humbled in the depths of sorrow. Jesus led him on, past the grave, through the Resurrection, up to Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit came, and in the Holy Spirit Christ with His divine life came, and then it was, "Christ liveth in me."

There is but one way of being delivered from this life of self. We must follow Christ, set our hearts upon Him, listen to His teachings, give ourselves up every day, that He may be all to us, and by the power of Christ the denial of self will be a blessed, unceasing reality. Never for one hour do I expect the Christian to reach a stage at which he can say, "I have no self to deny;" never for one moment in which he can say, "I do not need to deny self." No, this fellowship

with the cross of Christ will be an unceasing denial of self every hour and every moment by the grace of God. There is no place where there is full deliverance from the power of this sinful self. We are to be crucified with Christ Jesus. We are to live with Him as those who have never been baptized into His death. Think of that! Christ had no sinful self, but He had a self and that self He actually gave up unto death. In Gethsemane He said, "Father, not My will." That unsinning self He gave up unto death that He might receive it again out of the grave from God, raised up and glorified. Can we expect to go to Heaven in any other way than He went? Beware! remember that Christ descended into death and the grave, and it is in the death of self, following Jesus to the uttermost, that the deliverance and the life will come.

And now, what is the use that we are to make of this lesson of the Master? The first lesson will be that we should take time, and that we should humble ourselves before God, at the thought of what this self is in us; put down to the account of the self every sin, every shortcoming, all failure, and all that has been dishonoring to God, and then say, "Lord, this is what I am;" and then let us allow the blessed Jesus Christ to take entire control of our life, in the faith that His life can be ours.

Do not think it is an easy thing to get rid of self. At a consecration meeting, it is easy to make a vow, and to offer a prayer, and to perform an act of surrender, but as solemn as the death of Christ was on Calvary – His giving up of His unsinning self life to God, – just as solemn must it be between us and our God – the giving up of self to death. The power of the death of Christ must come to work in us every day. Oh, think what a contrast between that self-willed Peter, and Jesus giving up His will to God! What a contrast between that self-exaltation of Peter, and the deep humility of the Lamb of God, meek and lowly in heart before God and man! What a contrast between that self-confidence of Peter, and that deep dependence of Jesus upon the Father, when He said: "I can do nothing of myself." We are called upon to live the life of Christ, and Christ comes to live His life in us; but one thing must first take place; we must learn to hate this self, and to deny it. As Peter said, when he denied Christ, "I have

nothing to do with him," so we must say, "I have nothing to do with self," that Christ Jesus may be all in all. Let us humble ourselves at the thought of what this self has done to us and how it has dishonored Jesus; and let us pray very fervently: "Lord, by Thy light discover this self; we beseech Thee to discover it to us. Open our eyes, that we may see what it has done, and that it is the only hindrance that has been keeping us back." Let us pray that fervently, and then let us wait upon God until we get away from all our religious exercises, and from all our religious experience, and from all our blessings, until we get close to God, with this one prayer: "Lord God, self changed an archangel into a devil, and self ruined my first parents, and brought them out of Paradise into darkness and misery, and self has been the ruin of my life and the cause of every failure; oh, discover it to me." And then comes the blessed exchange, that a man is made willing and able to say: "Another will live the life for me, another will live with me, another will do all for me," Nothing else will do. Deny self; take up the cross, to die with Jesus; follow Him only. May He give us the grace to understand, and to receive, and to live the Christ life.

WAITING ON GOD

III.

Psalms 62:5. – My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him.

The solemn question comes to us, "Is the God I have, a God that is to me above all circumstances, nearer to me than any circumstance can be?" Brother, have you learned to live your life having God so really with you every moment, that in circumstances the most difficult He is always more present and nearer than anything around you? All our knowledge of God's Word will help us very little, unless that comes to be the question to which we get an answer.

What can be the reason that so many of God's beloved children complain continually: "My circumstances separate me from God; my trials, my temptations, my character, my temper, my friends, my enemies, anything can

come between my God and me?" Is God not able so to take possession that He can be nearer to me than anything in the world? Must riches or poverty, joy or sorrow, have a power over me that my God has not? No. But why, then, do God's children so often complain that their circumstances separate them from Him? There can be but one answer, "They do not know their God." If there is trouble or feebleness in the Church of God, it is because of this. We do not know the God we have. That is why in addition to the promise, "I will be thy God," the promise is so often added, "And ye shall know that I am your God." If I know that, not through man's teaching, not with my mind or my imagination; but if I know that, in the living evidence which God gives in my heart, then I know that the divine presence of my God will be so wonderful, and my God Himself will be so beautiful, and so near, that I can live all my days and years a conqueror through Him that loved me. Is not that the life which we need?

The question comes again: Why is it that God's people do not know their God? And the answer is: They take anything rather than God, – ministers, and preaching, and books, and prayers, and work, and efforts, any exertion of human nature, instead of waiting, and waiting long if need be, until God reveals Himself. No teaching that we may get, and no effort that we may put forth, can put us in possession of this blessed light of God, all in all to our souls. But still it is attainable, it is within reach, if God will reveal Himself. That is the one necessity. I would to God that every one would ask his heart whether he has said, and is saying every day: "I want more of God. Do not speak to me only of the beautiful truth there is in the Bible. That cannot satisfy me. I want God." In our inner Christian life, in our every-day prayers, in our Christian living, in our churches, in our prayer-meetings, in our fellowship, it must come to that – that God always has the first place; and if that be given Him, He will take possession. Oh, if in our lives as individuals every eye were set upon God, upon the living God, every heart were crying, "My soul thirsteth for God," what power, what blessing and what presence of the everlasting God would be revealed to us! Let me use an illustration. When a man is giving an illustrated lecture he often uses a long pointer to indicate places on a map or chart. Do the people look at that

pointer? No, that only helps to show them the place on the map, and they do not think of it, – it might be of fine gold; but the pointer cannot satisfy them. They want to see what the pointer points at. And this Bible is nothing but a pointer, pointing to God; and, – may I say it with reverence – Jesus Christ came to point us, to show us the way, to bring us to God. I am afraid there are many people who love Christ and who trust in Him, but who fail of the one great object of His work; they have never learned to understand what the Scripture saith: "He died, that He might bring us unto God."

There is a difference between the way and the end which I am aiming at. I might be traveling amid most beautiful scenery, in the most delightful company; but if I have a home to which I want to go, all the scenery, and all the company, and all the beauty and happiness around me cannot satisfy me; I want to reach the end; I want my home. And God is meant to be the home of our souls. Christ came into the world to bring us back to God, and unless we take Christ for what God intended we should, our religion will always be a divided one. What do we read in Hebrews vii? "He is able to save to the uttermost." – Whom? "Them that come to God by Him;" not them that only come to Christ. In Christ – bless His name – we have the graciousness, the condescension, and the tenderness of God. But we are in danger of standing there, and being content with that, and Christ wants to bring us back to rejoice as much as in the glory of God Himself, in His righteousness, His holiness, His authority, His presence and His power. He can save completely those who come to God through Him!

Now, just a very few thoughts on the way by which I can come to know God as this God above all circumstances, filling my heart and life every day. The one thing needful is: I must wait upon God. The original is, – it is in our Dutch version, and it is in the margin, too, – "My soul is silent into God." What ought to be the silence of the soul unto God? A soul conscious of its littleness, its ignorance, its prejudices and its dangers from passion, from all that is human and sinful, – a soul conscious of that, and saying, "I want the everlasting God to come in and to take hold of me and to take such hold of me that I may be kept in the hollow of His hand for my life long; I want Him to take such possession

of me that every moment He may work all in all in me." That is what is implied in the very nature of our God. How we ought to be silent unto Him, and wait upon Him!

May I ask, with reverence: What is God for? A God is for this: to be the light and the life of creation, the source and power of all existence. The beautiful trees, the green grass, the bright sun, God created that they might show forth His beauty, His wisdom and His glory. The tree of one hundred years old – when it was planted God did not give it a stock of life by which to carry on its existence. Nay, verily, God clothes the lilies every year afresh with their beauty; every year God clothes the tree with its foliage and its fruit. Every day and every hour it is God who maintains the life of all nature. And God created us, that we might be the empty vessels in which He could work out His beauty, His will, His love, and the likeness of His blessed Son. That is what God is for, to work in us by His mighty operation, without one moment's ceasing. When I begin to get hold of that, I no longer think of the true Christian life as a high impossibility, and an unnatural thing, but I say, "It is the most natural thing in creation that God should have me every moment, and that my God should be nearer to me than all else." Just think, for a moment, what folly it is to imagine that I cannot expect God to be with me every moment. Just look at the sunshine; have you ever had any trouble as you were working or as you were studying or reading a book in the light the sun gives? Have you ever said, "Oh, how can I keep that light, how can I hold it fast, how can I be sure that I shall continue to have it to use?" You never thought that. God has taken care that the sun itself should provide you with light; and without your care; the light comes unbidden. And I ask you: What think you? Has God arranged that the light of that sun that will one day be burned up, can come to you unconsciously and abide in you blessedly and mightily; and is God not willing, or is He not able, to let His light and His presence so shine through you that you can walk all the day with God nearer to you than anything in nature? Praise God for the assurance; He can do it. And why does He not do it? Why so seldom, and why in such feeble measure? There is but one answer: you do not let Him. You are so occupied and filled with

other things, religious things, preaching and praying, studying and working, so occupied with your religion, that you do not give God the time to make Himself known, and to enter in and to take possession. Oh, brother, listen to the word of the man who knew God so well, and begin to say: "My soul, wait thou only upon God."

I might show that this is the very glory of the Creator, the very life Christ brought into the world, the life He lived, and the very life Christ wants to lift us up to in its entire dependence on the Father. The very secret of the Christ-life is this: such a consciousness of God's presence that whether it was Judas, who came to betray Him, or Caiaphas, who condemned Him unjustly, or Pilate, who gave Him up to be crucified, the presence of the Father was upon Him, and within Him, and around Him, and man could not touch His spirit. And that is what God wants to be to you and to me. Does not all your anxious restlessness, and futile effort, prove that you have not let God do His work? God is drawing you to Himself. This is not your own wish, and the stirring of your own heart, but the everlasting Divine magnet is drawing you. These restless yearnings and thirstings, remember, are the work of God. Come and be still, and wait upon God. He will reveal Himself.

And how am I to wait on God? In answer I would say: first of all, in prayer take more time to be still before God without saying one word. What is, in prayer, the most important thing? That I catch the ear of Him to whom I speak. We are not ready to offer our petition until we are fully conscious of having secured the attention of God. You tell me you know all that. Yes, you know it; but you need to have your heart filled by the Holy Spirit with the holy consciousness that the everlasting, almighty God is indeed come very near you. The loving one is longing to have you for His own. Be still before God, and wait, and say: "Oh, God, take possession. Reveal Thyself, not to my thoughts or imaginations, but by the solemn, awe-bringing, soul-subduing consciousness that God is shining upon me bring me to the place of dependence and humility."

Prayer may be indeed waiting upon God, but there is a great deal of prayer that is not waiting upon God. Waiting on God is the first and the best beginning

for prayer. When we bow in the humble, silent acknowledgment of God's glory and nearness, ere we begin to pray there will be the very blessing that we often get only at the end. From the very beginning I come face to face with God; I am in touch with the everlasting omnipotence of love and I know my God will bless me. Let us never be afraid to be still before God; we shall then carry that stillness into our work; and when we go to church on Sunday, or to the prayer-meeting on week-days, it will be with the one desire that nothing may stand betwixt us and God, and that we may never be so occupied with hearing and listening as to forget the presence of God.

Oh, that God might make every minister what Moses was at the foot of Mount Sinai; "Moses led the people out to meet God," and they did meet Him until they were afraid. Let every minister ask with all the earnestness his soul can command, that God may deliver him from the sin of preaching and teaching without making the people feel first of all: "The man wants to bring us to God Himself." It can be felt, not only in the words, but in the very disposition of the humble, waiting, worshiping heart. We must carry this waiting into all our worship; we will have to make a study of it; we will have to speak about it; we will have to help each other, for the truth has been too much lost in the Church of Christ; we must wait upon God about it. Then we shall be able to carry it out into our daily life. There are so many Christians who wonder that they fail; but think of the ease with which they talk and join in conversation, spending hours in it, never thinking that all this may be dissipating the soul's power and leading them to spend hours not in the immediate presence of God. I am afraid this is the great difficulty: that we are not willing to make the needed sacrifice for a life of continual waiting upon God. Are there not some of us who would feel it an impossibility to spend every moment under the covering of the Most High, "in the secret of His pavilion?" Beloved, do not think it too high, or too difficult. It is too difficult for you and me to attain, but our God will give it to us. Let us begin even now to wait more earnestly and intensely upon God. Let us in our homes sometimes bow a little in silence; let us in our closets wait in

silence, and make a covenant, it may be, without words, that with our whole hearts we will seek God's presence to come in upon us.

What is religion? Just as much as you have of God working in you, that alone is religion. And if you want more religion, more grace, more strength and more fruitfulness, you must have more of God. Let that be the cry of our hearts, – More of God! More of God! More of God! And let us say to our souls, "My soul, wait thou upon God, for my expectation is from Him."

ENTRANCE INTO REST.

IV.

Hebrews 4:1. – Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

Hebrews 4:11. – Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

I want, in the simplest way possible, to answer the question: "How does a man enter into that rest?" and to point out the simple steps that he takes, all included in the one act of surrender and faith.

And the first step, I think, is this: that a man learns to say, "I believe, heartily, there is rest in a life of faith." Israel passed through two stages. This is beautifully expressed in the fifth of Deuteronomy: "He brought us out, that He might bring us in" – two parts of God's work of redemption – "He brought us out from Egypt, that He might bring us into Canaan." And that is applicable to every believer. At your conversion, God brought you out of Egypt, and the same almighty God is longing to bring you into the Canaan life. You know how God brought the Israelites out, but they would not let Him bring them in and they had to wander for forty years in the wilderness – the type, alas! of so many Christians. God brings them out in conversion, but they will not let Him bring them in into all that He has prepared for them. To a man who asks me, "How can I enter into the rest?" I say, first of all, speak this word, "I do believe that

there is a rest into which Jesus, our Joshua, can bring a trusting soul." And if you would know what the difference is between the two lives – the life you have been leading, and the life you now want to lead, just look at the wilderness and Canaan. What are the points of difference? In the wilderness, wandering for forty years, backward and forward; in Canaan, perfect rest in the land that God gave them. That is the difference between the life of a Christian who has, and one who has not entered into Canaan. In wandering backward and forward; going after the world, and coming back and repenting; led astray by temptation, and returning only to go off again; – a life of ups and downs. In Canaan, on the other hand, a life of rest, because the soul has learned to trust: "God keeps me every hour in His mighty power." There is the second difference: the life in the wilderness was a life of want; in Canaan, a life of plenty. In the wilderness there was nothing to eat; there was often no water. God graciously supplied their wants by the manna, and the water from the rock. But, alas! they were not content with this, and their life was one of want and murmurings. But in Canaan God gave them vineyards that they had not planted, and the old corn of the land was there waiting for them; a land flowing with milk and honey; a land that lived by the rain of Heaven and had the very care of God Himself. Oh, Christian, come and say to-day, "I believe there is a possibility of such a change out of that life of spiritual death, and darkness, and sadness, and complaining, that I have often lived, into the land of supply of every want; where the grace of Jesus is proved sufficient every day, every hour." Say to-day: "I believe in the possibility that there is such a land of rest for me."

And then, the third difference: In the wilderness there was no victory. When they tried, after they had sinned at Kadesh, to go up against their enemies, they were defeated. In the land they conquered every enemy; from Jericho onward, they went from victory to victory. And so God waits, and Christ waits, and the Holy Spirit waits, to give victory every day; not freedom from temptation; no, not that; but in union with Christ a power that can say, "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me." "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." May God help every heart to say that.

Then comes the second step. I want you to say not only, "I believe there is such a life," but, second, "I have not had it yet." Say that. "I have never yet got that." Some may say, "I have sought it;" some may say, "I have never heard about it;" some may say, "At times I thought I had found it, but I lost it again." Let every one be honest with God.

And now, will all who have never yet found it honestly, begin to say, "Lord, up to this time I have never had it?" And why is it of such consequence to speak thus? Because, dear friends, some people want to glide into this life of rest gradually; and just quietly to steal in; and God won't have it. Your life in the wilderness has not only been a life of sadness to yourself, but of sin and dishonor to God. Every deeper entrance into salvation must always be by the way of conviction and confession; therefore, let every Christian be willing to say: "Alas! I have not lived that life, and I am guilty; I have dishonored God; I have been like Israel; I have provoked Him to wrath by my unbelief and disobedience. God have mercy upon me!" Oh, let it go up before God – the secret confession: "I haven't it; alas! I have not glorified God by a life in the land of rest."

Then comes the third word I want you to speak and that is: "Thank God, that life is for me." Some say, "I believe there is such a life, but not for me." There are people who continually say: "Oh, my character is so unstable; my will is naturally very weak; my temperament is nervous and excitable, it is impossible for me always to live without worry, resting in God." Beloved brother, do not say that. You say so only for one reason: You do not know what your God will do for you. Do begin to look away from self, and to look up to God, Take that precious word: "He brought them out that he might bring them in." The God who took them through the Red Sea was the God who took them through Jordan into Canaan. The God who converted you is the God who is able to give you every day this blessed life. Oh, begin to say, with the beginnings of a feeble faith, even before you claim it, begin even intellectually to say: "It is for me; I do believe that. God does not disinherit any of His children. What He gives is for every one. I believe that blessed life is waiting for me. It is meant for me. God is waiting to bestow it, and to work it in me. Glory be to His blessed name!

My soul says it is for me, too." Oh, take that little word "me," and looking up in the very face of God dare to say: "This inestimable treasure – it is for me, the weakest and the unworthiest; it is for me." Have you said that? Say it now: "This life is possible to me, too."

And then comes the next step, and that is: "I can never, by any effort of mine, grasp it; it is God must bestow it on me." I want you to be very bold in saying, "It is for me." But then I want you to fall down very low and say, "I cannot seize it; I cannot take it to myself." And how can you then get it? Praise God, if once He has brought you down in the consciousness of utter helplessness and self-despair, then comes the time that He can draw nigh and ask you, "Will you trust your God to work this in you?" Dearly beloved Christians, say in your heart: "I never, by any effort, can take hold of God, or seize this for myself; it is God must give it." Cherish this blessed impotence. It is He who brought us out, who Himself must bring us in. It is your greatest happiness to be impotent. Pray God by the Holy Spirit to reveal to you this true impotence, and that will open the way for your faith to say, "Lord, Thou must do it, or it will never be done." God will do it. People wonder, when they hear so many sermons about faith, and such earnest pleading to believe, and ask why it is they cannot believe. There is just one answer: It is self. Self is working; is trying; is struggling, and self must fail. But when you come to the end of self and can only cry, "Lord, help me! Lord, help me!" – then the deliverance is nigh; believe that. It was God brought the people in. It is God who will bring you in.

One should be willing, for the sake of this rest, to give up everything. The grace of God is very free. It is given without money and without price. And yet, on the other hand, Jesus said that every man who wants the pearl of great price must sacrifice his all, must sell all that he has to buy that pearl. It is not enough to see the beauty, the attractiveness and the glory, and almost to taste the gladness and the joy of this wonderful life as it has been set before you. You must become the possessor, the owner of the field. The man who found the field with a treasure, and the man who found the great pearl, were both glad; but they had not yet got it. They had found it, seen it, desired it, rejoiced in it; but

they had not yet got it. Not until they went and sold all, gave up everything, and bought the ground, and bought the pearl. Ah, friends, there is a great deal that has to be given up: the world, its pleasures, its favor, its good opinion. You are to stand to the world in the same relation as Jesus did. The world rejected Him, and cast Him out, and you are to take up the position of your Lord, to whom you belong, and to follow with the rejected Christ. You have to give up everything. You have to give up all that is good in yourself and to be humbled in the dust of death. And that is not all. Your past religious life and experience and successes – you have to give all up and become nothing, that God alone may have the glory. God has brought you out in conversion; it was God's own life given you: but you defiled it with disobedience and with unbelief. Give it all up. Give up all your own wisdom, and your own thoughts about God's work. How hard it is for the minister of the Gospel to give up all his wisdom, and to lay it at the feet of Jesus, to become a fool and to say: "Lord, I know nothing as I should know it. I have been preaching the Gospel, and how little I have seen of the glory of the blessed land, and the blessed life!"

Why is it that the blessed Spirit cannot teach us more effectually? No reason but this: the wisdom of man prevents it; the wisdom of man prevents the light of God from shining in. And so we could say of other things; give up all. Some may have an individual sin to give up. There may be a Christian man who is angry with his brother. There may be a Christian woman who has quarreled with her neighbor. There may be friends who are not living as they should. There may be Christians holding fast some little doubtful thing, not willing to surrender and leave behind the whole of the wilderness life and lust. Oh, do take this step and say: "I am ready to give up everything to have this pearl of great price; my time, my attention, my business, I count all subordinate to this rest of God as the first thing in my life; I yield all to walk in perfect fellowship with God." You cannot get that and live every day in perfect fellowship with God, without giving up time to it. You take time for everything. How many hours a day has a young lady spent for years and years that she may become proficient on the piano? How many years does a young man study to fit himself

for the profession of the law or medicine? Hours, and days, and weeks, and months, and years, gladly given up to perfect himself for his profession. And do you expect that religion is so cheap that without giving time you can find close fellowship with God? You cannot. But, oh, my brothers and sisters, the pearl of great price is worth everything. God is worth everything. Christ is worth everything. Oh, come to-day, and say, "Lord, at any cost help me; I do want to live this life." And if you find it difficult to say this, and if there is a struggle within the heart, never mind; say to God, "Lord, I thought I was willing, but I see how much unwillingness there is; come and discover what the evil is still in the heart." By His grace, if you will lie at His feet and trust Him you may depend upon it deliverance will come.

Then comes the next step, and that is to say: "I do now give up myself to the holy and everlasting God, for Him to lead me into this perfect rest." Ah, friends, we must learn to meet God face to face. My sin has been against God. David felt that when he said, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." It is God on the judgment seat whose face you will have to meet personally. It is God Himself, personally, who met you to pardon your sins. Come to-day and put yourself into the hands of the living God. God is love. God is near. God is waiting to give you His blessing. The heart of God is yearning over you. "My child," God says, "you think you are longing for rest; it is I that am longing for you, because I desire to rest in your heart as My home, as My temple." You need your God. Yes, but your God needs you, to find the full satisfaction of His Father heart in Christ in you. Come to-day and say: "I do now give up myself to Christ. I have made the choice. I deliberately say, Lord God, I am the purchaser of the pearl of great price. I give up everything for it. In the name of Jesus I accept that life of perfect rest.'"

And then comes my last thought. When you have said that, then add: "And now, I trust God to make it all real to me in my experience. Whether I am to live one year, or thirty years, I have heard it to-day again: God is Jehovah, the great I AM of the everlasting future, the eternal One; and thirty years hence is to Him just the same as now;' and that God gives Himself to me, not according

to my power to hold Him, but according to His almighty power of love to hold me." Will you trust God to-day for the future? Oh, will you look up to God in Christ Jesus once again? A thousand times you have heard, and thought, and thanked – "God has given us His Son;" but will you not to-day say, "How shall He not with Him give me all things, every moment and every day of my life?" Say that in faith. "How shall God not be willing to keep me in the light of His countenance, in the full experience of Christ's saving power? Did God make the sun to shine so brightly, and is the light so willing to pour itself into every nook and corner where it can find entrance? And will not my God, who is love, be willing all the day to shine into this heart of mine, from morning to night, from year's end to year's end?" God is love, and longs to give Himself to us.

Oh, come, Christians, you have hitherto lived a life in your own strength. Will you not begin to-day? Will you not choose a life in which God shall be all, and in which you rest in Him for all? Will you not choose a life in which you shall say: "Oh, God, I ask, I expect, I trust Thee for it. I enter this day into the rest of God to let God keep me; to let God keep me every hour. I enter into the rest of God." Are you ready to say that? Be of good courage; fear not, you can trust God. He brings into rest. Listen to God's word in the Prophets once again: "Take heed, and be quiet. Fear not, neither be faint-hearted." Joshua brought Israel into the land. God did it through Joshua; and Joshua is Jesus, your Jesus, who washed you in His blood; your Jesus, whom you have learned to know as a precious Saviour. Trust Him to-day afresh: "O my Joshua, take me, bring me in and I will trust Thee, and in Thee the Father." You may count upon it. He will take you and the work will be done.

THE KINGDOM FIRST.

V.

Matt 6:33. – Seek ye first the kingdom of God.

You have heard what need there is of unity in Christian life and Christian work. And where is the bond of unity between the life of the Church, the life

of the individual believer and the work to be done among the heathen? One of the expressions for that unity is: "Seek first the Kingdom of God," That does not mean, as many people take it, "Seek salvation; seek to get into the Kingdom, and then thank God, and rest there." Ah, no; the meaning of that word is entirely different and infinitely larger. It means: Let the Kingdom of God, in all its breadth and length, in all its Heavenly glory and power; let the Kingdom of God be the one thing you live for, and all other things will be added unto you. "Seek first the Kingdom of God." Let me just try to answer two very simple questions; the one: "Why should the Kingdom of God be first?" and the other: "How can it be?" The one, "Why should it be so?" God has created us as reasonable beings, so that the more clearly we see that according to the law of nature, according to the fitness of things, something that is set before us is proper, and an absolute necessity, we so much the more willingly accept it, and aim after it. And now, why does Christ say this: "Seek first the Kingdom of God?" If you want to understand the reason, look at God, and look at man. Look at God. Who is God? The great Being for whom alone the universe exists; in whom alone it can have its happiness. It came from Him. It cannot find any rest or joy but in Him. Oh, that Christians understood and believed that God is a fountain of happiness, perfect, everlasting blessedness! What would the result be? Every Christian would say, "The more I can have of God, the happier. The more of God's will, and the more of God's love, and the more of God's fellowship, the happier." How Christians, if they believed that with their whole heart, would, with the utmost ease, give up everything that would separate them from God! Why is it that we find it so hard to hold fellowship with God? A young minister once said to me, "Why is it that I have so much more interest in study than in prayer, and how can you teach me the art of fellowship with God?" My answer was: "Oh, my brother, if we have any true conception of what God is, the art of fellowship with Him will come naturally, and will be a delight." Yes, if we believed God to be only joy to the one who comes to Him, only a fountain of unlimited blessing, how we should give up all for Him! Has not joy a far stronger attraction than anything in the world? Is it not in every beauty, or in every

virtue, in every pursuit, the joy that is set before us that draws? And if we believe that God is a fountain of joy, and sweetness, and power to bless, how our hearts will turn aside from everything, and say: "Oh, the beauty of my God! I rejoice in Him alone." But, alas! the Kingdom of God looks to many as a burden, and as something unnatural. It looks like a strain, and we seek some relaxation in the world, and God is not our chief joy. I come to you with a message. It is right, on account of what God is as Infinite Love, as Infinite Blessing; it is right and more, it is our highest privilege to listen to Christ's words, and to seek God and His Kingdom first and above everything.

And then look at man again; man's nature. What was man created for? To live in the likeness of God, and as His image. Now, if we have been created in the image and likeness of God, we can find our happiness in nothing except that in which God finds His happiness. The more like Him we are the happier. And in what does God find His happiness? In two things: Everlasting righteousness and everlasting beneficence. God is righteousness everlasting. "He is Light, and in Him is no darkness." The Kingdom, the domination, the rule of God will bring us nothing but righteousness. "Seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." If men but knew what sin is, and if men really longed to be free from everything like sin, what a grand message this would be! Jesus comes to lead me to God and His righteousness. We were created to be like God, in His perfect righteousness and holiness. What a prospect! And in His love too. The Kingdom of God means this: that there is in God a rule of universal love. He loves, and loves, and never ceases to love; and He longs to bless all who will yield to His pleadings. God is Light, and God is Love. And now the message comes to man. Can you think of a higher nobility; can you think of anything grander than to take the position that God takes, and to be one with God in His Kingdom; i.e., to have His Kingdom fill your heart; to have God Himself as your King and portion? Yes, my friends, let us remember that we must not just try to get here and there one and another of the blessings of the Kingdom. But the glory of the Kingdom is this: that it is the Kingdom of God where God is all in all. The French Empire, when Napoleon lived, had military glory as the ideal. Every

Frenchman's heart thrilled at the name of Napoleon as the man who had given the empire its glory. If we realized what it means, – our God takes us up into His Kingdom and puts His Kingdom into us and with the Kingdom we have God Himself, that blessed One, possessing us – surely there would be nothing that could move our hearts to enthusiasm like this. The Kingdom of God first! Blessed be His name I Look at man. I don't speak about man's sins, and about man's wretchedness, and about man's seeking everywhere for pleasure, and for rest, and for deliverance from sin, but I just say: Think what man is by creation and think what man is now by redemption; and let every heart say: "It is right. There is no blessedness or glory like that of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God ought to be first in my whole life and being."

But now comes the important question, "How can I attain this?" Here we come to the great question that is troubling the lives of tens of thousands of Christians throughout the world. And it is strange that it is so very difficult for them to find the answer; that tens of thousands are not able to give an answer; and others, when the answer is given, cannot understand it; The day the centurion found his joy in being devoted to the Roman Empire, it took charge of him with all its power and glory. Dear friends, how are we to attain to this blessed position in which the Kingdom of God shall fill our hearts with such enthusiasm that it will spontaneously be first every day? The answer is, first of all give up everything for it. You have heard of the Roman soldier who gave up his soul, his affection, his life, who gave up everything, to be a soldier; and you have often seen, in history ancient and modern, how men who were not soldiers gave up their lives in sacrifice for a king or a country. You have heard how in the South African Republic not many years ago the war of liberty was fought. After three years of oppression by the English the people said they would endure it no longer, and so they gathered together to fight for their liberty. They knew how weak they were, as compared with the English power, but they said, "We must have our liberty." They bound themselves together to fight for it, and when that vow had been made, they went to their homes to prepare for the struggle. Such a thrill of enthusiasm passed through that country that in many

cases women, when their husbands might have been allowed to stay at home, said to them: "No, go, even though you have not been commanded." And there were mothers who, when one son was called out to the front, said: "No, take two, three." Every man and woman was ready to die. It was in very deed "Our country first, before everything." And even so, friends, must it be with you if you want this wonderful Kingdom of God to take possession of you. I pray you by the mercies of God, give up everything for it. You do not know at once what that may mean, but take the words and speak them out at the footstool of God: "Anything, everything, for the Kingdom of God." Persevere in that, and by the Holy Spirit your God will begin to open to you the double blessing: on the one hand, the blessedness of the Kingdom which comes to possess your heart; and on the other hand, the blessedness of being surrendered to Him, and sacrificing and giving up all for Him.

"The Kingdom of God first!" How am I to reach that blessed life? The answer is: "Give up everything for it." And then a second answer would be this: Live every day and hour of your life in the humble desire to maintain that position. There are people who hear this test, and who say it is true, and that they want to obey it. But if you were to ask them how much time they spend with God day by day, you would be surprised and grieved to hear how little time they give up to Him. And yet they wonder that the blessedness of the divine life disappears. We prove the value we attach to things by the time we devote to them. The Kingdom should be first every day, and all the day. Let the Kingdom be first every morning. Begin the day with God, and God Himself will maintain His Kingdom in your heart. Do believe that. Rome did its utmost to maintain the authority of the man who gave himself to live for it. And God, the living God, will He not maintain His authority in your soul if you submit to Him? He will, indeed. Come to Him; only come, and give yourself up to Him in fellowship through Christ Jesus. Seek to maintain that fellowship with God all the day. Ah, friends, a man cannot have the Kingdom of God first, and at times, by way of relaxation, throw it off and seek his enjoyment in the things of this world. People have a secret idea life will become too solemn, too great a strain; it will

be too difficult every moment of the day, from morning to evening, to have the Kingdom of God first. One sees at once how wrong it is to think thus. The presence of the love of God must every moment be our highest joy. Let us say: "By the help of God, it shall ever be the Kingdom of God first."

And then, my last remark, in answer to that question, "How can it be?" is this: it can be only by the power of the Holy Ghost. Let us remember that God's Word comes to us with the language, "Be filled with the Spirit;" and if you are content with less of the Spirit than God offers, not utterly and entirely yielding to be filled with the Spirit, you do not obey the command. But listen: God has made a wonderful provision. Jesus Christ came preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and proclaimed "The Kingdom is at hand." "Some," He said, "are standing here who will not see death until they see the Kingdom come in power." He said to the disciples, "The Kingdom is within you." And when did the Kingdom come – that Kingdom of God upon earth? When the Holy Ghost descended. On Ascension Day the King went and sat down upon the throne at the right hand of God, and the Kingdom of God, in Christ, the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, was inaugurated. When the Holy Ghost came down He brought God into the heart, and Christ, and established the rule of God in power. I am afraid sometimes, that in speaking of the Holy Spirit we forget one thing. The Holy Spirit is very much spoken of in connection with power; and it is right that we should seek power. It is not so much spoken of in connection with the graces. And yet these are always more important than the gifts of power – the holiness, the humility, the meekness, the gentleness, and the lovingness; these are the true marks of the Kingdom. We speak rightly of the Holy Spirit as the only one who can breathe all this into us. But I think there is a third thing almost more important, that we forget, and that is: in the Spirit, the Father and the Son themselves come. When Christ first promised the Holy Spirit, and spoke about His approaching coming, He said: "In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that loveth me keepeth my commandments; and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him." Brother, would you have the Kingdom of God first

in your life, you must have the Kingdom in your hearts. If my heart be set upon a thing I may be bound with chains, but the moment the chains are loosened I fly towards the object of my affection and desire. And just so the Kingdom must be within us, and then it is easy to say: "The Kingdom first." But to have the Kingdom within us in truth, we must have God the Father, and Christ the Son, by the Holy Ghost within us too. No Kingdom without the King.

You are called to likeness with Christ. Oh, how many Christians strive after this part and that part of the likeness of Christ, and forget the root of the whole! What is the root of all? That Christ gave Himself up utterly to God, and His Kingdom and glory. He gave His life, that God's Kingdom might be established. Do you the same to-day and give your life to God to be every moment a living sacrifice, and the Kingdom will come with power into your heart. Give yourself up to Christ. Let Christ the King reign in your heart, and the heavenly Kingdom will come there and the Presence and the Rule of God be known in power. Oh, think of that wonderful thing that is going to happen in the great eternity. We read of it in 1st Corinthians: God has entrusted Christ with the Kingdom, but there is coming a day when Christ shall come Himself again to be subjected unto the Father, and He shall give up the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be all, and in that day Christ shall say before the universe: "This is my glory, I give back the Kingdom to the Father!" Christians, if your Christ finds His glory here on earth in dying and sacrificing Himself for the Kingdom and then in eternity again in giving the Kingdom to God, shall not you and I come to God to do the same and count anything we have as loss, that the Kingdom of God may be made manifest, and that God may be glorified.

CHRIST OUR LIFE.

VI.

Colossians 3:4. – Christ who is our life.

One question that rises in every mind is this: "How can I live that life of perfect trust in God?" Many do not know the right answer, or the full answer.

It is this: "Christ must live it in me." That is what He became man for; as a man to live a life of trust in God, and so to show to us how we ought to live. When He had done that upon earth, He went to heaven, that He might do more than show us, might give us, and live in us that life of trust. It is as we understand what the life of Christ is and how it becomes ours, that we shall be prepared to desire and to ask of Him that He would live it Himself in us. When first we have seen what the life is, then we shall understand how it is that He can actually take possession, and make us like Himself. I want especially to direct attention to that first question. I wish to set before you the life of Christ as He lived it, that we may understand what it is that He has for us and that we can expect from Him. Christ Jesus lived a life upon earth that He expects us literally to imitate. We often say that we long to be like Christ. We study the traits of His character, mark His footsteps, and pray for grace to be like Him, and yet, somehow, we succeed but very little. And why? Because we are wanting to pluck the fruit while the root is absent. If we want really to understand what the imitation of Christ means, we must go to that which constituted the very root of His life before God. It was a life of absolute dependence, absolute trust, absolute surrender, and until we are one with Him in what is the principle of His life, it is in vain to seek here or there to copy the graces of that life.

In the Gospel story we find five great points of special importance; the birth, the life on earth, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension. In these we have what an old writer has called "the process of Jesus Christ;" the process by which He became what He is to-day – our glorified King, and our life. In all this life process we must be made like unto Him. Look at the first. What have we to say about His birth? This: He received His life from God. What about His life upon earth? He lived that life in dependence upon God. About His death? He gave up His life to God. About His resurrection? He was raised from the dead by God. And about His ascension? He lives His life in glory with God.

First, He received His life from God. And why is it of consequence that we should look to that? Because Christ Jesus had in that the starting-point of His whole life. He said: "The Father sent me;" "The Father hath given the Son all

things;" "The Father hath given the Son to have life in Himself." Christ received it as His own life, just as God has His life in Himself. And yet, all the time it was a life given and received. "Because the Father almighty has given this life unto me, the Son of man on earth, I can count upon God to maintain it and to carry me through all." And that is the first lesson we need. We need often to meditate on it, and to pray, and to think, and to wait before God, until our hearts open to the wonderful consciousness that the everlasting God has a divine life within us which cannot exist but through Him. I believe God has given His life, it roots in Him. I shall feel it must be maintained by Him. We often think that God has given us a life which is now our own, a spiritual life, and that we are to take charge; and then we complain that we cannot keep it right. No wonder. We must learn to live, learn to live as Jesus did. I have a God-given treasure in this earthen vessel. I have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. I have the life of God's Son within me given me by God Himself, and it can only be maintained by God Himself as I live in fellowship with Him.

What does the Apostle Paul teach us in Romans VI.; there where he has just told us that we must reckon ourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus? He goes on at once to say: "Therefore yield, present yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead." How often a Christian hears solemn words about his being alive to God, and his having to reckon himself dead indeed to sin, and alive to God in Christ! He does not know what to do; he immediately casts about: "How can I keep it, this death and this life?" Listen to what Paul says. The moment that you reckon yourself dead to sin and alive to God, go with that life to God Himself, and present yourself as alive from the dead, and say to God: "Lord, Thou hast given me this life. Thou alone canst keep it. I bring it to Thee. I cannot understand all. I hardly know what I have got, but I come to God to perfect what He has begun." To live like Christ, I must be conscious every moment that my life has come from God, and He alone can maintain it.

Then, secondly, how did Christ live out His life during the thirty-three years in which He walked here upon earth? He lived it in dependence on God. You

know how continually He says: "The Son can do nothing of Himself. The words that I speak, I speak not of Myself." He waited unceasingly for the teaching, and the commands, and the guidance of the Father. He prayed for power from the Father. Whatever He did, He did in the name of the Father. He, the Son of God, felt the need of much prayer, of persevering prayer, of bringing down from heaven and maintaining the life of fellowship with God in prayer. We hear a great deal about trusting God. Most blessed! And we may say: "Ah, that is what I want," and we may forget what is the very secret of all, – that God, in Christ, must work all in us. I not only need God as an object of trust, but I must have Christ within as the power to trust; He must live His own life of trust in me. Look at it in that wonderful story of Paul, the Apostle, the beloved servant of God. He is in danger of self-confidence, and God in heaven sends that terrible trial in Asia to bring him down, lest he trust in himself and not in the living God. God watched over his servant that he should be kept trusting. Remember that other story about the thorn in the flesh, in 2 Corinthians XII., and think what that means. He was in danger of exalting himself, and the blessed Master came to humble him, and to teach him: "I keep thee weak, that thou mayest learn to trust not in thyself, but in Me." If we are to enter into the rest of faith, and to abide there; if we are to live the life of victory in the land of Canaan, it must begin here. We must be broken down from all self-confidence and learn like Christ to depend absolutely and unceasingly upon God. There is a greater work to be done in that than we perhaps know. We must be broken down, and the habit of our souls must be unceasingly: "I am nothing; God is all. I cannot walk before God as I should for one hour, unless God keep the life He has given me." What a blessed solution God gives then to all our questions and our difficulties, when He says: "My child, Christ has gone through it all for thee. Christ hath wrought out a new nature that can trust God; and Christ the Living One in heaven will live in thee, and enable thee to live that life of trust." That is why Paul said: "Such confidence have we toward God, through Christ." What does that mean? Does it only mean through Christ as the mediator, or intercessor?

Verily, no. It means much more; through Christ living in and enabling us to trust God as He trusted Him.

Then comes, thirdly, the death of Christ. What does that teach us of Christ's relation to the Father? It opens up to us one of the deepest and most solemn lessons of Christ life, one which the Church of Christ understands all too little. We know what the death of Christ means as an atonement, and we never can emphasize too much that blessed substitution and bloodshedding, by which redemption was won for us. But let us remember, that is only half the meaning of His death. The other half is this: just as much as Christ was my substitute, who died for me, just so much He is my head, in whom, and with whom, I die; and just as He lives for me, to intercede, He lives in me, to carry out and to perfect His life. And if I want to know what that life is which He will live in me, I must look at His death. By His death He proved that He possessed life only to hold it, and to spend it, for God. To the very uttermost; without the shadow of a moment's exception, He lived for God, – every moment, everywhere, He held life only for His God. And so, if one wants to live a life of perfect trust, there must be the perfect surrender of his life, and his will, even unto the very death. He must be willing to go all lengths with Jesus, even to Calvary. When a boy twelve years of age Jesus said: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and again when He came to Jordan to be baptized: "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." So on through all His life, He ever said: "It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father. I come not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me." "Lo, I am come to do Thy will, O God." And in the agony of Gethsemane, His words were: "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

Some one says: "I do indeed desire to live the life of perfect trust; I desire to let Christ live it in me; I am longing to come to such an apprehension of Christ as shall give me the certainty that Christ will forever abide in me; I want to come to the full assurance that Christ, my Joshua, will keep me in the land of victory." What is needful for that? My answer is: "Take care that you do not take a false Christ, an imaginary Christ, a half Christ." And what is the full Christ? The full Christ is the man who said, "I give up everything to the death that God may be

glorified. I have not a thought; I have not a wish; I would not live a moment except for the glory of God." You say at once, "What Christian can ever attain that?" Do not ask that question, but ask, "Has Christ attained it and does Christ promise to live in me?" Accept Him in His fullness and leave Him to teach you how far He can bring you and what He can work in you. Make no conditions or stipulations about failure, but cast yourself upon, abandon yourself to this Christ who lived that life of utter surrender to God that He might prepare a new nature which He could impart to you and in which He might make you like Himself. Then you will be in the path by which He can lead you on to blessed experience and possession of what He can do for you. Christ Jesus came into the world with a commandment from the Father that He should lay down His life, and He lived with that one thought in His bosom His whole life long. And the one thought that ought to be in the heart of every believer is this: "I am in the death with Christ; absolutely, unchangeably given up to wait upon God, that God may work out His purpose and glory in me from moment to moment." Few attain the victory and the enjoyment and the full experience at once. But this you can do: Take the right attitude and as you look to Jesus and what He was, say: "Father, Thou hast made me a partaker of the divine nature, a partaker of Christ. It is in the life of Christ given up to Thee to the death, in His power and indwelling, in His likeness, that I desire to live out my life before Thee." Death is a solemn thing, an awful thing. In the Garden it cost Christ great agony to die that death; and no wonder it is not easy to us. But we willingly consent when we have learned the secret; in death alone the life of God will come; in death there is blessedness unspeakable. It was this made Paul so willing to bear the sentence of death in himself; he knew the God who quickeneth the dead. The sentence of death is on everything that is of nature. But are we willing to accept it, do we cherish it? and are we not rather trying to escape the sentence or to forget it? We do not believe fully that the sentence of death is on us. Whatever is of nature must die. Ask God to make you willing to believe with your heart that to die with Christ is the only way to live in Him. You ask, "But must it then be dying every day?" Yes, beloved; Jesus lived every day in the prospect of

the cross, and we, in the power of His victorious life, being made conformable to His death, must rejoice every day in going down with Him into death. Take an illustration. Take an oak of some hundred years' growth. How was that oak born? In a grave. The acorn was planted in the ground, a grave was made for it that the acorn might die. It died and disappeared; it cast roots downward, and it cast shoots upward, and now that tree has been standing a hundred years. Where is it standing? In its grave; all the time in the very grave where the acorn died; it has stood there stretching its roots deeper and deeper into that earth in which its grave was made, and yet, all the time, though it stood in the very grave where it had died, it has been growing higher, and stronger, and broader, and more beautiful. And all the fruit it ever bore, and all the foliage that adorned it year by year, it owed to that grave in which its roots are cast and kept. Even so Christ owes everything to His death and His grave. And we, too, owe everything to that grave of Jesus. Oh! let us live every day rooted in the death of Jesus. Be not afraid, but say: "To my own will I will die; to human wisdom, and human strength, and to the world I will die; for it is in the grave of my Lord that His life has its beginning, and its strength and its glory."

This brings us to our next thought. First, Christ received life from the Father; second, Christ lived it in dependence on the Father; third, Christ gave it up in death to the Father; and now, fourth, Christ received it again raised by the Father, by the power of the glory of the Father. Oh, the deep meaning of the resurrection of Christ! What did Christ do when He died? He went down into the darkness and absolute helplessness of death. He gave up a life that was without sin; a life that was God-given; a life that was beautiful and precious; and He said, "I will give it into the hands of my Father if He asks it;" and He did it; and He was there in the grave waiting on God to do His will; and because He honored God to the uttermost in His helplessness, God lifted Him up to the very uttermost of glory and power. Christ lost nothing by giving up His life in death to the Father. And so, if you want the glory and the life of God to come upon you, it is in the grave of utter helplessness that that life of glory will be born. Jesus was raised from the dead, and that resurrection power, by the grace

of God, can and will work in us. Let no one expect to live a right life until he lives a full resurrection life in the power of Jesus. Let me state in a different way what this resurrection means.

Christ had a perfect life, given by God. The Father said: "Will you give up that life to me? Will you part with it at my command?" And He parted with it, but God gave it back to Him in a second life ten thousand times more glorious than that earthly life. So God will do to every one of us who willingly consents to part with his life. Have you ever understood it? Jesus was born twice. The first time He was born in Bethlehem. That was a birth into a life of weakness. But the second time, He was born from the grave; He is the "first-born from the dead." Because He gave up the life that He had by His first birth, God gave him the life of the second birth, in the glory of heaven and the throne of God. Christians, that is exactly what we need to do. A man may be an earnest Christian; a man may be a successful worker; he may be a Christian that has had a measure of growth and advance; but if he has not entered this fullness of blessing, then he needs to come to a second and deeper experience of God's saving power; he needs, just as God brought him out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, to come to a point where God brings him through Jordan into Canaan. Beloved, we have been baptized into the death of Christ. It is as we say: "I have had a very blessed life, and I have had many blessed experiences, and God has done many things for me; but I am conscious there is something wrong still; I am conscious that this life of rest and victory is not really mine." Before Christ got His life of rest and victory on the throne, He had to die and give up all. Do you it, too, and you shall with Him share His victory and glory. It is as we follow Jesus in His death, that His resurrection, power and joy will be ours.

And then comes our last point. The fifth step in His wondrous path was: He was lifted up to be forever with the Father. Because He humbled Himself, therefore God highly exalted Him. Wherein cometh the beauty and the blessedness of that exaltation of Jesus? For Himself perfect fellowship with the Father; for others participation in the power of God's omnipotence. Yes, that was the fruit of His death. Scripture promises not only that God will, in the

resurrection life, give us joy, and peace that passeth all understanding, victory over sin, and rest in God, but He will baptize us with the Holy Ghost; or, in other words, will fill us with the Holy Ghost. Jesus was lifted to the throne of heaven, that He might there receive from the Father the Spirit in His new, divine manifestation, to be poured out in His fullness. And as we come to the resurrection life, the life in the faith of Him who is one with us, and sits upon the throne – as we come to that, we too may be partakers of the fellowship with Christ Jesus as He ever dwells in God's presence, and the Holy Spirit will fill us, to work in us, and out of us in a way that we have never yet known.

Jesus got this divine life by depending absolutely upon the Father all His life long, depending upon Him even down into death. Jesus got that life in the full glory of the Spirit to be poured out, by giving Himself up in obedience and surrender to God alone, and leaving God even in the grave to work out His mighty power; and that very Christ will live out His life in you and me. Oh, the mystery! Oh, the glory! And oh, the Divine certainty. Jesus Christ means to live out that life in you and me. What think you, ought we not to humble ourselves before God? Have we been Christians so many years, and realized so little what we are? I am a vessel set apart, cleansed, emptied, consecrated; just standing, waiting every moment for God, in Christ, by the Holy Spirit, to work out in me as much of the holiness and the life of His Son as pleases Him. And until the Church of Christ comes to go down into the grave of humiliation, and confession, and shame; until the Church of Christ comes to lay itself in the very dust before God, and to wait upon God to do something new, and something wonderful, something supernatural, in lifting it up, it will remain feeble in all its efforts to overcome the world. Within the Church what lukewarmness, what worldliness, what disobedience, what sin! How can we ever fight this battle, or meet these difficulties? The answer is: Christ, the risen One, the crowned One, the almighty One, must come, and live in the individual members. But we cannot expect this except as we die with Him. I referred to the tree grown so high and beautiful, with its roots every day for a hundred years in the grave in which the acorn died. Children of God, we must go down deeper into the grave of Jesus.

We must cultivate the sense of impotence, and dependence, and nothingness, until our souls walk before God every day in a deep and holy trembling. God keep us from being anything. God teach us to wait on Him, that He may work in us all He wrought in His Son, till Christ Jesus may live out His life in us! For this may God help us!

CHRIST'S HUMILITY OUR SALVATION.

VII.

Philippians 2:5-8. – "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

All are familiar with this wonderful passage. Paul is speaking about one of the most simple, practical things in daily life, – humility; and in connection with that, he gives us a wonderful exhibition of divine truth. In this chapter we have the eternal Godhead of Jesus – He was in the form of God, and one with God. We have His incarnation – He came down, and was found in the likeness of man. We have his death with the atonement – He became obedient unto death. We have His exaltation – God hath highly exalted Him. We have the glory of His Kingdom, – that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess Him. And in what connection? Is it a theological study? No. Is it a description of what Christ is? No; it is in connection with a simple, downright call to a life of humility in our intercourse with each other. Our life on earth is linked to all the eternal glory of the Godhead as revealed in the exaltation of Jesus. The very looking to Jesus, the very bowing of the knee to Jesus, ought to be inseparably connected with a spirit of the very deepest humility. Consider the humility of Jesus. First of all, that humility is our salvation; then, that humility is just the salvation we need; and again, that humility is the salvation which the Holy Spirit will give us.

Humility is the salvation that Christ brings. That is our first thought. We often have very vague, – I might also say visionary – ideas of what Christ is;

we love the person of Christ, but that which makes up Christ, which actually constitutes Him the Christ, that we do not know or love. If we love Christ above everything, we must love humility above everything, for humility is the very essence of His life and glory, and the salvation He brings. Just think of it. Where did it begin? Is there humility in heaven? You know there is, for they cast their crowns before the throne of God and the Lamb. But is there humility on the throne of God? Yes, what was it but heavenly humility that made Jesus on the throne willing to say: "I will go down to be a servant, and to die for man; I will go and live as the meek and lowly Lamb of God?" Jesus brought humility from heaven to us. It was humility that brought Him to earth, or He never would have come. In accordance with this, just as Christ became a man in this divine humility, so His whole life was marked by it. He might have chosen another form in which to appear; He might have come in the form of a king, but He chose the form of a servant. He made Himself of no reputation; He emptied Himself; He chose the form of a servant. He said: "The Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." And you know, in the last night, He took the place of a slave, and girded Himself with a towel, and went to wash the feet of Peter and the other disciples. Beloved, the life of Jesus upon earth was a life of the deepest humility. It was this gave His life its worth and beauty in God's sight. And then His death – possibly you haven't thought of it much in this connection – but His death was an exhibition of unparalleled humility. "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." My Lord Christ took a low place all the time of His walk upon earth; He took a very low place when He began to wash the disciples' feet; but when He went to Calvary, He took the lowest place there was to be found in the universe of God, the very lowest, and He let sin, and the curse of sin, and the wrath of God, cover Him. He took the place of a guilty sinner, that He might bear our load, that He might serve us in saving us from our wretchedness, that He might by His precious blood win deliverance for us, that He might by that blood wash us from our stain and our guilt.

We are in danger of thinking about Christ, as God, as man, as the atonement, as the Saviour, and as exalted upon the throne, and we form an image of Christ, while the real Christ, that which is the very heart of His character, remains unknown. What is the real Christ? Divine humility, bowed down into the very depths for our salvation. The humility of Jesus is our salvation. We read, "He humbled Himself, therefore God hath highly exalted Him." The secret of His exaltation to the throne is this: He humbled Himself before God and man. Humility is the Christ of God, and now in Heaven, today, that Christ, the Man of humility, is on the throne of God. What do I see? A Lamb standing, as it had been slain, on the throne; in the glory He is still the meek and gentle Lamb of God. His humility is the badge He wears there. You often use that name – the Lamb of God – and you use it in connection with the blood of the sacrifice. You sing the praise of the Lamb, and you put your trust in the blood of the Lamb. Praise God for the blood. You never can trust that too much. But I am afraid you forget that the word "Lamb" must mean to us two things: it must mean not only a sacrifice, the shedding of blood, but it must mean to us the meekness of God, incarnate upon earth, the meekness of God represented in the meekness and gentleness of a little Lamb.

But the salvation that Christ brought is not only a salvation that flows out of humility; it also leads to humility. We must understand that this is not only the salvation which Christ brought; but that it is exactly the salvation which you and I need. What is the cause of all the wretchedness of man? Primarily pride; man seeking his own will and his own glory. Yes, pride is the root of every sin, and so the Lamb of God comes to us in our pride, and brings us salvation from it. We need above everything to be saved from our pride and our self-will. It is good to be saved from the sins of stealing, murdering, and every other evil; but a man needs above all to be saved from what is the root of all sin, his self-will and his pride. It is not until man begins to feel that this is exactly the salvation he needs, that he really can understand what Christ is, and that he can accept Him as his salvation. This is the salvation that we as Christians and believers specially need. We know the sad story of Peter and John; what their

self-will and pride brought upon them. They needed to be saved from nothing except themselves, and that is the lesson which we must learn, if we are to enter the life of rest. And how can we enter that life, and dwell there in the bosom of the Lamb of God, if pride rules? Have we not often heard complaints of how much there is of pride in the Church of Christ? What is the cause of all the division, and strife, and envying, that is often found even among God's saints? Why is it that often in a family there is bitterness – it may be only for half an hour, or half a day; but what is the cause of hard judgments and hasty words? What is the cause of estrangement between friends? What is the cause of evil speaking? What is the cause of selfishness and indifference to the feelings of others? Simply this: the pride of man. He lifts himself up, and he claims the right to have his opinions and judgments as he pleases. The salvation we need is indeed humility, because it is only through humility that we can be restored to our right relation to God.

"Waiting upon God," – that is the only true expression for the real relation of the creature to God; to be nothing before God. What is the essential idea of a creature made by God? It is this: to be a vessel in which He can pour out His fullness, in which He can exhibit His life, His goodness, His power, and His love. A vessel must be empty if it is to be filled, and if we are to be filled with the life of God we must be utterly empty of self. This is the glory of God, that He is to fill all things, and more especially His redeemed people. And as this is the glory of the creature, so this is the only redemption, and the only glory of every redeemed soul, to be empty and as nothing before God; to wait upon Him, and to let God be all in all.

Humility has a prominent place in almost every epistle of the New Testament. Paul says: "Walk with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The nearer you get to God, and the fuller of God, the lowlier you will be; and equally before God and man, you will love to bow very low. We know of Peter's early self-confidence; but in his epistles what a different language he speaks! He wrote there: "Let the younger be subject to

the elder, and all of you be subject one to another; humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in His own time." He understood, and he dared to preach, humility to all. It is indeed the salvation we need. What is it that prevents people from coming to that entire surrender that we speak of? Simply that they dare not abandon themselves, and trust themselves, to God; that they are not willing to be nothing, to give up their wishes, and their will, and their honor to Christ. Shall we not accept the salvation that Jesus offers? He gave up His own will; He gave up His own honor; He gave up any confidence in Himself; He lived dependent upon God as a servant whom the Father had sent. There is the salvation we need, the Spirit of humility that was in Christ.

What is it that often disturbs our hearts, and our peace? It is pride seeking to be something. And God's decree is irreversible, "God resisteth the proud; He gives grace only to the humble." How often Jesus had to speak to his disciples about it! You will find repeatedly in the Gospel those simple words: "He that humbleth Himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be humbled." He taught His disciples: "He that would be chiefest among you, let him be the servant of all." This should be our one cry before God: "Let the power of the Holy Ghost come upon me, with the humility of Jesus, that I may take the place that He took." Brother, do you want a better place than Jesus had? Are you seeking a higher place than Jesus? Or will you say: "Down, down, as deep as ever I can go. By the help of God I will be nothing before God; I will be where Jesus was."

And now comes the third thought, – This is the salvation the Holy Ghost brings. You know what a change took place in those disciples. Let us praise God for it; the Holy Spirit means this: the life, the disposition, the temper, and the inclinations of Jesus, brought down from heaven into our hearts. That is the Holy Ghost. He has His mighty workings to bestow as gifts; but the fullness of the Holy Ghost is this: Jesus Christ in His humility coming to dwell in us. When Christ was teaching His disciples, all His instructions may have helped in the way of preparation, breaking them down, and making them conscious of what was wrong, and awakening desire; but the instruction could not do it, and

all their love to Jesus and their desire to please Him could not do it, until the Holy Ghost came. That is the promise Christ gave. He says, in connection with the coming of the Holy Ghost: "I will come again to you." Christ said to His disciples: "I have been three years with you, and you have been in the closest contact with me, and I have done the utmost to reach your hearts; I have sought to get into your hearts, yet I have failed; but fear not, I will come again. In that day ye shall see me, and your hearts shall rejoice, and no man shall take your joy from you. I will come again to dwell in you, and live my life in you." Christ went to heaven that He might get a power which He never had before. And what was that? The power of living in men. God be praised for this! It was because Jesus, the humble One, the Lamb of God, the meek, the lowly and gentle One, came down in the Holy Spirit into the hearts of His disciples, that the pride was expelled, and that the very breath of Heaven breathed through Him in the love that made them one heart and one soul.

Dear friends, Christ is yours. Christ as He comes in the power of the Holy Spirit is yours. Are you longing to have Him, to have the perfect Christ Jesus? Come, then, and see how, amid the glories of His Godhead – His having been in the form of God, and equal to God; amid the glories of His incarnation – His having become a man; amid the glories of His atonement – His having been obedient to death; and amid the glories of His exaltation, which is the chief and brightest glory, He humbled Himself from Heaven down to earth and on earth down to the cross. He humbled Himself to bear the name and show the meekness, and die the death of the Lamb of God. And what is it we now need to do? How are we to be saved by this humility of Jesus? It is a solemn question, but, thank God, the answer can be given. First we must desire it above everything. Let us learn to pray God to deliver us from every vestige of pride, for this is a cursed thing. Let us learn to set aside for a time other things in the Christian life, and begin to plead with the Lamb of God day by day, "O Lamb of God, I know Thy love, but I know so little of Thy meekness." Come day after day, and lay your heart against His heart, and say to Him with strong desire: "Jesus, Lamb of God, give, oh, give me Thyself, with Thy meekness and

humility," and He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him. It is not enough to desire it and to pray for it; claim and accept it as yours. This humility is given you in Christ Jesus. Christ is our life. What does that mean? Oh, that God might give you and me a vision of what that means. The air is our life, and the air is everywhere, universal. We breathe without difficulty because God surrounds us with the air; and is the air nearer to me than Christ is? The sun gives light to every green leaf and every blade of grass, shining hour by hour and moment by moment. And is the sun nearer to the blade of grass than Christ is to man's soul? Verily, no; Christ is around us on every side; Christ is pressing on us to enter, and there is nothing in heaven, or earth, or hell, that can keep the light of Christ from shining into the heart that is empty and open. If the windows of your room were closed with shutters, the light could not enter; it would be on the outside of the building, streaming and streaming against the shutters; but it could not enter. But leave the windows without shutters, and the light comes, it rejoices to come in and fill the room. Even so, children of God, Jesus and His light, Jesus and His humility, are around you on every side, longing to enter into your hearts. Come and take Him to-day in His blessed meekness and gentleness. Do not be afraid of Him; He is the Lamb of God. He is so patient with you, He is so kindly towards you, He is so tender and loving. Take courage to-day and trust Jesus to come into your heart and take possession of it. And when He has taken possession, there will be a life day by day of blessed fellowship with Him, and you will feel a necessity ever deeper for your quiet time with Him, and for worshiping and adoring Him, and for just sinking down before Him in helplessness and humility, and saying: "Jesus, I am nothing, and Thou art all." It will be a blessed life, because you will be conscious of being at the feet of Jesus. At this moment you can claim Jesus in His divine humility as the life of your soul. Will you? Will you not open your heart, and say: "Come in; come in?"

Come to-day, and take Him up afresh in this blessed power of His wonderful humility, and say to Him: "Oh, Thou who didst say, Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' my Lord, I know why it is that I have not the perfect life; it is my pride, but to-day, come

Thou and dwell in my heart. Thou who didst lead even Peter and John into the blessedness of Thy heavenly humility; Thou wilt not refuse me. Lord, here I am; do Thou, who by Thy wonderful humility alone canst save, come in. O Lamb of God, I believe in Thee; take possession of my heart, and dwell in me." When you have said that, go out in quiet, and retire, walking gently as holding the Lamb of God in your heart, and say: "I have received the Lamb of God; He makes my heart His care; He breathes His humility and dependence on God in me, and so brings me to God. His humility is my life and salvation."

THE COMPLETE SURRENDER.

VIII.

Genesis 39:1-3. – Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him at the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian, and his master saw that the Lord was with him.

We have in this passage an object lesson which teaches us what Christ is to us. Note: Joseph was a slave, but God was with him so distinctly that his master could see it. "And his master saw the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did prosper in his hands; and Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him," – that is to say, he was his slave about his person, – "and he made him overseer over his house," – that was something new. Joseph had been a slave, but now he becomes a master. "And he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hands. And it came to pass, from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not all he had, save the bread which he did eat."

We find Joseph in two characters in the house of Potiphar: first as a servant and a slave, one who is trusted and loved, but still entirely a servant; second, as master. Potiphar made him overseer over his house and his lands, and all that he had, so that we read afterward that he left everything in his hands, and he knew of nothing except the bread that came upon his table. I want to call your attention to Joseph as a type of Christ. We sometimes speak in the Christian life, of entire surrender, and rightly, and here we have a beautiful illustration of what it is. First, Joseph was in Potiphar's house to serve him and to help him, and he did that, and Potiphar learned to trust him, so that he said, "All that I have I will give into his hands." Now, that is exactly what is to take place with a great many Christians. They know Christ, they trust Him, they love Him, but He is not Master, He is a sort of helper. When there is trouble they come to Him, when they sin they ask Him for pardon in His precious blood, when they are in darkness they cry to Him; but often and often they live according to their own will, and they seek help from themselves. But how blessed is the man who comes and, like Potiphar, says, "I will give up everything to Jesus!" There are many who have accepted Christ as their Lord, but have never yet come to the final, absolute surrender of everything. Christians, if you want perfect rest, abiding joy, strength to work for God, oh, come and learn from that poor heathen Egyptian what you ought to do. He saw that God was with Joseph and he said, "I will give up my house to him." Oh, learn you to do that. There are some who have never yet accepted Christ, some who are seeking after Him, thirsting and hungering, but they do not know how to find Him.

Let me direct your attention to four thoughts regarding this surrender to Christ: First, its motives; second, its measures; third, its blessedness; lastly, its duration.

First of all, its motives. What moved Potiphar to do this? I think the answer is very easy: he was a trusted servant of the king and he had the king's work to take care of, and he very likely could not take care of his own house. All his time and attention were required at the court of Pharaoh. He had his duty there; he was in high honor; but his own house got neglected. Very likely he had

had other overseers, one slave appointed to rule the others, and perhaps that one had been unfaithful, or dishonest, and somehow his house was not as he would have it. So he buys another slave, just as he had formerly done, but in this case he sees what he had never seen before. There is something unusual about the man. He walks so humbly, he serves so faithfully and so lovingly, and withal so successfully. Potiphar begins to look into the reason for this, and finally concludes that God is with him.

It is a grand thing to have a man with whom God is, to entrust one's business to. The heathen realized this, and between the need of his own house and what he saw in Joseph, he decided to make him overseer. I ask you, do not these two motives plead most urgently that you should say: "I will make Jesus master over my whole being?" Your house, Christian, your spiritual life, the dwelling, the temple of God in your heart, – in what state is that? Is it not often like the temple of old, in Jerusalem, that had been defiled and made a house of merchandise, and afterwards a den of thieves? Your heart, meant to be the home of Jesus, is it not often full of sin and darkness, full of sadness, full of vexation? You have done your very best to get it changed, and you have called in the help of man, and the help of means; you have used every method you could think of for getting it put right; but it will not come right until He whose it is, comes in to take charge.

If there is any trouble in your heart, if you are in darkness, or in the power of sin, I bring to you the Son of God, with the promise that He will come in and take charge. As Potiphar took Joseph, will you not take Jesus? Has He not proven Himself worthy to be trusted? Come and say, "Jesus shall have entire charge; He is worthy." Think not only of His Divine power, but think of His wonderful love; think of His coming from heaven to save you; think of His dying on Calvary and shedding His blood out of intense love for you. Oh, think of it; Christ in heaven loves every one who is given to Him, and whom He has made a child of God. "Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

Must I plead in the name of the love of the crucified Jesus; must I plead with you Christians, and say, Look at Jesus, the Son of God, your Redeemer, and ask you to make Him overseer over all? Give Him charge of your temper, your heart's affections, your thoughts, your whole being, and He will prove Himself worthy of it. Joseph had been for a time just a common slave, and with the other slaves had served Pharaoh. Alas! many a Christian has used Christ for his own advancement and comfort, just as he uses everything in the world. He uses father and mother, minister, money, and all else the world will give, to comfort and make him happy; there is danger of his using Christ Jesus in the same way. But oh, brethren, this is not right. You are His house, and He has a right to dwell therein. Will you not come and surrender all, and say, "Lord Jesus, I have made Thee overseer over all?"

But now, secondly, the measure of that surrender. We read in the 4th verse: "All that he had he put into his hands." Then in verse 5: "And it came to pass from the time that he made him overseer over all that he had" – there you have it the second time – "the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had" – there the third time. Then in verse 6: "And he left all that he had" – there you have the words the fourth time – "in Joseph's hand, and he knew not all he had, save the bread which he did eat." What do I see here? That Potiphar actually gave everything into Joseph's hands. He made him master over his slaves. All the money was put into Joseph's hands, for we read that Potiphar had care of nothing. When dinner was brought upon the table, he ate of it, and that was all he knew of what was going on in his house. Is not this entire surrender? – he gives up everything into the hands of Joseph. Ah, beloved Christians, I want you to ask yourselves: "Have I done that?" You have offered more than one consecration prayer, and you have more than once said: "Jesus, all I have I give to Thee." You have said it, and meant it; but very probably you did not realize fully what it meant.

With the word surrender there seems always to be a larger and more comprehensive meaning. We do not succeed in carrying out our intentions, and afterward we take back one thing and another until we have lost sight of our

original intention. Beloved Christians, let Christ Jesus have all. Let Him have your whole heart, with its affections; He Himself loves, with more than the love of Jonathan. Let Him have your whole heart, saying, "Jesus, every fiber of my being, ever power of my soul, shall be devoted to Thee." He will accept that surrender. He spoke a solemn word: "You must hate father and mother." Say you to-day: "Lord Jesus, the love to father and mother, to wife and child, to brother and sister, I give up to Thee. Teach Thou me how to love Thee. I have only one desire, which is to love Thee. I want to give my whole heart to be full of Thy love."

But when you have given your heart, there is yet more to give. There is the head – the brain with its thoughts. I believe Christians do not know how much they rob Christ of in reading so much of the literature of the world. They are often so occupied with their newspapers that the Bible gets a very small place. Oh, friends, I beseech you bring this noble power which God has given you, the power of a mind that can think heavenly, eternal, and infinite things, and lay it at the feet of Jesus, saying, "Lord Jesus, every faculty of my being I want to surrender to Thee, that Thou shouldst teach me what to think, and how to think, for Thee and Thy Kingdom." Bless God, there are men who have given their intellect to Jesus, and it has been accepted by Him. And in this connection there is my whole outer life. There is my relation to society, my position among men, my intercourse in my own home, with friends and family; there is my money, my time, my business; all these should be put in the hands of Jesus. One cannot know beforehand the blessedness of this surrender, but blessed it surely is. Come, because He is worthy; come because you know you cannot keep things right yourself, and make Christ master over all you have. Give father and mother, wife and child, house and land, and money, all to Jesus, and you will find that in giving all you receive it back an hundred fold.

Thirdly, look at the blessing of the entire surrender. You have here the remarkable words: "And it came to pass from the time that Potiphar made Joseph overseer over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had

in the house, and in the field." I ask you Christians, If God did this to that heathen man, because he honored Joseph; if God, for Joseph's sake, blessed that Egyptian in this wonderful way, may a Christian not venture to say: "If I put my life into the hands of Jesus, I am sure God will bless all that I have?" Oh, dare to say it. Potiphar trusted Joseph implicitly and absolutely, and there was prosperity everywhere, because God was with Joseph. Beloved friends, if you but surrender everything, depend upon it, the blessing from that time will be yours. There will be a blessing within your own inner life, and a blessing in your outer life. He blessed Potiphar in the house, in the field, everywhere.

Oh, Christian, what is that blessing you will get? I cannot tell all, but I can tell you this: if you will come to Christ Jesus and surrender all, the blessing of God will be on all that you have. There will be a blessing for your own soul. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." Try that; trust Jesus for everything, and trust everything to Him, and the blessing of God will come upon you – the sweet rest, the rest of faith. It is all in the hands of Jesus; He will guide you; He will teach you; He will work in you; He will keep you; He will be everything to you. What a blessed rest and freedom from responsibility and from care, because it is all in the hands of Jesus! I do not say trouble and trial will never come; but in the midst of trial and trouble you will have the all-sufficiency of the presence of Jesus to be your comfort, your help, and your guide. Joseph was sold by his brethren, but he saw God in it, and he was quite content. Christ was betrayed by Judas, condemned by Caiaphas, and given over to execution by Pilate; but in all that, Christ saw God, and He was content. Give over your life, in all its phases, into the hands of Jesus; remembering that the very hairs of your head are numbered, and not a sparrow falls to earth without the Father's notice. Consent now and say: "I will give up everything into the hands of Jesus. Whatever happens is His will regarding me. Whether He comes in the light or in the dark, in the storm or on the troubled sea, I will rest in that blessed assurance. I give up my whole life entirely to Him."

In reading the Book of Jonah, we find God's hand in each step of Jonah's experience. It was God who sent the storm when Jonah went aboard the ship,

who appointed a whale to swallow him, who ordered the whale to cast him out; and then afterwards it was God who caused the hot wind to blow when the sun was sending down its scorching rays, until the soul of Jonah was grieved, and made the gourd to grow, and sent the worm to kill the gourd, and set a sea-wind to dry the gourd up quickly. Do we not thus see that every circumstance of our living, every comfort and every trial, comes from God in Christ? There is nothing can touch a hair of my head. Not a sharp word comes against me; not an unexpected flurry surrounds me, but it is all Jesus. With my life in His hands, I need care for nothing. I can be content with what Jesus gives.

God blessed Potiphar in the field; in the visible life outside of his house; and God will bless you, that, in your intercourse with men, you may be a blessing; that by your holy, humble, respectful, quiet walk, you may carry comfort; that by your loving readiness to be a servant and a helper to all, you may prove what the Spirit of God has done within you. Oh, my brother, my sister, you have no conception of it, – I have not – how God is willing to bless the soul utterly given up to Jesus. God can delight in nothing but Jesus. God delights infinitely in Jesus. God longs to see nothing in us but Jesus, and if I give up my heart and life to Jesus, and say, "My God, I want that Thou shouldst see in me nothing but Jesus," then I bring to the Father the sacrifice that is the most acceptable of all. Oh, believers, come to-day; come out of all your troubles, and all your self-efforts and your self-confidence, and let the blessed Son of God take possession.

Let me direct your thoughts, lastly, to the duration of this surrender. I want to emphasize this – because in many cases the surrender does not last. Some go away, and for a time have much gladness and joy, but it soon begins to decrease, and in a few weeks or perhaps months is all gone. Others who do not lose it entirely, complain sadly at times, that it goes away and comes again. They say: "My life has been very much blessed since that surrender I made to God, but it has not always been on the same level." What did Potiphar do? We read in the 4th verse: "He made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he left in Joseph's hands." What a simple word! He left it there.

And oh, children of God, if you will only get to that point and say, "For all eternity I leave it in the hands of Jesus," you will find what a blessing it is. Potiphar found now that he could do the king's business with two hands and an undivided heart. I might try to rescue a drowning man by holding fast somewhere with one hand, while I reached out the other hand to the man, but it is a grand thing for a person to be able to stretch out both hands, and that person is the one who has left all with Jesus – all his inner life, all his cares and troubles, and has given himself up entirely to do the will of God. Will you leave it there? I must press this, because I know temptations will come. One temptation will be that the feelings you had in your act of surrender will pass away; they will not be so bright; another, that circumstances will tempt you. Beloved, temptations will come; God means it for your good. Every temptation brings you a blessing. Do understand that. Learn the lesson of giving up everything to Jesus, and letting Jesus take charge of everything. Leave all with Jesus. Do not think that by a surrender to-day or on any day, however powerful, however mighty, things will keep right themselves. You need every morning afresh, when God wakes you up out of sleep, to put your heart, and your life, and your house, and your business, into the hands of Jesus. Wait on Him, if need be, in silence, or in prayer, until He gives you the assurance, "My child, for to-day all is safe; I take charge." And morning by morning He will renew to you the blessing, and morning by morning you will go out from your quiet time in the consciousness, "To-day I have had fellowship with my King, and it is all right." Jesus has taken charge. And so, day by day, you can have grace to leave all in the hands of Jesus.

In conclusion let me speak to two classes. There are times when your heart is restless; there are times when you are afraid to die.

There are some true believers who have perhaps never yet understood that it was their duty to give up everything to Christ. Beloved fellow Christians, I come with a message from your Father, to come and to-day take that word into your hearts and upon your lips, even though you do not understand it. "Jesus, I make Thee Master of everything and I will wait at Thy feet, that Thou wilt show me what Thou wouldst have me be and do." Do it now. And let me say to

believers who have done it before, and who long with an unutterable longing to do it fully and perfectly, – Child of God, you can do it, for the Holy Spirit has been sent down from Heaven for this one purpose, to glorify Jesus; to glorify Jesus in your heart, by letting you see how perfectly Jesus can take possession of the whole heart; to glorify Jesus by bringing Him into your very life, that your whole life may shine out with the glory of Jesus. Depend upon it, the Father will give it to you by the Holy Spirit, if you are ready. Oh, come, and let your intercourse with God be summed up in a simple prayer and answer – "My God, as much as Thou wilt have of me to fill with Christ, Thou shalt have to-day." "My child, as much of Christ as thy heart longeth to have, thou shalt have; for it is My delight that My Son be in the hearts of My children."

DEAD WITH CHRIST.

IX.

Gal. 2:20. – I am crucified with Christ.

The Revised Version properly has the above text "I have been crucified with Christ." In this connection, let us read the story of a man who was literally crucified with Christ. We may use all the narrative of Christ's work upon earth in the flesh as a type of His spiritual work. Let us take in this instance the story of the penitent thief, Luke 23:39-43, for I think we may learn from him how to live as men who are crucified with Christ. Paul says: "I have been crucified with Christ." And again: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom I have been crucified to the world, and the world to me." We often ask earnestly: How can I be free from the self life? The answer is, "Get another life." We often speak about the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon us, but I doubt if we fully realize that the Holy Spirit is a heavenly life come to expel the selfish, and fleshly, and the earthly life. If we want, in very deed, to enjoy fully the rest that there is in Jesus, we can only have it as He comes in, in the power of His death, to slay what is in us of nature, and to take possession, and to live His own life in the fullness of the Holy Ghost.

God's Word takes us to the cross of Christ, and it teaches us about that cross, two things. It tells us that Christ died for sin. We understand what that means, that in His atonement He died as I never die, as I never can die, as I never need die; He died for sin and for me. But what gave His death such power to atone? It was this: the spirit in which He died, not the physical suffering, not the external act of death, but the spirit in which He died. And what was that spirit? He died unto sin. Sin had tempted Him, and surrounded Him, and had brought Him very nigh to saying, "I cannot die." In Gethsemane He cried: "Father, is it not possible that the cup pass from me?" But God be praised, He gave up His life rather than yield to sin. He died to sin, and in dying He conquered. And now, I can not die for sin like Christ, but I can and I must die to sin like Christ. Christ died for me. In that He stands alone. Christ died to sin, and in that I have fellowship with Him. I have been crucified, I am dead.

And here is the great subject to which I want to lead you. – What it is to be dead with Christ, and how it is that I can practically enter into this death with Christ. We know that the great characteristic of Christ is His death. From eternity He came with the commandment of the Father that He should lay down His life on earth. He gave Himself up to it, and He set His face towards Jerusalem. He chose death, and He lived and walked upon earth to prepare Himself to die. His death is the power of redemption; death gave Him His victory over sin; death gave Him His resurrection, His new life, His exaltation, and His everlasting glory. The great mark of Christ is His death. Even in Heaven, upon the throne, He stands as the Lamb that was slain, and through eternity they ever sing, "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain." Beloved brother, your Boaz, your Christ, your all-sufficient Saviour, is a Man of whom the chief mark and the greatest glory is this: He died. And if the Bride is to live with her husband as His wife, then she must enter into His state, and into His spirit, and into His disposition, and ever be as He is. If we are to experience the full power of what Christ can do for us, we must learn to die with Christ. I ought not, perhaps, to use that expression, "We must learn to die with Christ;" I ought, rather, to say, "We must learn that we are dead with Christ." That is a

glorious thought in the 6th chapter of Romans; to every believer in the Church of Rome – not to the select ones, or the advanced ones, but to every believer in the Church of Rome, however feeble, Paul writes, "You are dead with Christ." On the strength of that he says, "Reckon yourselves dead unto sin." What does that mean – You are dead to sin? We cannot see it more clearly than by referring to Adam. Christ was the second Adam. What happened in the first Adam? I died, in the first Adam; I died to God; I died in sin. When I was born, I had in me the life of Adam, which had all the characteristics of the life of Adam after he had fallen. Adam died to God, and Adam died in sin, and I inherit the life of Adam, and so I am dead in sin as he was, and dead unto God. But at the very moment I begin to believe in Jesus, I become united to Christ, the second Adam, and as really as I am united by my birth to the first Adam, I am made partaker of the life of Christ. What life? That life which died unto sin on Calvary, and which rose again; therefore God by his apostle tells us: "Reckon yourselves indeed dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus." You are to reckon it as true, because God says it – for your new nature is indeed, in virtue of your vital union to Christ, actually and utterly dead to sin.

If we want to have the real Christ that God has given us, the real Christ that died for us, in the power of His death and resurrection, we must take our stand here. But many Christians do not understand what the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans teaches us. They do not know that they are dead to sin. They do not know it, and therefore Paul instructs them: "Know ye not that as many of you as are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His death." How can we who are dead to sin in Christ live any longer therein? We have indeed the death and the life of Christ working within us. But, alas! most Christians do not know this, and therefore do not experience or practice it. They need to be taught that their first need is to be brought to the recognition, to the knowledge, of what has taken place in Christ on Calvary, and what has taken place in their becoming united to Christ. The man must begin to say, even before he understands it, "In Christ I am dead to sin." It is a command: "Reckon ye yourselves indeed to be dead unto sin." Get hold of your union to Christ; believe

in the new nature within you, that spiritual life which you have from Christ, a life that has died and been raised again. A man's acts are always in accordance with his idea of his state. A king acts like a king, otherwise we say, "That man has forgotten his kingship," but if a man is conscious of being a king, he behaves like a king. And so I cannot live the life of a true believer unless I am filled with a consciousness of this every day: "I thank God that I am dead in Christ. Christ died unto sin, and I am united with Christ, and Christ lives in me and I am dead to sin." What is the life Christ lives in me? Ask what is the life Adam lives in me? Adam lives in me the death life, a life that has fallen under the power of sin and death, death to God. That life Adam lives in me by nature as an unconverted man. And Christ, the second Adam, has come to me with a new life, and I now live in His life, the death-life of Christ. As long as I do not know it, I cannot act according to it, though it be in me. Praise God, when a man begins to see what it is, and begins in obedience to say, "I will do what God's Word says; I am dead, I reckon myself dead," he enters upon a new life. On the strength of God's everlasting Word, and your union to Christ, and the great fact of Calvary, reckon, know yourself as dead indeed unto sin. A man must see this truth; this is the first step. The second is – he must accept it in faith. And what then? When he accepts it in faith, then there comes in him a struggle, and a painful experience, for that faith is still very feeble, and he begins to ask, "But why, if I am dead to sin, do I commit so much sin?" And the answer God's Word gives is simply this: You do not allow the power of that death to be applied by the Holy Spirit. What we need is to understand that the Holy Spirit came from Heaven, from the glorified Jesus, to bring His death and His life into us. The two are inseparably connected. That Christ died, He died unto sin, and that He liveth, He liveth unto God. The death and the life in Him are inseparable; and even so in us the life to God in Christ is inseparably connected with the death to sin. And that is what the Holy Ghost will teach us and work in us. If I have accepted Christ in faith by the Holy Ghost, and yield myself to Him, Christ every day keeps possession, and reveals the full power of my fellowship in His death and life in my heart. To some this comes undoubtedly in one moment of

supreme power and blessing; all at once they see and accept it, and enter in, and there is death to sin as a Divine experience. It is not that the tendency to evil is rooted out. No; but the power of Christ's death keeps from sin, and destroys the power of sin; the power of Christ's death can be manifested in the Holy Spirit's unceasingly mortifying the deeds of the body.

Some one asks me if there is still growth needed. Undoubtedly. By the Holy Spirit a man can now begin to live and grow, deeper and deeper, into the fellowship of Christ's death. New things are discovered by him in spheres of which he never thought. A man may at times be filled with the Holy Ghost, and yet there may be great imperfections in him. Why? For this reason: because his heart, perhaps, had not been fully prepared by a complete discovery of sin. There may be pride, or self-consciousness, or forwardness, or other qualities of this nature which he has never noticed. The Holy Spirit does not always cast these out at once. No. There are different ways of entering into the blessed life. One man enters into the blessed life with the idea of power for service; another with the idea of rest from worry and weariness; another with the idea of deliverance from sin. In all these aspects there is something limited, and therefore every believer is to give himself up after he knows the power of Christ's death, and say continually: "Lord Jesus, let the power of Thy death work through, let it penetrate my whole being." As the man gives himself unreservedly up, he will begin to bear the marks of a crucified man. The apostle says: "I have been crucified," and he lives like a crucified man.

What are the marks of a crucified man? The first is, deep, absolute humility. Christ humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. When the death to sin begins to work mightily, that is one of its chief and most blessed proofs. It breaks a man down, down, and the great longing of his heart is, "Oh, that I could get deeper down before my God, and be nothing at all, that the life of Christ might be exalted. I deserve nothing but the cursed cross; I give myself over to it." Humility is one of the great marks of a crucified man.

Another mark is impotence, helplessness. When a man hangs on the cross, he is utterly helpless, he can do nothing. As long as we Christians are strong,

and can work, or struggle, we do not get into the blessed life of Christ; but when a man says, "I am a crucified man, I am utterly helpless, every breath of life and strength must come from my Jesus," then we learn what it is to sink into our own impotence, and say, "I am nothing."

Still another mark of crucifixion is restfulness. Yes. Christ was crucified, and went down into the grave, and we are crucified and buried with Him. There is no place of rest like the grave; a man can do nothing there, "My flesh shall rest in hope," said David, and said the Messiah. Yes, and when a man goes down into the grave of Jesus, it means this: that he just cries out, "I have nothing but God, I trust God; I am waiting upon God; my flesh rests in Him; I have given up everything, that I may rest, waiting upon what God is to do to me." Remember, the crucifixion, and the death, and the burial are inseparably one. And remember the grave is the place where the mighty resurrection power of God will be manifested. And remember those precious words in the 11th of John: "Said I not unto thee" – when did Christ say that? It was at the grave of Lazarus – "that if thou believest, thou shalt see the glory of God?" Where shall I see the glory of God most brightly? Beside the grave. Go down into death believing, and the glory of God will come upon thee, and fill thy heart.

Dear friends, we want to die. If we are to live in the rest, and the peace, and the blessedness of our great Boaz; if we are to live a life of joy and of fruitfulness, of strength and of victory, we must go down into the grave with Christ, and the language of our life must be: "I am a crucified man. God be praised, though I have nothing but sin in myself, I have an everlasting Jesus, with His death and His life, to be the life of my soul."

How can I enter into this fellowship of the cross? We find an illustration in the story of the penitent thief. Thomas said, before Christ's death, "Let us go and abide with Him." And Peter said, "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee to prison, or to death." But the disciples all failed, and our Lord took a man who was the offscouring of the earth, and he hung him upon the cross of Calvary beside Himself, and He said to Peter, and to all: "I will let you see what it is to die with Me." And He says that word to-day, to the weakest and the humblest;

if you are longing to know what it is to enter into death with Jesus, come and look at the penitent thief. And what do we see there? First of all, we see there the state of a heart prepared to die with Christ. We see in that penitent thief, a humble, whole-hearted confession of sin. There he hung upon the cursed tree, and the multitudes were blaspheming that man beside him, but he was not ashamed publicly to make confession: "I am dying a death that I have deserved; I am suffering justly; this cross is what I have deserved." Here is one of the reasons why the Church of Christ enters so little into the death of Christ; men do not want to believe that the curse of God is upon everything in them that has not died with Christ. People talk about the curse of sin, but they do not understand that the whole nature has been infected by sin, and that the curse is on everything. My intellect, has that been defiled by sin? Terribly, and the curse of sin is on it, and therefore my intellect must go down into the death. Ah, I believe that the Church of Christ suffers more to-day from trusting in intellect, in sagacity, in culture, and in mental refinement, than from almost anything else. The Spirit of the world comes in, and men seek by their wisdom, and by their knowledge, to help the Gospel, and they rob it of its crucifixion mark. Christ directed Paul to go and preach the Gospel of the cross, but to do it not with wisdom of words. The curse of sin is on all that is of nature. If there be a minister who has delighted in preaching, who has done his very best, who has given his very best in the way of talent and of thought, and who asks, "Must that go down into the grave?" I say, "Yes, my brother, the whole man must be crucified." And so with the heart's affection. What is more beautiful than the love of a child to his mother? In that lovely nature there is something unsanctified, and it must be given up to die. God will raise it from the dead and give it back again, sanctified and made alive unto God. So I might go through the whole of our life. People often say to me: "But has God made all things so beautiful, and is it not right that we should enjoy them? Are not His gifts all good?" I answer, yes, but remember what it says; they are good, if sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. The curse of sin is on them; the blight of sin is on everything most beautiful, and it takes much of God's Word, and much of

prayer to sanctify them. It is very hard to give up a thing to the death, and it is hardest of all to give up my life to the death, and I never will until I have learned that everything about that life is stamped by sin, and let it go down into the death as the only way to have it quickened and sanctified.

The penitent thief confessed his sin, and that he deserved death. Then, next, he had faith in the almighty power of Christ. A wonderful faith. It has no parallel in the Bible. There hangs the cursed malefactor with Jesus of Nazareth, and he dares speak, and say: "I am dying here, under the just curse of my sins, but I believe Thou canst take me into Thy heart, and remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." Oh, that we might learn to believe in the almighty power of Christ! That man believed that Christ was a King, and had a Kingdom, and that He would take him up in His arms, and in His heart, and remember him when He came into His Kingdom. He believed that, and believing that, he died. Brother, you and I need to take time to come to a much larger and deeper faith in the power of Christ, that the almighty Christ will indeed take us in His arms and carry us through this death life, revealing the power of His death in us. I cannot live it without personal contact with Christ every hour of the day. Christ must do it; Christ can do it. Come therefore and say: "Is He not the Almighty One; did He not come from the throne of God; did He not prove His omnipotence, and did the Father not prove it when He rose from the dead?" Would you be afraid, now that Christ is on the throne, of doing what the malefactor did when Christ was upon the cross, and entrusting yourself to Him to live as one dead with Him? Christ will carry you through the very process He went through; will make His death work in you every day of your life.

I note one thing more in the penitent thief – his prayer. There was his conviction of sin, and his faith, but there was, further, the utterance of his faith in prayer. He turned to Jesus. Remember that the whole world, with perhaps the exception of Mary and the women, was turned against Christ that day. Of the whole world of men as far as I know, there was but that one praying to Christ. Do not wait to see what others do; if you wait for that, – alas! I desire to say it in love and tenderness, – you will not find much company in the Church of Christ.

Pray incessantly: "Lord Christ, let the power of Thy death come into me." For God's sake, pray the prayer. If you want to live the life of Heaven, there must be death to sin in the power of Jesus. There must be personal entrustment of the soul into His death to sin, personal acceptance of Jesus to do the mighty work.

We have seen what the preparation is on the part of this man; let us look, secondly, at how Christ met him. He met him, you know, with that wonderful promise, with its three wonderful parts: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." A promise of fellowship with Christ, – "Thou shalt be with me;" a promise of rest in eternity, in the Paradise from which sin had cast man out, – "With me in Paradise;" a promise of immediate blessing, – "To-day shalt thou be with Me." With that three-fold blessing Jesus comes to you and me, and He says: "Believer, are you longing to live the Paradise life, where I give souls to eat of the Tree of Life, in the Paradise of God, day by day? Are you longing for that uninterrupted communion with God that there was in Paradise before Adam fell? Are you longing for perfect fellowship with me, longing to live where I am living, in the love of the Father? To-day, to-day; even as the Holy Ghost says: To-day shalt thou be with me!' Longest thou for Me? I long more for thee. Longest thou for fellowship? I long unceasingly for thy fellowship, for I need thy love, my child, to satisfy my heart. Nothing can prevent My receiving thee into fellowship. I have taken possession of Heaven for thee, as the Great High Priest, that thou mightest live the Heavenly life, that thou mightest have access into the holiest of all and an abiding dwelling place there. To-day, if thou wilt, thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Thank God, the Jesus of the penitent thief is my Jesus. Thank God, the cross of the penitent thief is my cross. I must confess my sinfulness if I want to come into the closest communion with my blessed Lord. There was not a man upon earth during the thirty-three years of Christ's life that had such wonderful fellowship with the Son of God, as the penitent thief, for with the Son of God he entered the glory. What made him so separate from others? He was on the cross with Jesus and entered Paradise with Him. And if I live upon the cross with Jesus, the Paradise life shall be mine every day.

And now, if Jesus gives me that promise, what have I to do? Let go. When a ship is moored alongside the dock, with everything ready for the start and all standing on the quay, the last bell is rung and the order is given, "Let go." Then the last rope is loosened, and the steamer moves. There are things that tie us to the earth, to the flesh-life, and to the self-life; but to-day the message comes: "If thou wouldst die with Jesus, let go." Thou needst not understand all. It may not be perfectly clear; the heart may appear dull, but never mind; Jesus carried that penitent thief through death to life. The thief did not know where he was going, he did not know what was to happen, but Jesus, the mighty conqueror, took him in His arms, and landed him, in his ignorance, in Paradise. Oh, I have sometimes said in my soul, bless God for the ignorance of that penitent thief. He knew nothing about what was going to happen, but he trusted Christ; and if I cannot understand all about this crucifixion with Christ, and the death to sin, and the life to God, and the glory that comes into the heart, never mind, I trust my Lord's promise, I cast myself helpless into His arms, I maintain my position on the cross. Given up to Jesus, to die with Him, I can trust Him to carry me through.

Shall we not each one take the blessed opportunity of doing what Ruth did when she, in obedience to the advice of her mother, just cast herself at the feet of the great Boaz, the Redeemer, to be His? Shall we not come into personal contact with Jesus, and shall not each one of us just speak before the world these simple words: "Lord, here is this life; there is much in it still of self, and sinfulness, and self-will, but I come to Thee; I long to enter fully into Thy death; I long to know fully that I have been crucified with Thee; I long to live Thy life every day." Then say: "Lord Jesus, I have seen Thy glory, what Thou didst for the penitent one at Thy side on the cross; I am trusting Thee, that Thou wilt do it for me. Lord, I cast myself into Thy arms."

JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST.

X.

Romans 14:17. – For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

In this text we have the earthly revelation of the work of the Trinity. The Kingdom of God is righteousness; that represents the work of the Father. The foundations of His throne are justice and judgment. Then comes the work of the Son: He is our peace, our Shiloh, our rest. The Kingdom of God is peace; not only the peace of pardon for the past, but the peace of perfect assurance as to the future. Not only the work of atonement is finished, but the work of sanctification is finished in Christ, and I may receive and enjoy what is prepared for me. The new man has been created, and I may in Him live out my life; if a kingdom is established in righteousness, if the rule is perfect, there can be perfect rest. If there be peace, no war from without, and no civil dissension within, a nation can be happy and prosperous. And so there comes here, after righteousness and peace, the joy, the blessed happiness in which a man can live; "The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." May we regard this joy of the Holy Ghost, not only as a beautiful thing to admire, not only as a thing to have beautiful thoughts about, but as a blessing that we are going to claim.

We often see a fruiterer's or confectioner's shop, with beautiful fruit or cake temptingly displayed in the window. There is a great pane of plate glass before it, and the hungry little boys stand there and look, and long, but they cannot reach it. If you were to say to one, "Now, little boy, take that fruit," he would look at you in surprise. He has learned that there is something between. If he had never known of glass he might attempt it. The plate glass is sometimes so clear that even a grown man might for a moment be deceived and stretch out his hand. But he soon finds there is something invisible between him and the fruit. This represents exactly the life of many Christians; they see, but they cannot take. And what now is this invisible pane of plate glass, that hinders my taking the beautiful things I see? It is nothing but the self-life; I see divine things but cannot reach them, the self-life is the invisible plate glass. We are willing, we are working, we are striving, and yet we are holding back something; we are

afraid to give up everything to God. We do not know what the consequences may be. We have not yet comprehended that God and Christ Jesus are worth everything. Whatever is told us of the blessed life of peace and joy, we say, "Praise God; God's Word is true; I believe the Word;" and yet, day by day, we stand back. When some one says, "Take it," we say, "I can't take it; there is something between." Would we were willing to give up the self-life; would we had the courage to give up to-day, and let the joy of the Holy Ghost be our religion. That is the religion God has prepared for us; that is the religion we can claim; not only righteousness, not only peace, but the joy of the Holy Ghost. That is the Kingdom of God.

What is this joy? First of all, it is the joy of the presence of Jesus. We are often inclined to speak most of two other things, the power for sanctification, and the power for service. But I find there is a thing more important than either of those two, and that is that the Holy Ghost came from Heaven to be the abiding presence of Christ in His disciples, in the Church, and in the heart of every believer. The Lord Jesus was going away, and His disciples were very sad; their hearts was sorrowful; but He said to them, "I will come back again, and I will come to you. Your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you." What took place with them, may take place with us too. The Holy Spirit is given to make the presence of Jesus an abiding reality, a continual experience. And what was that joy that no man could ever touch? It was the joy of Pentecost. And what was Pentecost? The coming of the Lord Jesus in the Holy Ghost to dwell with His disciples. While Jesus was with His disciples on earth, He could not get into their hearts in the right way. They loved Him, but they could not take in His teaching, they could not partake of His disposition, and they could not receive His very spirit into their being. But when He had ascended to Heaven, He came back in the Spirit to dwell in their hearts. It is this alone that will help us to go, the minister to his congregation with its difficulties, the business man to his counter, the mother to her large family with its care, the worker to her Bible class. It is this only that will help us to feel, "I can conquer, I can live in the rest of God." Why? "Because I have the almighty

Jesus with me every day." With God's people, there seems to be one hindrance, they do not know their Saviour. They do not realize that this blessed Christ is an ever present, all-pervading, in-dwelling Christ, who wants to take charge of their entire lives. They do not know, they do not believe that He is an Almighty Christ, and ready in the midst of any difficulties and any circumstances to be their keeper and their God. This is absolutely true. Many Christians are asked as to how one may have the joy unspeakable, the joy that nothing can take away, the joy of the friendship and nearness and love of Jesus filling his heart. We complain that the rush of competition is so terrible that we cannot get time for private prayer. Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ, if He comes to you as a brother and a friend and an abiding guest, can give your heart the joy of the Holy Ghost, so that business will take its right place under your feet. Your heart is too holy to have it filled with business; let the business be in the head and under the feet, but let Christ have the whole heart, and He will keep the whole life. Our glorious, exalted, almighty, ever present Christ! why is it that you and I cannot trust Him fully, perfectly to do His work? Shall we not say before God that we do trust Him, that we will trust Christ to be to us every moment all that we can desire? On the Cross of Calvary Christ was all alone, and you believe He did a perfect and a blessed work; and Christ in Heaven is all alone, as high priest and intercessor, and you trust Him for His work there. But, praise God! it is equally true, Christ in the heart is able all alone to keep it all the days. May it please God to reveal to His children the nearness of Christ standing and knocking at the door of every heart, ready to come in and rest forever there and to lead the soul into His rest.

We all know what the power of joy is; we know there is nothing so attractive as joy, there is nothing can help a man to bear and endure so much as joy; we know that the Lord Jesus Himself for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross. One is not living aright if he is living a sighing, trembling, doubting life. Come to-day and believe the joy of the Holy Ghost is meant for you. Does not the Scripture say, "Whom not having seen we love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Do

you not believe that this blessed, adorable, inconceivably beautiful Son of God, the delight of the Father, – do you not believe that this Son of God could fill your heart with delight day and night, if He were always present? And do you not believe that He loves you more than a bridegroom loves his bride? Do you not believe that, having bought you with His blood, Jesus is longing for you? He needs you to satisfy His heart of love. Begin to believe with your whole heart, "The joy of the Holy Ghost is my portion," for the Holy Ghost secures to me without interruption the presence and the love of Jesus.

But secondly, there is the joy of deliverance from sin. The Holy Ghost comes to sanctify us. Christ is our sanctification, and the Holy Ghost comes to communicate Him to us, to work out all that is in Christ and to reproduce it in us. Let us remember that in the sight of God there is something more than work. There is Christlikeness – the likeness and the life of Christ in us. That is what God wants; that will fit us for work. God asks not that Christ should live in us as separate persons; temples full of filthy, impure, foul creatures, with Christ hidden away somewhere there, – that is not the intention of God, but He wants Christ so formed in us that we are one with Christ, and that in our thinking, feeling and living, the image of His blessed Son is manifest before Him. The Holy Spirit is given to sanctify us. My brother, are you willing to be sanctified from every sin, be that sin great or small? I am not asking, do you feel that you have the power to conquer it? I am not even asking, do you feel the power to cast it out? It may be that you feel no power; that won't hinder if you are willing. I cannot cast out sin, but I can get the Almighty Christ by the Holy Spirit to do it, and it is my work to say to Christ, "There is the sin, there is the evil thing, I lay it at Thy feet, I cast it there, I cast it into Thy very bosom. Lord, I am ready to cut off the right hand, anything, only deliver me from it." Then Christ will cast out the evil spirit and give deliverance. The Spirit of God is a holy spirit and His work is to make free from the power of sin and death. And if you want to live in the joy of the Holy Ghost, the question comes: "Are you willing to surrender everything that is sinful, even what appears good, – but has the stain of sin on it?" You may be involved in relationships that make your

life very difficult. A pastor with his people maybe brought into very difficult relationships; or a business man with his partner or those with whom he has to associate, may be in an exceedingly trying position. But is not the blessed Lamb of God worth it all? What is the Christ worth to you? The question was once asked the disciples, "What think ye of Christ?" I ask, "What is Christ worth to you?" And I beseech you, whatever prospective difficulties there may be, and whatever perplexities surround you, take the whole world to-day and cast it at His feet. To have Him is worth any difficulty; to have Him will be the solution of every difficulty. There are not only such external, manifest difficulties and perplexities, there are a thousand little things that come in our life and that often disturb us, temptations to unloving feelings, and sharp words, and hasty judgments. Oh, come, and believe that the Holy Spirit, the sanctifier, can come in and rule, and give grace to pass through all without sinning, and you shall know what the joy of the Holy Ghost is. Our body, we read in 1st Corinthians, is the temple of the Holy Ghost. It is to be holy in things like eating and drinking. How often a Christian comes to the consciousness that he takes or seeks too much enjoyment in that eating, eating for pleasure, with no self-denial or self-sacrifice in his feeding the body! How often we tempt one another to eat, and how often the believer forgets that this body is the very secret temple of the Holy Ghost and that every mouthful we eat and drink must be for the glory of God in such a way as to be perfectly well pleasing to Him! Beloved, I bring you a message: There is access for you into the rest of God, and the Holy Spirit is given to bring you in, and the Holy Spirit will fill your heart with the unutterable joy of Christ's presence; and with the joy of deliverance from sin, of victory over sin; the unutterable joy of knowing that you are doing God's will and are pleasing in His sight; the unutterable joy of knowing that He is sanctifying and keeping the temple for Christ to dwell in. Believers, the joy of the Holy Ghost, the joy of that holiness of God, is His blessedness, His purity, His perfection, that nothing can mar or stain or disturb. The Holy Ghost waits to bring and to manifest it in our lives. He wants to come so into our hearts that we shall live, as Holy Ghost

men, the sanctified life, with the sanctifying power of Jesus running through our whole beings.

My third thought is: the joy of the Holy Ghost is the joy of the love of the saints. The Holy Ghost was not given to any man on the day of Pentecost separate from the others; He came and filled the whole company. We know how much division and separation and pride there had been among them, but on that day the Holy Ghost so filled their hearts that we find it was afterward said: "Behold how these men love one another." There was a love in the primitive church that the very heathen noticed, and could not understand. Why was that? The Holy Spirit is the bond of union between the Father and Son; and that bond is love. The Holy Spirit is just the love of God come to dwell in the heart. When He dwells with me and my brother we learn to love each other. Though I be unloving naturally, and though I have very little grace, if the heart of my brother is full of the Holy Spirit he loves me through it all. You know love is a wonderful thing. As long as a man tries to love it is not real love, but when real love comes, the more opposition it meets the more it triumphs, for the more it can exercise itself and perfect itself, the more it rejoices. Take a mother with a son dishonoring her. How her love follows him! When she sees that he has fallen deeper than ever before, how the dear mother heart only loves him the more intensely through all the wretchedness! Does not the Scripture say, "If He gave His life for us, we are bound to give our life for the brethren?" The Holy Spirit comes as a spirit of love, and if you want to know the joy of the Holy Ghost, and want Him to lead you into the rest of God and keep you there, beware above everything on earth or in hell of being unloving. One sharp word to your brother or sister brings a cloud upon you without your knowing it. People are so accustomed to talk just as they like about each other that they say sharp and unkind and unloving things, and when a cloud comes in consequence they cannot understand it. If there is one thing that grieves God, if there is one thing that hinders the Spirit – the fruit of the Spirit is love – it is the want of lovingness. If you want to live in the joy of the Holy Ghost make your covenant with God. "But," you say, "there is a Christian man who makes me so impatient;

he does trouble me and vex me so with his stupidity. And there are those worldly men; how they have tempted me in times past and done me harm! And there is that business man who is trying to ruin me." Take them all, and your own wife and children and every one around you and say, "I understand it, love is rest, and rest is love. God resteth in His love. Love is rest and rest is love, and where there is no love the rest must be disturbed." And let us say to-day, "I see what the joy is; it is the joy of always loving, it is the joy of losing my own life in love to others." In connection with humility, some one asks, "How about that text, In honor preferring one another?'" When a soul comes into perfect humility before God it becomes nothing, and God becomes all in all. I am nothing. There is no self to be affronted; I have said before God: "I am nothing; it is only Thy life and light that shines. The honor is Thine, and nothing may touch me but what is against the glory of my God."

Beloved, are you living in the joy of the Holy Ghost? Come and accept a blessing and give yourself up to live a life of humility in which you are nothing, and a life of love like Christ's in which you only live for your fellow-men, for the kingdom of God is the joy of the Holy Ghost.

My last thought is that the joy of the Holy Ghost is the joy of working for God. The joy of the presence of Jesus, the joy of deliverance from sin, the joy of love for the brethren, and then the joy of working for God. Some of us have at times felt what an incomprehensible thing it is that the everlasting God should work through us; and we have said, "Lord, what is this, that Thou the Almighty One dost work in me and through me, a vile worm by nature?" It is a mystery that passeth knowledge, and yet it is so true. The joy of the Holy Ghost comes when a man gives himself up to the Christlike work of carrying the love of God to men. Let us seek the perishing, let us live and die for souls, let us live and die that our fellow-men may be reclaimed and brought back to their God. There is no joy like hearing the joy-song of a new-born soul. But yes, there is another joy that may be as deep. Even if God does not give me the blessing of hearing the newborn soul sing its song, I may have the joy, the sympathy with Jesus in His rejected life, and the assurance that the Father looks with good pleasure

on me. When I think of the thousands of believers in the Christian world and then think of the heathen world, the cry comes up in my heart: "What are we doing?" Ah, we need to be crying to God day and night, "Lord God, wake us up. Lord God, let the Holy Spirit burn within us." Are we the true successors of Jesus Christ? Are we indeed the followers and successors of Christ who went all the way to Calvary to give His blood for men? Do let us remember the joy of the Holy Ghost is the joy of working for God in Christ. I believe that God has new ways and new leadings and new power for His people, if they will only wait on Him. But what most of us do is this: we thank God for all He has given, we look at all the ways of working we have, and we say that we will try to do our work better. But oh, if we had a sense of the need, if we had any sense, by the vision of the Holy Ghost, of the state of the millions around us, I am sure we would fall on our faces before God and say, "God help me to something new. Oh that every fiber of my being may be taken possession of for this great work with God!" The great need is that all Christians should consecrate themselves wholly to God for His work. May God help us to know what is the joy of the Holy Ghost.

Concluding, I ask again: "Do you believe that it is possible for the Lord Jesus, our Shiloh, of whom Jacob prophesied, our Joshua, our glorious King and High Priest, – do you believe it is possible for Christ Jesus to bring you to-day into the rest of God?" Remember that word in Hebrews, "Even as the Holy Ghost saith, to-day." To-day, summon up courage and take up your ministry, and take up your business, and take up your surroundings, and take up your natural temperament, and take up your home, and take up your life for the days to come upon earth, and say, "I do not understand it, I know not what will come, but one thing I know, I do absolutely give everything into the hands of the crucified Lamb of God; He shall have me in my entirety." And oh, remember, beloved, that Christ will be to you more than you can think or understand, more than you can ask or desire.

Come, let us cast ourselves into those blessed, loving arms, and let us believe even now that our Joshua leads us into the rest of God, the rest in which

we are saved from self-care and self-seeking and self-trusting and self-loving, the rest in which we do not think of ourselves, but where He who is almighty and omnipresent is always going to be with us and is always going to work within us. And let us when we have done that, claim the promise, that as we have sought first the kingdom and God's righteousness, all things shall be added unto us. Beloved, the kingdom of God is within you, and it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Come, let us claim it even now in simple, childlike, humble faith.

TRIUMPH OF FAITH.

XI.

John 4:50. – And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him.

Let me quote from the Gospel according to St. John, the 4th chapter, beginning at the 46th verse: "So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come up out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." There you have the word "believe" the first time. "The nobleman saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." There you have that word the second time. "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house." There you have the word "faith".

This story has often been used to illustrate the different steps of faith in the spiritual life. It was this use made of it in an address that brought the sainted Canon Battersby into the full enjoyment of rest. He had been a most godly man, but had lived the life of failure. He saw in the story what it was to rest on the Word and trust the saving power of Jesus, and from that night he was a changed man. He went home to testify of it, and under God, he was allowed to originate the Keswick Convention.

Let me point out to you the three aspects of faith which we have here: first, faith seeking; then, faith finding; and then, faith enjoying. Or, still better: faith struggling; faith resting; faith triumphing. First of all, faith struggling. Here is a man, a heathen, a nobleman, who has heard about Christ. He has a dying son at Capernaum, and in his extremity leaves his home, and walks some six or seven hours away to Cana of Galilee. He has heard of the Prophet, possibly, as one who has made water wine; he has heard of His other miracles round Capernaum, and he has a certain trust that Jesus will be able to help him. He goes to Him, and his prayer is that the Lord will come down to Capernaum and heal his son. Christ said to him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." He saw that the nobleman wanted Him to come and stand beside the child. This man had not the faith of the centurion – "Only speak a word." He had faith. It was faith that came from hearsay, and it was faith that did, to a certain extent, hope in Christ; but it was not the faith in Christ's power such as Christ desired. Still Christ accepted and met this faith. After the Lord had thus told him what He wished – a faith that could fully trust Him – the nobleman cried the second time, "Sir, come down ere my child die." Seeing his earnestness and his trust, Christ said, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." And then we read that the nobleman believed. He believed, and he went his way. He believed the word that Jesus had spoken. In that he rested and was content. And he went away without having any other pledge than the word of Jesus. As he was walking homeward, the servants met him, to tell him his son lived. He asked at what hour he began to amend. And when they told him, he knew it was at the very hour that Jesus had been speaking to him. He had at first a faith that was seeking,

and struggling, and searching for blessing; then he had a faith that accepted the blessing simply as it was contained in the word of Jesus. When Christ said, "Thy son liveth," he was content, and went home, and found the blessing – the son restored.

Then came the third step in his faith. He believed with his whole house. That is to say, he did not only believe that Christ could do just this one thing, the healing of his son; but he believed in Christ as his Lord. He gave himself up entirely to be a disciple of Jesus. And that not only alone, but with his whole house. Many Christians are like the nobleman. They have heard about a better life. They have met certain individuals by whose Christian lives they have been impressed, and consequently have felt that Christ can do wonderful things for a man. Many Christians say in their heart, "I am sure there is a better life for me to live; how I wish I could be brought to that blessed state!" But they have not much hope about it. They have read, and prayed, but they have found everything so difficult, If you ask them, "Do you believe Jesus can help you to live this higher life?" they say, "Yes; He is omnipotent." If you ask, "Do you believe Jesus wishes to do it?" they say, "Yes, I know He is loving." And if you say, "Do you believe that He will do it for you?" they at once say, "I know He is willing, but whether He will actually do it for me I do not know. I am not sure that I am prepared. I do not know if I am advanced enough. I do not know if I have enough grace for that." And so they are hungering, struggling, wrestling, and often remain unblessed. This state of things sometimes goes on for years – they are expecting to see signs and wonders, and hoping that God, by a miracle, will put them all right. They are just like the Israelites; they limit the Holy One of Israel. Have you ever noticed that it is the very people whom God has blessed so wonderfully who do that? What did the Israelites say? "God hath provided water in the wilderness. But can He provide the table in the wilderness? We do not think He can." And so we find believers who say, "Yes, God has done wonders. The whole of redemption is a wonder, and God has done wonders for some whom I know. But will God take one so feeble as I, and put me entirely right?" The struggling and wrestling and seeking are the beginnings of faith

in you – a faith that desires and hopes. But it must go on further. And how can that faith advance? Look at the second step. There is the nobleman, and Christ speaks to him this wonderful word: "Go thy way; thy son liveth;" and the nobleman simply rests upon that word of the living Jesus. He rests on it, and without any proof of what he is to get, and without one man in the world to encourage him. He goes away home with the thought, "I have received the blessing I sought; I have got life from the dead for my son. The living Christ promised it me, and on that I rest." The struggling, seeking faith has become a resting faith. The man has entered into rest about his son.

And now, dear believers, this is the one thing God asks you to do: God has said that in Christ you have eternal life, the more abundant life; Christ has said to you, "I live, and ye shall live also." The Word says to us that Christ is our Peace, our Victory over every enemy, who leads us into the rest of God. These are the words of God, and His message has come to us that Christ can do for us what Moses could not have done. Moses had no Christ to live in him. But it is told you that you can have what Moses had not; you can have a living Christ within you. And are you going to believe that, apart from any experience, and apart from any consciousness of strength? If the peace of God is to rule in your heart, it is the God of peace Himself must be there to do it. The peace is inseparable from the God. The light of the sun – can I separate that from the sun? Utterly impossible. As long as I have the sun I have the light. If I lose the sun; I lose the light. Take care! Do not seek the peace of God or the peace of Christ apart from God and Christ. But how does Christ come to me? He comes to me in this precious Word; and just as He said to the nobleman, "Go thy way home; thy son liveth," so Christ comes to me to-day, and He says, "Go thy way; thy Saviour liveth." "Lo, I am with you alway." "I live, and ye shall live also." "I wait to take charge of your whole life. Will you have me do this? Trust to me all that is evil and feeble; your whole sinful and perverse nature – give it up to Me; that dying, sin-sick soul – give it up to Me, and I will take care of it." Will you not listen and hear Him speak to your soul? "Child, go forward into all the circumstances of life that have tempted you; into all the difficulties that

threaten you." Your soul lives with the life of God; your soul lives in the power of God; your soul lives in Christ Jesus. Will you not, like the nobleman, take the simple step of faith, and believe the word Jesus hath spoken? Will you not say, "Lord Jesus, Thou hast spoken: I can rest on Thy Word. I have seen that Christ is willing to be more to me than I ever knew; I have seen that Christ is willing to be my life in the most actual and intense meaning of the words." All that we know about the Holy Ghost sums itself up in this one thing: The Holy Ghost comes to make Christ an actual, indwelling, always-abiding Saviour.

Lastly, comes the triumphant faith. The man went home holding fast the promise. He had only one promise, but he held it fast. When God gives me a promise, He is just as near me as when He fulfills it. That is a great comfort. When I have the promise I have also the pledge of the fulfillment. But the whole heart of God is in His promise, just as much as in the fulfillment of it, and sometimes God, the promiser, is more precious because I am compelled to cling more to Him, and to come closer, and to live by simple faith, and to adore His love. Do not think this is a hard life, to be living upon a promise. It means living upon the everlasting God. Who is going to say that is hard? It means living upon the crucified, the loving Christ. Be ashamed to say that is a difficult thing. It is a blessed thing.

The nobleman went home and found the child living. And what happened then? Two things. First: he gave up his whole life to be a believer in Jesus. If there had been a division among the people of Capernaum, and thousands of them had hated Christ, this man would still have stood on His side. He believed in the Lord. This is what must take place with us. Let us go forward with our trust in the living Christ, knowing that He will keep us. Then we will get grace to carry the life of Christ into our whole conduct, into all our walk and conversation. The faith that rests in Jesus, is the faith that trusts all to Him, with all we have. Do we not read that when God had finished His work, and rested, it was only to begin new work? Yes; the great work was to be carried on – watching over and ruling His world and His church. And is it not so with the Lord Jesus? When He had finished His work, He sat upon the throne to do His work of perfecting

the body, through the Holy Spirit. And now, the Holy Spirit is carrying on that blessed work, teaching us to rest in Christ, and in the strength of that rest to go on, and to cover our whole life with the power, and the obedience, and the will, and the likeness of the Lord Jesus. The nobleman gave up his whole life to be a believer in Christ; and from that day it was a believer in Jesus who walked about the streets of Capernaum; not only a man who could say, "Once He helped me," but, "I believe in Him with my whole life." Let that be so with us everywhere; let Christ be the one object of our trust.

One thought more, – he believed with his whole house. That was triumphant faith. He took up his position as a believer in Christ; and his wife, his children, his servants – he gathered them all together, and laid them at the feet of Christ. And if you want power in your own house, if you want power in your Bible-class, if you want power in your social circle, if you want power to influence the nation and if you want power to influence the Church of Christ, see where it begins. Come into contact with Jesus in this rest of faith that accepts His life fully, that trusts Him fully, and the power will come by faith to overcome the world; by faith to bless others; by faith to live a life to the glory of God. Go thy way, thy soul liveth; for it is Jesus Christ who liveth within you. Go thy way; be not trembling and fearful, but rest in the word and the power of the Son of God. "Lo, I am with you alway." Go thy way, with the heart open to welcome Him, and the heart believing He has come in. Surely we have not prayed in vain. Christ has listened to the yearnings of our hearts and has entered in. Let us go our way quietly, restfully, full of praise, and joy, and trust; ever hearing the words of our Master, "Go thy way, thy soul liveth;" and ever saying, "I have trusted Christ to reveal His abundant life in my soul; by His grace I will wait upon Him to fulfill His promise." Amen.

THE SOURCE OF POWER IN PRAYER.

XII.

Romans 8:26-27. – Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Here we have the teaching of God regarding the help the Holy Spirit will give us in prayer. The first half of this chapter is of much importance in connection with the teaching of God's word regarding the Spirit. In Romans vi. we read about being dead to sin and alive to God, and in Romans vii., about being dead to the law and married to Christ, and also about the impotency of the unregenerate man to do God's will. This is only a preparation to show us how helpless we are; and then in the eighth chapter comes the blessed work of the Spirit, expressed chiefly in the following words: "The Spirit hath made us free from the law of sin and death." The Spirit makes us free from the power of sin, and teaches and leads us so that we walk after the Spirit. In our inner disposition we may become spiritually minded, and enabled to mortify the deeds of the body. The Holy Spirit helps our infirmities. Prayer is the most necessary thing in the spiritual life. Yet we do not know how to pray nor what to pray for as we ought. The Spirit, Paul tells us, prays with groanings unutterable. And again he tells us that we ourselves often do not know what the Spirit is doing within us, but there is one, God, who searches the hearts. Words often reveal my thought and my wishes, but not what is deep in my heart, and God comes and searches my heart, and deep down, hidden, what I cannot see and what was to me an unutterable longing, God finds.

Powerful prayer! The confession of ignorance! Ah, friends, I am often afraid for myself as a minister that I pray too easily. I have been praying for these forty or fifty years and it becomes, as far as man is concerned, an easy thing to pray. We all have been taught to pray, and when we are called upon we can pray, but it gets far too easy, and I am afraid we think we are praying often when there is little real prayer. Now if we are to have the praying of the Holy Ghost in us one thing is needed; we must begin by feeling, "I cannot pray."

When a man breaks down and cannot pray, and there is a fire burning in his heart, and a burden resting upon him, there is something drawing him to God. "I know not what to pray," – oh, blessed ignorance! We are not ignorant enough. Abraham went out not knowing whither he went; in that was an element of ignorance and also an element of faith. Jesus said to His disciples when they came with their prayer before the throne, "You know not what you ask." Paul says, "No man knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God." You say, "If I am not to pray the old prayers I learned from my mother or from my professor in college or from my experience yesterday and the day before, what am I to pray?" I answer, pray new prayers, rise higher into the riches of God. You must begin to feel your ignorance. You know what we think of a student who goes to college fancying he knows everything. He will not learn much. Sir Isaac Newton said, "I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." When I see a man who cannot pray glibly and smoothly and readily, I say that is a mark of the Holy Spirit. When he begins in his prayers to say, "Oh, God, I want more, I want to be led deeper in. I have prayed for the heathen, but I want to feel the burden of the heathen in a new way," it is an indication of the presence of the Holy Spirit. I tell you, beloved, if you will take time and let God lay the burden of the heathen heavier upon you until you begin to feel, "I have never prayed," it will be the most blessed thing in your life. And so with regard to the church: We want to take up our position as members of the church of Christ in this land; and as belonging to that great body, to say, "Lord God, is there nothing that can be done to bless the church of this land and to revive it and bring it out of its worldliness and out of its feebleness?" We may confer together and conclude faithlessly, "No, we do not know what is to be done; we have no influence and power over all these ministers and their churches." But on the other hand, how blessed to come to God and say, "Lord, we know not what to ask. Thou knowest what to grant." The Holy Spirit could pray a hundred fold more in us if we were

only conscious of our ignorance, because we would then feel our dependence upon Him. May God teach us our ignorance in prayer and our impotence, and may God bring us to say, "Lord, we cannot pray; we do not know what prayer is." Of course some of us do know in a measure what prayer is, many of us, and we thank God for what he has been to us in answer to prayer, but oh, it is only a little beginning compared to what the Holy Spirit of God teaches.

There is the first thought: our ignorance. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought;" but "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." We often hear about the work of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost in working out and completing the great redemption, and we know that when God worked in the creation of the world, He was not weary, and yet we read that wonderful expression in the book of Exodus about the Sabbath day, "God rested and was refreshed." He was refreshed, the Sabbath day was a refreshment to Him. God had to work and Christ had to work, and now the Holy Spirit works, and His secret working place, the place where all work must begin, is in the heart where He comes to teach a man how to pray. When a man begins to get an insight into that which is needed and that which is promised and that which God waits to perform, he feels it to be beyond his conception; then is the time he will be ready to say, "I cannot limit the holy one of Israel by my thoughts; I give myself up in the faith that the Holy Spirit can be praying for me with groanings, with longings, that cannot be expressed." Apply that to your prayers.

There are different phases of prayer. There is worship, when a man just bows down to adore the great God. We do not take time to worship. We need to worship in secret, just to get ourselves face to face with the everlasting God, that He may overshadow us and cover us and fill us with His love and His glory. It is the Holy Spirit that can work in us such a yearning that we will give up our pleasures and even part of our business, that we may the oftener meet our God.

The next phase of prayer is fellowship. In prayer there is not only the worship of a king, but fellowship as of a child with God. Christians take far too little time in fellowship. They think prayer is just coming with their petitions. If

Christ is to make me what I am to be, I must tarry in fellowship with God. If God is to let his love enter in and shine and burn through my heart, I must take time to be with Him. The smith puts his rod of iron into the fire. If he leaves it there but a short time it does not become red hot. He may take it out to do something with it and after a time put it back again for a few minutes, but this time it does not become red hot. In the course of the day he may put the rod into the fire a great many times and leave it there two or three minutes each time, but it never becomes thoroughly heated. If he takes time and leaves the rod ten or fifteen minutes in the fire the whole iron will become red hot with the heat that is in the fire. So if we are to get the fire of God's holiness and love and power we must take more time with God in fellowship. That was what gave men like Abraham and Moses their strength. They were men who were separated to a fellowship with God, and the living God made them strong. Oh, if we did but realize what prayer can do!

Another, and a most important phase of prayer is intercession. What a work God has set open for those who are His priests – intercessors! We find a wonderful expression in the prophecy of Isaiah; God says, "Let him take hold of me;" and again, "There is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee." In other passages God refers to the intercessors for Israel. Have you ever taken hold of God? Thank God, some of us have; but oh, friends, representatives of the church of Christ in the United States, if God were to show us how much there is of intense prayer for a revival through the church, how much of sincere confession of the sins of the church, how much of pleading with God and giving Him no rest till He make Jerusalem a glory in the earth, I think we should all be ashamed. We need to give up our hearts to the Holy Spirit, that He may pray for us and in us with groanings that can not be uttered.

What am I to do if I am to have this Holy Spirit within me? The Spirit wants time and room in the heart; He wants the whole being. He wants all my interest and influence going out for the honor and the glory of God; He wants me to give myself up. Beloved friend, you do not know what you could do if you would give yourself up to intercession. It is a work that a sick one lying on a bed

year by year may do in power. It is a work that a poor one who has hardly a penny to give to a missionary society can do day by day. It is a work that a young girl who is in her father's house and has to help in the housekeeping can do by the Holy Spirit. People often ask: What does the Church of our day do to reach the masses? They ask, though they ask it tremblingly, for they feel so helpless: What can we do against the materialism and infidelity in places like London and Berlin and New York and Paris? We have given it up as hopeless. Ah, if men and women could be called out to band themselves together to take hold upon God! I am not speaking of any prayer union or any prayer time statedly set apart, but if the Spirit could find men and women who would give up their lives to cry to God, the Spirit would most surely come. It is not selfishness and it is not mere happiness that we seek when we talk about the peace and the rest and the blessing Christ can give. God wants us, Christ wants us, because He has to do a work; the work of Calvary is to be done in our hearts, we are to sacrifice our lives to pleading with God for men. Oh, let us yield ourselves day by day and ask God that it may please Him to let His Holy Spirit work in us.

Then comes the last thought, that God Himself comes to look with complacency upon the attitude of His child. Perhaps that poor man does not know that he is praying; perhaps he is ashamed of his prayers. So much the better. Perhaps he feels burdened and restless, but God hears, God discovers what is the mind of the Spirit, and will answer. Oh, think of this wonderful mystery, God the Father on the throne ready to grant unto us His blessings according to the riches of His glory; Christ the almighty high priest pleading day and night. His whole person is one intercession, and there goes up from Him without ceasing the pleading to the Father, "Bless thy church," and the answer comes from the Father to the Son, and from the Son down to the church, and if it does not reach us, it is because our hearts are closed. Let us open and enlarge our hearts and say to God, "Oh that I might be a priest, to enter God's presence continually and to take hold of God and to bring down a blessing to my perishing fellowmen!" God longs to find the intercession of Jesus reflected in the hearts of His children, and where He finds it, it is a delight. And He that

searcheth the hearts knoweth the mind of the Spirit, because he prayeth for the saints, according to the will of God. Some one has spoken of that word, "for the saints," as meaning the spirit of praise in the believer for the saints throughout the world. God's word continually comes to us to pray for all, not to be content with ourselves. Think upon the hundreds of church members in this land, multitudes unconverted, multitudes just converted, but yet worldly and careless. Think of the thousands of nominal Christians – Christians in name, but robbing God! and can we be happy? If we bear the burden of souls, can we have this peace and joy? God gives you peace and joy with no other object than that you should be strong to bear the burden of souls in the joy of Christ's salvation.

We do not wish to say, "I am trying to be as holy as I can; what have I to do with those worldly people about me?" If there is a terrible disease in my hand, my body cannot say, "I have nothing to do with it." When the people had sinned Ezra rent his garments and bowed in the dust and made confession. He repented on the part of the people. And Nehemiah, when the nation sinned, made confession, and cast himself before God, deploring their disobedience to the God of their fathers. Daniel did the very same. And think you that we as believers have not a great work to do? Suppose we were each, persons without a single sin; just suppose it; could we then make confession? Look at Christ, without sin! He went down into the waters of baptism with sinners; He made Himself one with them. God has spoken to us to ask us if we realize what we are. He now asks us whether we belong to the church of this land, whether we have borne the burden of sin around us. Let us go to God and may He by the Holy Spirit fill our hearts with unutterable sorrow at the state of the church, and may God give us grace to mourn before Him. And when we begin to confess the sins of the church, we will begin to feel our own sins as never before. In five of the epistles to the seven churches in Asia the keynote was "Repent;" there was to be no idea of overcoming and getting a blessing unless they repented. Let us on behalf of the church of Christ repent, and God will give us courage to feel that He will revive His work.

THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL.

XIII.

1 Corinthians 15:24-28. – "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith, All things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him, that God may be all in all."

This will be the grand conclusion of the great drama of the world's history, and of Christ's redemption. There will come a day – the glory is such we can form no conception of it, the mystery is so deep we cannot realize it, but there is a day coming, when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom that the Father gave Him, and that He won with His blood, and that He hath established and perfected from the throne of His glory. "He shall deliver up the Kingdom unto the Father." The Son Himself shall be subject also unto the Father, "that God may be all in all." I cannot understand it – the ever blessed Son equal with God, from eternity, and through eternity; the ever blessed Son on the throne shall be subject unto the Father; and in some way utterly beyond our comprehension, it shall then be made manifest, as never before, that God is all in all. It is this that Christ has been working for; it is this that He is working for to-day in us; it is this that He thought it worth while to give His blood for; it is this that His heart is longing for in each of us; this is the very essence and glory of Christianity, "that God may be all in all." And now, if this is what fills the heart of Christ; if this expresses the one end of the work of Christ, then, if I want to have the spirit of Christ in me, the motto of my life must be: Everything made subject, and swallowed up in Him, "that God may be all in all." What a triumph it would be if the Church were fighting really with that banner floating over her! What a life ours could be if that were really our banner! To serve God fully,

wholly, only, to have Him all in all! How it would ennoble, and enlarge, and stimulate our whole being! I am working, I am fighting, "that God may be all in all;" that the day of glory may be hastened. I am praying, and the Holy Spirit makes His wrestling in me with unutterable longing, "that God may be all in all." Would that we Christians realized in connection with what a grand cause we are working and praying; that we had some conception of what a Kingdom we are partakers of, and what a manifestation of God we are preparing for. To illustrate what a grand thing it is to belong to the Kingdom of God, and to the glorious Church of Christ on earth, John McNeill tells how when he was a boy twelve years of age, working on a railway line and earning the grand wages of six shillings a week, he used to go home to his mother and sisters, who thought no end of their little Johnnie, and delight them by telling of the position he had. He would say with great pride, "Oh, our company – it has so many thousands of pounds passing through its hands every year; it carries so many hundreds of thousands of passengers every year; and it has so many miles of railway, and so many engines and carriages; and so many thousands in its employ!" And the mother and the sisters had great pride in him, because he was a partner in such an important business. Christians, if we would only rouse ourselves to believe that we belong to the Kingdom that Christ is preparing to deliver up to the Father, that God may be all in all, how the glory would fill our hearts, and expel everything mean, and low, and earthly! How we should be borne along in this blessed faith! I am living for this: that Christ may have the Kingdom to deliver to the Father. I am living for this, and I will one day see Him made subject to the Father, and then God all in all. I am living for Him, and I shall be there not only as a witness, but I will have a part in it all. The Kingdom delivered up, the Son made subject, and God all in all! I shall have a part in it, and in adoring worship share the glory and the blessedness.

Let us take this home to our hearts, that it may rule in our lives – this one thought, this one faith, this one aim, this one joy: Christ lived, and died, and reigns; I live and die and in His power I reign; only for this one thing, "that God may be all in all." Let it possess our whole heart, and life. How can we do this?

It is a serious question, to which I wish to give you a few simple answers. And I say, first of all: Allow God to take His place in your heart and life. Luther often said to people, when they came troubling him about difficulties, "Do let God be God." Oh, give God His place. And what is that place? "That God may be all in all." Let God be all in all every day, from morning to evening. God to rule and I to obey. Ah, the blessedness of saying, "God and I!" What a privilege that I have such a partner! God first, and then I! And yet there might be secret self-exaltation in associating God with myself. And I find in the Bible a more precious word still. It is, "God and not I." It is not, "God first, and I second;" God is all, and I am nothing. Paul said, "I labored more abundantly than they all; though I be nothing." Let us try to give God His place – begin in our closet, in our worship, in our prayer. The power of prayer depends almost entirely upon our apprehension of who it is with whom I speak. It is of the greatest consequence, if we have but half an hour in which to pray, that we take time to get a sight of this great God, in His power, in His love, in His nearness, just waiting to bless us. This is of far more consequence than spending the whole half hour in pouring out numberless petitions, and pleading numberless promises. The great thing is to feel that we are putting our supplications into the bosom of omnipotent Love. Before and above everything, let us take time ere we pray to realize the glory and presence of God. Give God His place in every prayer. I say, allow God to have His place. I can not give God His place upon the throne – in a certain sense I can, and I ought to try. The great thing, however, is for me to feel that I cannot realize what that place is, but God will increasingly reveal Himself and the place He holds. How do I know anything about the sun? Because the sun shines, and in its light I see what the sun is. The sun is its own evidence. No philosopher could have told me about the sun if the sun did not shine. No power of meditation and thought can grasp the presence of God. Be quiet, and trusting, and resting, and the everlasting God will shine into your heart, and will reveal Himself. And then, just as naturally as I enjoy the light of the sun, and as naturally as I look upon the pages of a book knowing that I can see the letters because the light shines; just as naturally will

God reveal Himself to the waiting soul, and make His presence a reality. God will take His place as God in the presence of His child, so that absolutely and actually the chief thing in the child's heart shall be: "God is here, God makes Himself known." Beloved, is not this what you long for – that God shall take a place that He has never had; and that God shall come to you in a nearness that you have never felt yet; and, above all, that God shall come to you in an abiding and unbroken fellowship? God is able to take His place before you all the day. I repeat what I have referred to before, because God has taught me a lesson by it: As God made the light of the sun so soft, and sweet, and bright, and universal, and unceasing, that it never costs me a minute's trouble to enjoy it; even so, and far more real than the light shining upon me, the nearness of my God can be revealed to me as my abiding portion. Let us all pray "that God may be all in all," in our everyday life.

"That God may be all in all," I must not only allow Him to take His place, but secondly, I must accept His will in everything. I must accept His will in every providence. Whether it be a Judas that betrays, or whether it be a Pilate in his indifference, who gives me up to the enemy; whatever the trouble, or temptation, or vexation, or worry, that comes, I must see God in it, and accept it as God's will to me. Trouble of any sort that comes to me is God's will for me. It is not God's will that men should do the wrong, but it is God's will that they should be in circumstances of trial. There is never a trial that comes to us but it is God's will for us, and if we learn to see God in it, then we bid it welcome.

Suppose away in South Africa there is a woman whose husband has gone on a long journey into the interior. He is to be away for months from all posts. The wife is anxious to receive news. In weeks she has had no letter or tidings from him. One day, as she stands in her door, there comes a great, savage Kafir. He is frightful in appearance, and carries his spears and shield. The woman is alarmed and rushes into the house and closes the door. He comes and knocks at the door, and she is in terror. She sends her servant, who comes back and says, "The man says he must see you." She goes, all affrighted. He takes out an old newspaper. He has come a month's journey on foot from her husband,

and inside the dirty newspaper is a letter from her husband, telling her of his welfare. How that wife delights in that letter! She forgets the face that has terrified her. And now as weeks are passing away again, how she begins to long for that ugly Kafir messenger! After long waiting he comes again, and this time she rushes out to meet him because he is the messenger that comes from her beloved husband, and she knows that with all his repelling exterior, he is the bearer of a message of love. Beloved, have you learned to look at tribulation, and vexation, and disappointment, as the dark, savage-looking messenger with a spear in his hand, that comes straight from Jesus? Have you learned to say, "There is never a trouble, and never a hurt by which my heart is touched or even pierced, but it comes from Jesus, and brings a message of love?" Will you not learn to say from to-day, "Welcome every trial, for it comes from God?" If you want God to be all in all, you must see and meet God in every providence. Oh, learn to accept God's will in everything! Come learn to say of every trial, without exception, "It is my Father who sent it. I accept it as His messenger," and nothing in earth or hell can separate you from God.

If God is to be all in all in your heart and life, I say not only, Allow Him to take His place, and accept all His will, but, thirdly, Trust in His power. Dear friends, it is "God who worketh to will and to do according to His good pleasure." It is "the God of peace," according to another passage, "who perfects you in every good thing to do His will, working in you what is well-pleasing in His sight." You complain of weakness, of feebleness, of emptiness. Never mind; that is what you are made for – to be an emptied vessel, in which God can put His fullness and His strength. Do learn the lesson. I know it is not easy. Long after Paul had been an apostle, the Lord Jesus had to come in a very special way to teach him to say, "I do gladly glory in my infirmities." Paul was in danger of being exalted, owing to the revelations from Heaven, and Jesus sent him a thorn in the flesh – yes, Jesus sent it – a messenger of Satan – to buffet him. Paul prayed, and struggled, and wanted to get rid of it. And Jesus came to him, and said, "It is my doing that you may not be free from that. You need it. I will bless you wonderfully in it." Paul's life was changed from that moment in this

one respect, and he said, "I never knew it so before, from henceforth I glory in my infirmities; for when I am weak, then am I strong." Do you indeed desire God to be all in all? Learn to glory in your weakness. Take time to say every day as you bow before God, "The almighty power of God that works in the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the flowers, is working in me. It is as sure as that I live. The almighty power of God is working in me. I only need to get down, and be quiet; I need to be more submissive, and surrendered to His will; I need to be more trustful, and to allow God to do with me what He will." Give God His way with you, and let God work, and He will work mightily. The deepest quietness has often been proved to be the inspiration for the highest action. It has been seen in the experience of many of God's saints, and it is just the experience we need, – that in the quietness of surrender and faith, God's working has been made manifest.

Fourthly: If God is to be all in all, sacrifice everything for His kingdom and glory. "That God may be all in all." This is such a noble, glorious, holy aim that Christ said, "For this I will give my life. For this I will give my all, even to the death of the cross. For this I will give myself." If it was worth that to Christ, is it worth less to you? If one had asked Jesus of Nazareth, "What is it Thou hast a body for; what is to Thee the highest use of the body?" He would have said, "The use and the glory of my body is that I can give it a sacrifice to God. That is every thing." What is the use of having a mind; and what is the use of having money; and what is the use of having children? That I can give them to God; for God must be all in all in everything. I pray God that He may give us such a sight of His kingdom, and His glory, that everything else may disappear. Then, if you had ten thousand lives, you would say, "This is the beauty and the worth of life, that God may be all in all' to me, and that I may prove to men that God is more than everything, that life is only worth living as it is given to God to fill." Do let us sacrifice everything for His kingdom and glory. Begin to live day by day with the prayer, "My God, I am given up to Thee. Be Thou my all in all." You say, "Am I able to realize that?" Yes, in this way: Let the Holy Spirit dwell in you; let the Holy Spirit burn in you as a fire, and burn in you with unutterable

groanings, crying unto God, Himself to reveal His presence and His will in you. In the eighth of Romans, Paul spoke about the groanings of the whole creation. And what is the whole creation groaning for? For the redemption, the glorious liberty of the children of God. And I am persuaded that was what Paul meant when he spoke of the groanings of the Holy Spirit – the unutterable groanings for the coming time of glory when God should be all in all. Christians, sacrifice your time; sacrifice your interests; sacrifice your heart's best powers in praying, and desiring, and crying that "God may be all in all."

And lastly: if God is to be all in all, wait continually on Him all the day. My first point had reference to giving God His place; but I want to bring this out more pointedly in conclusion. Wait continually on God all the day. If you are to do that, you must live always in His presence. That is what we have been redeemed for. Do we not read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Let us draw near within the veil, through the blood, where the high priest is?" The holy place in which we are to live in the heavens is the immediate presence of God. The abiding presence of God is certainly the heritage of every child of God, as that the sun shines. The Father never hides His face from His child. Sin hides it, and unbelief hides it, but the Father lets His love shine all the day on the face of His children. The sun is shining day and night. Your sun shall never go down. Begin to seek for this. Come and live in the presence of God. There is indeed an abiding place in His presence, in the secret of His pavilion, of which some one has sung very beautifully:

With me, wheresoe'er I wander,

That great Presence goes;

That unutterable gladness,

Undisturbed repose.

Everywhere, the blessed stillness

Of that Holy Place;

Stillness of the love that worships,

Dumb before His face.

This is the portion of those to whom the prayer is granted – "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell all my days in the house of the Lord; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." "In the secret of His pavilion He hideth me." God Himself will take you up, and will keep you there, so that all your work shall be done in God. Beloved, wait continually upon God. You cannot do this unless you are in His presence. You must live in His presence. Then the blessed habit of waiting upon God will be learned. The real difficulty of getting to the point of real waiting upon God, is because most Christians have not sought to realize the nearness of God, and to give God the first place. But let us strive after this, let us trust God to give it to us by His grace, let us wait on God all the day. "My eyes," says one, "are ever towards Thee." Wait upon God for guidance, and God, if you wait much upon Him, will lead you up into new power for His service, into new gladness in His fellowship. He will lead you out into a larger trust in Him; He will prepare you to expect new things from Him. Beloved, there is no knowing what God will do for a man who is utterly given up to Him. Praise His name! Let each one of us say, "May my life be to live and die, to labor and to pray continually for this one thing: that in me, and around me, and in the church; that throughout the world 'God may be all in all.'" A little seed is the beginning of a great tree. A mustard seed becomes a tree in which the birds of the air can nestle. That great day of which the text speaks, when Christ Himself shall be subject to the Father, and deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all in all – that is the great tree of the Kingdom of God reaching its perfect consummation and glory. Oh, let us take the seed of that glory into our hearts, and let us bow in lowly surrender and submission, and say, "Amen, Lord; this be my one thought. This be my life – to speak and to work, to pray and to exist only that others may be brought to know Him too. This be my life – to yield myself to the unutterable yearnings of the Holy Spirit, that I may not rest, but ever keep my eye on that day – the day of glory, when in very deed God shall be all in all."

God help every one of us. God help us all to yield ourselves to Him, and to Christ, and to make it our every-day life; for His name's sake. Amen.

Indexes

Index of Scripture References

Genesis

[1]39:1-3 [2]39:4 [3]39:4 [4]39:5 [5]39:6

Psalms

[6]62:5

Matthew

[7]6:33 [8]16:13 [9]16:16 [10]16:21 [11]16:22 [12]16:24

Luke

[13]23:39-43

John

[14]4:46 [15]4:50

Romans

[16]6 [17]7 [18]8:26-27 [19]14:17

1 Corinthians

[20]3:1 [21]15:24-28

Galatians

[22]2:20 [23]3:5 [24]6:1

Philippians

[25]2:5-8

Colossians

[26]3:4

Hebrews

[27]4:1 [28]4:11

Index of Pages of the Print Edition

[29]1 [30]3 [31]5 [32]7 [33]8 [34]9 [35]10 [36]11 [37]12 [38]13 [39]14 [40]15 [41]16 [42]17 [43]18 [44]19 [45]20 [46]21 [47]22 [48]23 [49]24 [50]25 [51]26 [52]27 [53]28 [54]29 [55]30 [56]31 [57]32 [58]33 [59]34 [60]35 [61]36 [62]37 [63]38 [64]39 [65]40 [66]41 [67]42 [68]43 [69]44 [70]45 [71]46 [72]47 [73]48 [74]49 [75]50 [76]51 [77]52 [78]53 [79]54 [80]55 [81]56 [82]57 [83]58 [84]59 [85]60 [86]61 [87]62 [88]63 [89]64 [90]65 [91]66 [92]67 [93]68 [94]69 [95]70 [96]71 [97]72 [98]73 [99]74 [100]75 [101]76 [102]77 [103]78 [104]79 [105]80 [106]81 [107]82 [108]83 [109]84 [110]85 [111]86 [112]87 [113]88 [114]89 [115]90 [116]91 [117]92 [118]93 [119]94 [120]95 [121]96 [122]97 [123]98 [124]99 [125]100 [126]101 [127]102 [128]103 [129]104 [130]105 [131]106 [132]107 [133]108 [134]109 [135]110 [136]111 [137]112 [138]113 [139]114 [140]115 [141]116 [142]117 [143]118 [144]119 [145]120 [146]121 [147]122 [148]123 [149]124 [150]125 [151]126 [152]127 [153]128 [154]129 [155]130 [156]131 [157]132 [158]133 [159]134 [160]135 [161]136 [162]137 [163]138 [164]139 [165]140 [166]141 [167]142 [168]143 [169]144 [170]145 [171]146 [172]147 [173]148 [174]149 [175]150 [176]151 [177]152 [178]153 [179]154 [180]155 [181]156 [182]157 [183]158 [184]159 [185]160 [186]161 [187]162 [188]163 [189]164 [190]165 [191]166 [192]167 [193]168 [194]169 [195]170 [196]171 [197]172 [198]173 [199]174 [200]175 [201]176 [202]177 [203]178 [204]179 [205]180

This document is from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library at Calvin College, http://www.ccel.org,