





Division

Section











CHRIST: THE GOD MAN.

Typographie—Hofmann.

ASPECTS OF CHRIST.

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STUDIES



OF THE

MODEL LIFE.

BY

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BURDETT HART, D.D.

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TO ONE

Who with me has lingered long in the  
Gallery of Holy Scripture  
Before the one Portraiture  
Of Him

Whom not having seen we love  
And whose Blessed Face  
We hope  
Ere long to see together



## Introductory.

It was in the soft atmosphere of the home of a scholar and teacher that I first saw the composite photographs, which, in that instance, combined and expressed the strongest facial traits of his family and of a class of students who had been under his instruction in a striking portrait of each group.

It was the phenomenal and weird workmanship of light.

Unique, condensed, unified, character was represented by the combined result.

It were impossible to reduce into one personification the manifold Aspects of Christ. As even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written to fully set forth all the things that Jesus did, if they should be written every one, so the representation of Him would be imperfect however multiplied and varied might be the forms and statements which should be intended to characterize Him. Not only is Humanity fully indwelling in Him, but Divinity is expressed in Him as well. When we have said all, that which remains unsaid is greater than all that is spoken.

May the perusal of these essays, a few out of many that might be written of the impressive Aspects of the Christ, quicken our appreciation of the Divine Redeemer and deepen our love for Him who first loved us.

BURDETT HART.

*New Haven, 1892.*

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# THE MODEL LIFE.

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## I.

### CHRIST THE PRE-EMINENT ONE.



THE foremost thought of the world to-day is of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Other great matters indeed are on the minds of men. There never was a time when so much attention was given to the development of mechanical and physical forces as is given at this day. Great as have been the achievements of the recent past on all this line of results, studious and inventive and productive research is not satisfied. Greater power is called for. The latent and unemployed energies of nature are to be discovered and evoked and put to use.

There never was a time when so much heroic and laborious study was given to physics, as is given in our day. Nature, in its laws, in its arcana, in its manifestations, is fairly laid siege to by students, who, with reverent devotion and untiring energy, seek to know what demonstra-

tions are awaiting them in the world-old laboratories, by what subtle chemistries the great elements of creation are kept in order, and what light may be given by the hitherto unread records to that which was before discovered.

There never was a time when the laws of social life, the principles which should be controlling in the relation of men with men, were receiving such investigation as they now are. The world never had so many good homes as it has to-day. The institutions for the relief of human ills and for the comfort of the unfortunate, now surpass any that have heretofore been known. The great hospital at Greenwich publishes over its inviting gates that it is kept open for the sailors of all nations. Human brotherhood is coming to the front. Great statesmen are seeking to solve the problems which not only enter into the current history of their respective nations, but which affect the relations of all nations. Education—what a hold it has on best minds! Reform—how ardent are its apostles! Progress—how determined on every line are its promulgators! There is an aroused intellectual activity, a fiery zeal like that of crusaders, a generous charity, a cordial recognition of what is worthy, a significant unselfishness in the matters of the common humanity, which mark our day with red letters in the calendar of the nations. The community of *men*, of mankind, is getting enlarged

recognition. However strong the local pride may be, however intense the patriotic sentiment may be, it is felt that there is a brotherhood which is bounded by no territorial lines, and is constrained within no narrow places.

But great as are these subjects of thought and activity, absorbing as they are with the specialists, who are devoted to their own lines of investigation, it is very plainly clear that, in the world's thoughts and among the world's forces, there is a PERSON who is pre-eminent. Christ is Lord and Master. The world's intellect bows before Him. The world's progress yields place for Him. The world's kingdoms recognize the supremacy of His kingdom. The order of the world and the adjustment of human relations are "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence."

This is seen, in the first place, in the fact that account is taken of Christ in each separate realm of investigation and activity. Statesmanship, science, social progress, philosophies, do homage to the Lord Jesus. If, in only one department of human labor He were owned as Lord, He would not have necessarily the pre-eminence. But if in all departments this be true, if the statesmen of largest forecast, and the naturalists of deepest investigation, and the hardest students of social science, and the philosophers who do the most patient work, accord to Christ lordship, and hold themselves

in their various duties as His servants, then it is plain that so far He has the pre-eminence. There may be men in all and each of these spheres of thought and action who do not own Christ, who reject the revelation of Him, and who deny all Godhead and so all manifestation of God. But these are exceptions. A large proportion of these leaders are personally loyal to Christ: are professed Christians. Another proportion acknowledge His claims though they may not have individually given their saving faith to Him. The doubters are half-inclined toward Him. And the open rejecters are few. One of the first leaders of the world to-day, the man whose influence is largest, is one whose supreme trust is in Christ as a personal Saviour. When you read of such a man, with the world's burdens that are upon him, with responsibilities enough for many men, taking into his study the disobedient and reckless son of a helpless woman, and there talking with him and praying with him and urging him to a new life, you understand that there is the supremacy of a divine Saviour in the life of that great leader before which are willingly subordinated all measures and choices and affections to which his time and thought and energy are given. There can be no doubt who has the pre-eminence.

And when you hear the man who is close to him in the world's leadership acknowledging that his great career would be a failure except

for the faith in the Redeemer which insures his future, you understand that above any principality in human empire is the sovereignty of the divine Saviour who can command the supreme allegiance of such a mind. In effect, the same thing is true in each sphere of responsibility and labor. It is not loyalty to Confucius which is controlling with our leaders to-day. It is not loyalty to Buddha which challenges the first attention. It is not loyalty to heathen mythologies, nor to nature, nor to humanity, nor to conquering mind, which draws forth the devotion of our foremost thinkers and workers. CHRIST has the place of loyalty and of love.

As the first hour of every day was given to communion with Christ in His word and in prayer by a most successful merchant, who has lately closed his service with us, so the first place in affection and in service is given to Him by those whom the world most trusts and to whom it looks for guidance to-day, and that not in a single sphere of service alone, but in each separate realm of investigation and activity.

This is seen, in the second place, in the fact that the impulse of the sublime moral forces which are moving in society comes from the love of Christ. There is a love of humanity for humanity's sake. There are men who are engaged in great moral work who are only philanthropists. There are those even who

deny Christ who are the advocates of great moral principles. But all this is exceptional.

The sublime movements for the world's moral renovation, which are systematically and strenuously carried forward, with courage in their execution and with faith in their triumph, have their profound impulse in the love of Christ. Out of Christian nations, and with the support of Christian societies, and with the encouragement of Christian sympathy and prayers, proceed those world-wide charities which aim at the bringing up of the whole race of mankind, from night and chaos and barbarism, from gloomy and cruel heathenism, from blood and wars and savagery, into order and peace and liberty, into the comforts of civilization and into the blessings of Christianized society. The men who to-day are effectively laboring in India and China and Japan, in Turkey and Egypt and the islands of the sea, are men in whom the love of Christ is a master-passion. They are men like the veteran Moffat, who, in a great old age, has lately died in England, leaving light to shine after him forever across the Dark Continent: like Livingstone, who was found dead on his knees, with his face on the soil of the land for which his life was consecrated and his last prayer given. They are men with Apostolic zeal: men with the martyr firmness: men with prophetic foresight: men to whom Christ is first and last, is all and in all.



And not only is this true of these comprehensive charities. It is strikingly true of those more contracted and localized reformatory movements which affect classes, which strike at single vices, which aim at the overthrow of national evils.

That revolution which we have seen in our day, in our land, which has entirely changed the status of one-tenth of our population, which converted the nation from a slave power to a free empire, which placed us in an entirely new relation toward the other nations of the world, had its dominant and unconquerable impulse in love to Christ. That revolution was one which could no more be stopped than the New Testament could be annihilated. And the fact that it eventuated in such dreadful issues, destroying so much wealth and so many lives, only demonstrates how strong, how invincible the impulse is that in all things Christ may have the pre-eminence.

That other revolution which is working toward the freedom of our communities from intemperance, which is seeking by moral forces to change the drinking habits of society, to change the laws by which the manufacture and sale of poisonous drinks may be restricted, is one that can be successfully carried forward only by motives drawn from the love of Christ. The poor drunkard, victim of a debasing appetite, must be looked at as redeemed by the blood of Christ, and therefore to be labored for that the Re-

deemer's work for him may not be in vain. The woes of drunkards' homes, of wives and children, the guilt of those who tempt the young and who encourage the debauched, must be measured by those who estimate all moral action by the love of the Saviour and the peril of the soul.

The inspiration of the men and women who are now giving their lives to secure social order and worth and purity, is the pre-eminence of their Master and their Redeemer. Take that away, and these moral forces that are electrical in the atmosphere and that are regenerative in society would expire. It is this that keeps the churches open and makes the ministry effective, that gathers the prayer-meeting and the Sunday School, that gives so much influence to women in their sanctified endeavors, and that, through the greed and grime of politics will, on occasion, move the voters, in solid columns, to put principle above spoils and to recognize the supremacy of moral convictions.

It is this that makes such a man as Von Moltke the leader of temperance reform in Germany, that gives such popular power to the eloquence of Senator Wilson in Iowa when he calls on the young men of that State in this crisis of the reform there, "to keep in line with the better thought and the moral forces of the times." It is the pre-eminence of Christ, of His Person, of His authority, of His love, that is the controlling

impulse of all that moral revolution which is working changes in the nations.

And, once more, this is seen in the fact that Christ has the first place in the confidence and affection of His friends. There is no divided dominion here. When the test comes, in times of great public trial, in personal sorrow, in the final struggle, it is seen that Christ is the Lord of His people. They show it too little on ordinary occasions. It is not marked enough in every-day life. But the latent principle is in every truly redeemed soul. Men and women and children have not shrunk from severest persecutions and terrible martyrdoms to make it known that Christ was first. In the disappointment and suffering which have shrouded individual lives, how clearly and beautifully has it shone forth that He was trusted, that He was the joy of His people in their bitterest sorrow, that He was their strength in their utter weakness, that He was with them, an unfailing friend, when all other friends failed. And in the last great agony, the whole world dark, and every human support fallen, His name has held undying charm, and His presence has sustained the lonely but victorious soul. That beautiful queen, whom all Germany idolizes, whose great portrait is the charm of Cologne, whose pictures are beloved in every city of the proud empire, whose sweet name sounds in the love-songs and the battle-odes of a grand people,

as she breathed her brave life away in the Villa of Hohen-Zieritz, with those who were dearest to her, helpless to save her, turned from king and friend with her dying prayer, "O Jesus, make it easy."

In humble homes, He has been the Light of the poor man's cottage, and the feeble saint, expiring there, with little of worldly comfort and the homely attentions of faithful friends, has lifted up the same prayer to the same Deliverer, who is no respecter of persons. From regal couch and from hard bed He receives the same devoted loyalty, the same love and trust, which death only intensifies. We cannot doubt His place with His friends. They who know Him best, love Him most. They who dwell and walk nearest to Him, give Him the divinest pre-eminence.

What place has our Lord with us? We may well put to ourselves to-day this question. He is not here in personal and visible presence. But His representatives are here. His *Church* is here. What is our relation to His church, which is His body? Are we giving it foremost place in our affections and in our service? Are we willing to deny ourselves for it? Will we see to it that the Church, in which the Lord dwells, lacks nothing which is for its honor and progress in the world; that it has our prayers, our money, our service?

His *souls* are here: the souls which at great

cost He redeemed ; the souls that He wants for the gems of His crown and the glory of His kingdom. Will we seek to save them for Him ? Will we seek, by self-denial, by parting with that which we prize the most, by giving that which we are accustomed to call our own, to bring the unsaved world to Him, so “ that in all things He might have the pre-eminence ? ”

His *ministry* is here : the ambassadorship on behalf of Christ, commissioned to entreat men to be reconciled to God ; the ministry of reconciliation, to declare to the world that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself ; by manifestation of the truth to commend itself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. It is for us to aid that ministry, to give it our sympathy and affection and support, that it may have success in the great work for which it is appointed. It stands for Christ : it announces its divine message in His name ; and its one mission, its absorbing undertaking, through the preaching of the gospel and through manifold labor, is “ that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.”



## II.

### CHRIST IN CHILDHOOD.



THE boy Jesus was twelve years old when He was so spoken of. I suppose that, to look at, He was much like many another boy of that winning age. That is the real, sweetest boy-age. The reserve and rawness of the child have passed ; the self-assertion and overconfidence of a few years later have not begun. It is the prime of boyhood.

Who would not have been glad to have seen the boy Jesus then? You think of other boys whom it would have been a pleasure to have seen and known. Such was the boy *Moses*, who was taken out of the ark of bulrushes by the daughter of a great king, and was brought up in the palaces of Egypt: a beautiful boy, as the story goes, so that those who passed him turned to look at him again. When he was twelve years old, he was studying under careful and wise teachers, who instructed him in the learning of the Egyptians, then the most cultured of all peoples. It is told of him that finding the crown of the monarch one day, he sent it spinning across the floor with a kick of his foot, as

though the crown were only fit for his plaything.

Such was the boy *Alexander*, who when he was thirteen years of age was placed under the tutelage of the great Aristotle; one the conqueror of the world in arms, the other the conqueror of the world in philosophy. When I was twelve years old I used to read with pride how Alexander subdued Bucephalus, a grand war-horse, that afterward carried his master through many famous battles. He was so fierce that no one dared to mount him. But Alexander saw what the trouble was and was vexed that so noble an animal should be rejected for want of skill to handle him. His father gave him permission to try it, and the young prince soothing the proud animal with gentle tones and strokes sprang upon his back and gave him the rein and subdued him, so that afterward no one could mount Bucephalus but Alexander.

Such was the boy *Luther*, who when he was at school at Magdeburg, with other boys, sang at the doors of the houses for bread, and cried "Panem propter Deum," and who afterward became the great Reformer and changed the state of the whole world by exalting the Bible. This fine German boy with his sweet voice and his thrilling songs won the heart of Madame Cotta, who took him into her house and taught him music and made a good home for him.

Such was the boy *George Washington*, our own



American boy, too good to tell a lie and brave as Alexander, with a fiery horse which he mounted, but which, unlike Bucephalus, in the contest burst a blood-vessel and died. Washington became a man of prayer, having early learned to pray, and not forgetting, as some men do, in manhood, the good lessons and habits of boyhood.

Many others too we can think of, some of them now living, whom it would have been good to see in their fair boyhood. But of all boys who ever lived in any land, I think we would all prefer to have seen and known *the boy Jesus*. He was different from all other boys. He knew more than Moses, who was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was braver than Alexander, and conquered more of the world than that great conqueror. He had a heavier task than Luther and did more for every land than Washington did for our great land.

What was it that made Him so different from other boys? His earthly parents were no better than the parents of many children. His schools were not as good as the schools we have. The society in which He moved was not as refined and cultured as much other society. The time in which he lived was not as enlightened as many other times in the world's history.

Yet the boy Jesus was the *first Boy* of all the boys of the world. There was more to him: He was fairer and more lovely: He stood higher

in every worthy respect than any other boy has stood. Men and women seeing Him would see that there was something finer, nobler, more attractive, more heavenly in Him than in any other boy they had ever seen. The apocryphal stories, as they are called, that is, stories that are fictitious and have no real basis, that are told about Him, show that those who invented them and those who handed them down from age to age, thought He was a peculiar boy. He was Wonderful.

There is very little that we certainly know about His boyhood. A few words in the histories of the gospels include it all. They tell us that His parents, Joseph and Mary, dwelt in Nazareth, an obscure town in one of the picturesque valleys of Galilee. We read, "And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." They tell us, that when He was twelve years old, His parents went up to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover, after the custom of the Hebrew people: that when they had fulfilled the usual observances and were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and His parents knew it not; but supposing Him to be in the company of their kinsfolk and acquaintance they went a day's journey: then seeking Him and not finding Him, they returned to the city, looking for Him as they went: that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of

the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions: and all that heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers: that when His parents saw Him there they were astonished; and His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Knew ye not that I must be about my Father's business? They understood not the saying which He spake unto them. Then we read, And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He was subject unto them: and His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. Also, And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. That is all that is said. It is enough.

It shows us what a wonderful boy He was. It separates Him from all other boys, and it unites Him to all other boys. He was like them: He was also unlike them.

He was like them in that He had a similar home-life. He knew the sweet names, father, mother, brother, sister. He had cousins and friends. He was obedient to His parents. Do I say he was like other boys in that? He was like some boys and like what all boys should be. It is a most precious thing to have a father and mother to love. A good father and mother are God's best gift to a child. The Scripture says of Jesus that he was subject unto his parents.

In that he has left an example to all children. The rule of Holy Scripture is that children should obey their parents in the Lord. God is first. His commands are first of all to be obeyed, and when the parental commands are in harmony with them, they are to be obeyed. But we ought to obey God rather than man. God must always be put first. Christ must be about His Father's business: then subject to His human parents.

The child grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom. He advanced in wisdom and stature. That he should grow and become a strong and healthy child in the out-door air of His Galilean life was to have been expected. That we see in most children in the same condition. But He grew also in wisdom, and more than that, in favor with God and man; and the grace of God was upon Him.

What were the books He studied? He was not a High School scholar, nor a university student, nor did He have the training of the Jewish doctors. He was taught by His parents in their home-life and by the teachers in the synagogue, as we have our Sunday School instruction and our preaching service. He had a mind open to all the voices of nature, in all her volumes of truth, in all her display of ceaseless miracle. He mingled with the people and heard their talk. He was familiar with the Scriptures of the Old Testament: those Scriptures of which He after-

ward said, "In them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth." In the great truths of the divine Word He found food for His mind, uplift and expansion for His soul, as any other boy might do. Men who become great by their study of, and familiarity with, the Bible, are strong men. It is worth more than all other books to any boy, no matter what business he is preparing for. He had better shut up all his school-books, all books that he is interested in reading, than to shut up the Bible. If he can have but one book, that is the Book for him, for that one Book of God is able to make him wise unto salvation. Wisdom, wisdom of schools and of books, is vain wisdom if it does not make the learner wise unto salvation. Any course of study or training that stops short of salvation, stops short of the main thing, the only thing of chief concern. It is pitiful, inexpressibly pitiful, to see a boy go out from his schools and his home into the world of men and of business without salvation. He is like a ship going out from port without compass or rudder, to be driven by wild winds, on stormy seas, to meet the iceberg and the hurricane, and to go down in terrible wreck! Pity the boy, who, whatever he may have, has not the Christian faith to meet the temptations and trials of the world! How many have I seen, in a life not now short, who started out

fairly, like the ship with its sails all spread to the breeze and its pennons streaming toward the skies, with music ringing from its decks and the shouts of its sailors flung to the air, in a few short months brought home with draggled sails, and shattered masts, and hulk battered and leaking at every joint, fit only for the fire, or thrown on a rocky coast a miserable wreck! If these were my last words to the boys whom I love, I would charge them to love the Bible and to obey it, and especially to love Him who made the Bible and who made them. Dare not to neglect Christ, to put off salvation, to run the risk of everlasting ruin.

The boy Jesus also learned from communion with His heavenly Father. He was a boy of prayer. No day passed when He did not have intercourse with God. He looked up for health and strength and wisdom. Any boy without prayer is weak. He who takes hold of the arm of God takes hold of infinite strength.

By such means it was that Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and also in favor with God and man. Favor with God first: then favor with men. "Would'st have a friend? Have God thy friend who passeth all the rest."

The Jews marveled and said: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Ah! they did not know the secret of His wisdom. But you may know it. The Bible and Prayer,

these were the keys that unlocked all the doors that He needed to enter.

There may be one thing in which the boy Jesus was unlike all other boys who have ever lived. *He was without sin.* He never did any one thing for which He needed to repent. He never spoke a word which He should not have spoken. He never had a thought which He should not have had. He never injured a playmate, nor wronged another child, nor disobeyed any good rule. He was a perfect boy : perfect in thought, in purpose, in act, in word.

He was a true, pure, holy boy. He had the favor of God. Day after day, through all the sweet years of his boyhood He lived without sin, and no wrong thing was ever known of Him, seen in Him ; never, in fact, existed in Him.

Sin is that which makes so much sorrow and suffering in the world. It spoils human lives. It makes wretched fathers and mothers and children. It makes tears flow. It breaks human hearts. It wounds the heart of God. Sin made it necessary for the Saviour to die. He died to save sinners.

Boys begin to sin when they are very young. They go on in that way too often. Too often they grow up to be sinners : sometimes very bad ones. They break away from their parents, stop praying and reading the Bible, leave the Sunday School, never go to church, reject Christ and His salvation, mingle with hard and

wicked persons, and finally become as hard and wicked as any. And so it is that the prisons are filled with young men, thousands and thousands of them, who have gone off into bad company and become low and criminal.

In the boy Jesus we have a better example, the brightest example in all the history of the world! Copy His true, pure, life. He grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was on Him. Men admired Him and God loved Him. There was nothing wrong about Him. He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. He loved and obeyed His parents. He was always about His heavenly Father's business. He kept the Sabbath holy. He worshiped with God's people. He studied God's Holy Bible. His life made the world bright.

Be like Christ. Imitate His life. Be boys that your parents will be proud of. As you move through the world make a path that will be brilliant with light as the light of noons, that will ring with music as the songs of heaven, that will bless others all the way as dews and flowers make the morning and the evening glad. And let us be so about our Father's business that, when our work here shall be done, we shall all meet in our Father's House!



### III.

#### CHRIST THE DIVINE CARPENTER.

**T**HE CARPENTER! It is at first, almost impossible to think of the Saviour of the world, the Son of God, as employed in the work-shop of the village carpenter. But there was His place and His occupation. Through His youth and His early manhood He was known in the humble town of Nazareth as the carpenter. If, as the tradition goes, His reputed father, Joseph, died when Jesus was nineteen years of age, it would fall to Him to keep on with the business for the support of the family: and, in that case, for eleven years, He was at work on the simple dwellings of Nazareth, adjusting doors and windows to their stone walls, making plain furniture for them and fashioning plows and yokes for outdoor labor. From early morning till evening, assisted perhaps by His brethren, He was handling the saw and the plane, the hammer and the chisel, and was passing from house to house to fulfill the orders of the village people. So they all knew Him in His business: and when, after His public life began, after He had

gone away from Nazareth and entered upon that wonderful ministry which aroused the attention of the nation, after miracles of power had attested His divinity, He came into His own country, and on the Sabbath stood forth in the synagogue of His village as a teacher of the Scriptures, the people, hearing Him, were astonished, and they said, one to another, Whence hath this man these things? What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and what mean such mighty works wrought by His hands? Is not this the carpenter? Was He not working here for us a few months ago? Are not His brothers and His sisters here with us, and His mother Mary? They could not understand it. With a wisdom which surpassed that of the learned rabbis, with a power beyond that of man, His words and His works were unexplainable by them. He had not been taught in their schools of learning. He had not been familiar with the leaders of the Pharisees and Sadducees, with the educated scribes. He had not been a pupil of any Hillel or Gamaliel. The books of oriental and Greek philosophy were unknown in the home of Joseph and Mary. They were well surprised, therefore, at the wisdom with which He taught, at the grace which flowed from His lips. They had known Him only as the carpenter.

The mysterious life which He had lived among them for thirty years was out of their

sight. His open life as a workman, building their houses and tools, was familiar to them. But His life with God, His deep communion with His Father, the absorption of His lonely hours in silent meditation on things divine and heavenly, were all unobserved by them. After all, they were not acquainted with Him. He had indeed learned something from His father and his mother in their home instructions: He had learned something in the humble village school of the synagogue. But His real wisdom was divine. He was taught of God. All human learning was but the preface to his knowledge. The world was an open book to Him. The sun and the midnight stars, in their sublime circuits, printed His lessons. The beautiful landscapes, with their pictured lakes and forests, with marching shadows and the music of winds that rustled the leaves and dimpled the waters, the bloom of lilies and the songs of birds, mountains that lifted their serene summits toward the blue of the skies, were the leaves on which he studied. The human heart, bare to His scrutiny, with its joys and sorrows and its sober aspirations, as He saw it in the homes where He labored, among the simple people with whom He lived, torn by the tragedies of life, soothed by the tenderness of sympathetic love, was a volume of profound meaning for His constant thought. Memories of the glorious world where His eternal life had been spent, the music of the

angel-choirs, the splendor and peace of a holy estate, the glory of the Throne and the infinite perfections of Godhead, filled His soul and brought perpetual uplift to his lowly being. Nature and history, biography and living men, were His instructors. One who has looked upon the scene has vividly described the historic plain which the Saviour saw from the hill which rises six hundred feet above the village of Nazareth. "It was in the heart of the land of Israel. The standards of Rome were planted on the plain before him: the language of Greece was spoken in the towns below. And however peaceful it then might look, green as a pavement of emerald, rich with its gleams of vivid sunlight, and the purpling shadows which floated over it from the clouds of the latter rain, it had been for centuries a battle-field of nations. Pharaohs and Ptolemies, Emirs and Arsacids, judges and consuls, had all contended for the mastery of that smiling tract. It had glittered with the lances of the Amelekites: it had trembled under the chariot-wheels of Sesostris; it had echoed the twanging bow-strings of Sennacherib; it had been trodden by the phalanxes of Macedonia; it had clashed with the broadswords of Rome; it was destined hereafter to ring with the battle cry of the Crusaders, and thunder with the artillery of England and of France. In that Plain of Jezreel, Europe and Asia, Judaism and heathenism, barbarism and civilization, the

old and the new covenant, the history of the past and the hopes of the present, seemed all to meet. No scene of deeper significance for the destinies of humanity could possibly have arrested the youthful Saviour's gaze."

Under such instructive influences, earth and heaven being His teachers, the strange boyhood and youth and young manhood of the Messiah had passed away : and when He came before the people who had known Him well through those preparatory periods, opening their sacred record with a wisdom which surpassed that of their learned scribes and rabbis, they asked with wonder and skepticism, Is not this the Carpenter ?

A poet of our day has indulged in the conceit that somewhere in Nazareth or in some part of Palestine there may yet be found some surviving memento of the workmanship of Christ :

" Some dear relique  
Of work by Joseph's Son.  
Some carved thought, some tool of toil,  
Some house with stones grown gray,  
A home He built who had not where  
His weary head to lay.  
It were a thing most beautiful,  
Of rare and rich design :  
And something very true and strong,  
Made by a skill divine.  
The road-side stones at sight of Him  
Could scarce their rapture hush :  
What felt His touch and art must yet  
With conscious beauty blush."

But as there are no pictures preserved of Him, so there are no memorials of His known handiwork. Such memorial, if preserved, would be idolized. It would be considered a sacred thing and superstitious men would even worship it.

A recent number of "The Century" contains an interior of a carpenter's shop in Nazareth, with the tools that were in use and articles that were made, and the writer says: "Whatever the Palestine carpenter produces is from the fragrant cedars of Lebanon or from the eccentrically knotted and gnarled olive-wood." Memorials of His handiwork in fragrant cedar or beautifully grained olivewood would be indeed precious treasures to those who cherish His memory and love Him and all His works. But though no such relics have been handed down, there may be, yet, in the old interiors of the houses of Nazareth woodwork which the hand of this Carpenter wrought, doors and shelves and window-sills which he framed and set in place, which it were good to see. In an old and well-preserved house in Oxford, wainscoted and ceiled with English oak, as we were examining its elaborate panels and the tasteful workmanship of its woods, one of its refined dwellers said to me of a room into which we had entered, "*This* is a thousand years old!" The hardy cedar and the undecaying olive-wood of Lebanon would remain well-preserved for two thousand years in its original beauty and form. So that the travel-

er, exploring the white dwellings of Nazareth to-day may, unconsciously, come upon the very handiwork of this most illustrious Carpenter!

But if he should not, and could not, assure himself of this, he would yet be among known works of Christ. The heavens that bend above that historic town declare His glory, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge of His creations. Each star that beams from its remote place, in the unmeasured distances of space, is from His forming hand. Tabor with its groves of oak, and Carmel in its rugged features, and Hebron with its crown of snow, were made by Him. The Sea of Galilee, the wide plain of Esdraelon, the fruitful hills of Samaria, are all the products of His thought. The endless variety of flowers that garnish the rocks and the wayside with their luxurious beauty, are His own ideas in those graceful and fragrant forms. And every man, and every child, in that old town where He wrought with saw and chisel at the carpenter's bench, is the statuesque production of this divine Artist. Not in Nazareth can you go amiss of works of Christ. The very ground on which it is builded He made. The birds that flash over it on their wings of blue, and the camels that shamble through it in their patient pace, and every soul that gives a strange character to that early home of the Lord, own him as their Author. And the

signals of Him are not alone at hoary Nazareth. They are all over the world which is sanctified by His tread and toil, by His blessed works and words, by his vicarious sufferings and death. Would we find relics and memorials of Him? Would we see remembrances of our Lord? We need not cross the sea. We need not climb the rocky path from Gilboa to Nazareth. We have only to look around us. We have only, if we are His, to look within us. Around us and above us are His creations. Within us is His new creation, most wonderful of all! He who made the heavens and the earth, made and re-made, *renewed* our souls, and wrought them into His moral image. The poet to whom I have alluded has wrought the fact into harmonious verse:

“O soul of mine! I tell thee true,  
If Christ indeed be thine,  
No more made He Himself thy kin  
Than makes He thee divine.  
As thro’ His soul there frequent beat  
Our human hopes and loves,  
So midst thy varying joys and fears  
His spirit lives and moves.

“But O my soul, as I thy good  
And evil ways explore,  
I seem to see the Christ in thee  
His earthly life live o’er.  
Thou art another Holy Land,  
(Ah! holy might’st thou be!)  
The olden joys and griefs of Christ  
Repeat themselves in thee.”



Study yourself, if you are renewed in Christ, and you shall find that which memorializes Him. If you are like Him, it is His hand that has fashioned you after that divine likeness. If in you are the graces of the spirit, it is by Him that they are wrought. If you are redeemed unto God, it is through the redemption that He made at infinite cost. If you are healed from the wounds of sin, it is by His stripes that you are healed. If your transgressions are blotted out, it is His blood that has blotted them out. The new creation of the human soul is the new creation of Christ. It is no more true that He made the world and its varied organisms, than that He re-makes the soul and develops its divine life. It is no more true that, as the carpenter of Nazareth, His hand fashioned the woodwork in the houses of that village and the tools of its people, than that He fashions our souls into His image and will fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory. There is vast and tender meaning to that word of the apostle, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." You, so far as you are a Christian, are the workmanship of Christ: and you have not to go beyond yourself to find memorial of Him of whom the Nazarenes said, Is not this the carpenter?

The signs of Christ, then, are not far to see. "The invisible things of Him since the creation

of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made." The things that are made are ever in our sight. If we look upward, there is glorious revelation of Christ. Every star that flashes in the brilliant constellations, and helps to form the Milky Way, is a globe formed by Him. The sea is His and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land. His work at Nazareth was an insignificant part of what He has wrought. Is not this the carpenter? Is not this the maker of all worlds, of the landscapes that spread around us, with their hills and water and the glories of vegetation? All things were made by Him. Without Him was not anything made that was made. But a diviner creation is that creation which is bringing on the moral renewal of the world. He is even now creating new heavens and a new earth for the dwelling-place of righteousness. The foundations are laid by His own hand. The structure is rising on every land to which the gospel has been carried. And the former things He assures us shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. The pick has dug into the earth's mines of treasure. The tubes have been pointed into the peopled spaces of the heavens. The glass has magnified the minute forms of life. Science has searched into all seas and along all shores, and the graves of the centuries have been made to give up their dead. Trophies of research have been published in books and in

charts, and have crowded great galleries and museums. The spoils from the material creations have rewarded the study and investigation of men.

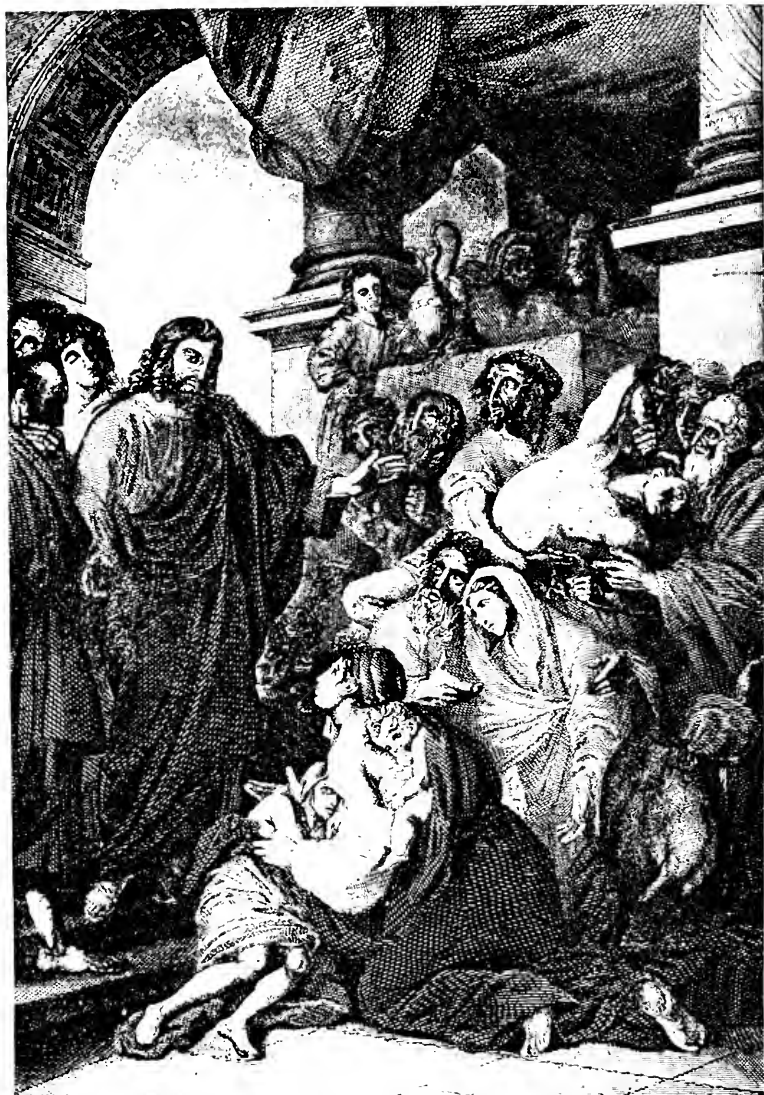
But there is another study, and another world of thought. Christ, the former and the informer of our souls, is working out the plan of salvation as it exists in the designs of God. You see the ongoing of it. You see the child, with the warm affectionateness of his nature, won to the love of the Saviour. You see the father, who has lived without hope and with no God, consecrating his manly powers to Christ. You see a whole family renouncing the vanities of the world, giving themselves together to the service of this blessed Master. You see parishes and communities wrought on by a power viewless as the wind and forceful as the tornado, revolutionized in their common life and turned toward heavenly things. You see, if your minds are open to current history, the progress of a new creation which is changing the world's history, which is sweeping away night and old chaos from the nations, which is gilding the horizon with the glory of a new and better day, whose light is to lighten all the peoples and to make Christ the Light of the world.

You would find some relics of the workmanship of the Galilean carpenter! You need not seek for them in the fragrant cedar and the beautiful olive-wood on which He worked in

Nazareth! Here and now, around you, in the world abroad, wherever His gospel goes, you may plainly see what He has wrought. Men are His memorials! Renewed souls are mementos of His work. The restored world is monumental of Him. By and by, lighted with His love, made glorious by His redeeming ministry upon it, it will swing through the heavens, among other spheres of light, the chief among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, for His accomplished work upon it!

This is the carpentering of the Master Builder! This is the city whose builder and maker is God. Jesus Christ is He "in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."





HEALING THE SICK IN THE TEMPLE.

Engraving - Benj. West.

## IV.

### THE POWER AND FAME OF CHRIST.



STRANGE Life had come into the world! strange in its beginnings, in its continuance, in its ending! The pre-announcement of it was such as has no parallel in history. The Birth of this Person in a humble place drew from heaven a multitude of angels who filled the mountain-air above Bethlehem with their exultant praises. It brought wise men from a far country, guided by a phenomenal star, with regal presents of gold and frankincense and myrrh, to worship Him. In the house of the village carpenter at Nazareth there was a wonderful boyhood. When He was twelve years old His parents found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. His parents did not understand what He spake unto them. Even in His earliest infancy they marveled at the things which were spoken concerning Him. He lived with them: He was obedient unto them: but, with all His winning traits there was mystery about the Boy which they could not fathom. He was unlike all other

boys. Who was He? From what world had He come to this? On what mission had this mystic life been launched into the living forces of the world?

Then came a period of eighteen years of obscurity and silence, in which this remarkable youth followed the trade of a carpenter in the village where His father had pursued that occupation until his death. No history tells us of these years. We can only wonder what they were in the discipline and growth of Him of whom we read, that He advanced in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.

When He was thirty years of age His public ministry began. It burst on the people as something extraordinary. At his baptism, the Holy Spirit, in bodily form as a dove, descended from the open heavens upon Him, and a voice came from the firmament: "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." John the Baptist testified that he saw the strange occurrence: "I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God." The spirit of power abode upon Him and abode with Him: so that immediately He became the prominent figure before the people. A wide fame went out concerning Him through all the regions round about: and He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. Luke mentions this before he makes mention of any miracle as wrought by Christ. It was the power of His preaching; it was the wonderful doctrine



that he taught; it was the new meanings which He brought out of the old Scriptures; which made His name and fame so pervasive and prominent. It was so in Galilee: it was so in Samaria. He spoke, as the Roman soldiers afterward testified, as no man ever spake. His very first journey was a triumph. Grace was poured into His lips. But his words were confirmed by that wonderful series of miracles which proved His innate and irresistible divinity. Without them He was great: with them His power was incontestable. Matthew, almost at the beginning of the history, says, Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. And the report of Him went forth into all Syria, and they brought unto Him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic and palsied, and he healed them. Then comes a statement by Matthew, which introduces a fact of marvel in this unique life and which is without parallel: "And there followed Him great multitudes from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond Jordan."

The people were drawn to Him by a magic attraction. They could not be kept away from Him. Over and over again, in all the gospels, is it repeated that multitudes, great multitudes, clung to Him, followed Him wherever He went,

from the beginning of his ministry, till in sad and gloomy ranks they closed around Him on Calvary and wept at the tragic event of the cross!

Matthew writes: "And seeing the multitudes, He went up into the mountain." And then he gave the Sermon on the Mount, as it is called. See now how often the fact is taken notice of. The multitudes were astonished at His teaching. When He was come down from the mountain great multitudes followed Him. When the multitudes saw it, they were afraid, and glorified God, who had given such authority unto men. When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John. While He was yet speaking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brethren stood without, seeking to speak to Him. On that day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea-side. And there were gathered unto Him great multitudes, so that He entered into a boat, and sat; and all the multitude stood on the beach. Then He spake many things to them in parables. Then he left the multitudes and went into the house. In various great divisions of the country the same thing occurred. When Jesus had finished these words, He departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of Judea beyond Jordan: and great

multitudes followed Him. And as they went out from Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. At Sychar, in Samaria, the mass of the people turned out to see and hear him.

Once, as He approached Jerusalem, there was a remarkable demonstration. Doré has made it the subject of one of his greatest and most impressive paintings. From the mount of Olives, from which afterward He ascended to heaven, He was escorted by a great multitude, who spread their garments in the way before Him and cut branches from the evergreen olive-trees and spread them in the way. From the country where He had been employed a great multitude accompanied Him. From the city which He was about to enter another great multitude came forth to escort Him. And the multitudes that went before Him, and that followed, cried, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest." They gave Him royal salute. They escorted Him as in triumphal procession. They gave Him entrance to the capital as great kings are given entrance. And when he was come into Jerusalem all the city was stirred, saying: "Who is this?" And the multitudes answered: "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee." Then they would have crowned Him, and placed Him on the historic throne of David, as from time to time the multitudes attempted to do. By a

whirlwind of popular excitement they would have swept down opposition and brought on conflict with the power of the Roman Empire. The narrative goes on to say : When the multitudes heard it, they were astonished at His teaching. Then spake Jesus to the multitudes and to His disciples. And repeatedly it is stated that His angry enemies dare not touch him for fear of the people, lest a tumult arise among the people.

The Gospel of Mark is just as full of similar statements. He says, many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door. He went forth by the sea-side, and all the multitude resorted unto Him, and He taught them. Jesus, with His disciples, withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed: and from Judea, and from Idumea, and beyond Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things He did, came unto Him. And he spake unto His disciples, that a little boat should wait on Him because of the crowd, lest they should throng Him. When Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude was gathered unto Him: and He was by the sea.

Mark is characteristically graphic in his descriptions of this point. Jesus and his disciples went apart into a desert place. And the people saw them going, and many knew them, and they ran there together on foot from all the cities, and

out-went them. Again, the people knew Him, and ran about that whole region to gather the sick. And wheresoever he entered, into villages or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the market-places, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment : and as many as touched Him were made whole.

Luke is just as full in referring to this striking fact : and it is very often noticed in the different history of John. I do not need to quote any further : but if you will notice the statements in your reading you will see how all the gospels dwell on it. Nor are we left in doubt as to the size of these multitudes. Luke says, "When the many thousands of the multitude were gathered together." Mark tells us that they that ate the loaves were five thousand men. Mark says, they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. They were multitudes, great multitudes, many thousands, five thousand at one time, four thousand beside women and children at another time. These immense congregations of people, from different nations and regions of country, poured along wherever He went. Nothing like it was ever elsewhere known in history. They amounted to armies. It was a wide fame. He could not appear anywhere without this overwhelming mustering of forces. Those who heard him speak, told of it. Those who were healed spread His fame. John

the Baptist heard of it behind prison bars. Herod heard of it in his luxurious palaces. Greeks heard of it, and when they came to Jerusalem they wanted to see Jesus. Joseph, of Arimathea, heard of it, and sought to do Him honor. All the synagogues were open to Him. The cities were stirred by His entrance. Far in the country, beyond the Hebrew border, He could not be hid. The Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees were combined for His ruin. The throne trembled at His name: for His armies wished to make Him King. He was the idol of the people. He carried the popular enthusiasm. Nothing could have stood before Him. No human power could cope with One who could feed His armies by miracle and so needed no commissariat: who could heal His wounded and restore His dead, and so needed no medical staff and no recruiting of forces. It was a most wonderful phenomenon.

To what are we to ascribe it? How can it be accounted for? It is to be explained, first of all, by *His remarkable personality*. Christ had in Him the hidings of divinity. Ordinarily, as when He was a carpenter in Nazareth, and was engaged in common duties, men would have noticed only that He was no ordinary man. But on extraordinary occasions, the divinity flashed in His dark eye, spoke in His voice of authority, was seen in the wave of his hand, and

was revealed in the pose and majesty of His person.

He was every inch a King! Royalty sat on His brow like a crown. The lifting of His finger was like the lifting of a scepter. His word was sovereignty. The seat on which He sat, though it were in a boat on Galilee, was a throne.

When, in his own town of Nazareth, roused to wrath by His words, the people cast Him forth out of the city and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong, He calmly passed through the midst of them unharmed. When officers and soldiers came into Gethsemane to apprehend Him, He went to meet them and asked them, Whom seek ye? And when they answered, Jesus of Nazareth, he said, I am He. On that, they went backward and fell to the ground. No crowd of men, no soldiers trained to arms, could stand before his daunting look. *God was in it.* The omnipotence of Jehovah lay dormant, but regnant, in His person. Himself was the absolute miracle. Men of power have something of this. When a slave came into the prison to kill Marius, then seventy years of age, that mighty Roman only said, "Slave, wilt thou slay Marius?" and the cowering creature fled away. When the boatmen who were rowing Cæsar across a lake were frightened by a sudden storm, he restored them by saying, "You need not

fear: you are carrying Cæsar." Napoleon had that power over his soldiers, so that when, in his majestic manner, he handed them their eagles and bid them *swear*, their oaths were the vows of enthusiasm. But no man possessed the personal, mysterious, reserved majesty that Christ possessed. It gave Him fame as the one man among men of acknowledged supremacy.

It is to be partly explained also by *the words which He spake*. His tone was that of a prophet. He had the language of a seer. More than that: He spake like the Son of God! He taught as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. The scribes taught as those who were learned in the Scriptures. But Christ taught as one whose own words were on an equality with Holy Scripture. Scripture was only His own word, spoken through holy men.

His words were for the deepest needs of men. He spoke to the human heart, to its wants, and sorrows, to its conviction of sin and its desires for escape. He represented God in the two great aspects of His character, as offended with sin, and as willing to be reconciled with the sinner. Men knew then, as they know now, what sin is. Christ made them realize its enormity. Those denunciatory words with which He rebuked the hypocrites of His day, had in them the terror of the judgment. They rolled on the sinful world like the voices of the seven trumpets of doom. Poor, depraved, full



of sorrow and woe, lost men needed the words of hope. And Christ drew them with His tenderness. He told them of the divine love. He told them of a Father who would come forth to meet them on their penitent return to Him; who would run and fall on the prodigal's neck and kiss him; who would welcome him to the old home and put the best robe on him, and put a costly ring on his hand, and make a glad festival of the day of his home-coming. Sinful men wanted such words as these. They struck on their hearts like the tones of inspiring music. They lifted them out of their forlornness. They kindled aspirations of better things in their souls. No wonder that great multitudes, many thousands, hung on His lips, thronged Him wherever He went, looked upon Him as a divine friend! No wonder that from all villages and all cities, not in Judea alone, but in Galilee and Samaria and in heathen territory, they gathered at the magic of His name and the graciousness of His words and the healing of His touch!

It is to be explained also by His *miracles of power*. Disease of all types recognized His mastership. He was the Healer of the body, as of the soul. He spent a day in Capernaum, and at nightfall there was not a sick person within the limits of that city. He visited town after town, and the market-places, instead of being filled with commodities for trade, were filled with the couches of the sick, and He healed them all.

Death recognized Him as the Giver of life. The beloved daughter of one household He called back to life with one word, Arise, as He took her by the lifeless hand. He arrested a funeral procession on its way to the grave and gave back to a widowed mother her only son. He called Lazarus from the tomb where he had already lain four days. Such acts, which were those of God alone, thrilled the popular mind and stirred the nation with the sentiment that God was with them.

Moreover, the *overthrow of diabolism* contributed to this effect. The irruption from hell of evil spirits, who desired to counteract the Saviour's presence in the world, was the occasion of a diabolic malady which, though somewhat seen at all times, was peculiarly formidable at that time. But with abject fear and utter impotence the demons trembled at His presence and obeyed His word. The people said, "What thing is this? for with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him." He was Sovereign of three worlds! Heaven was His own and His home. Hell, from beneath, bowed at His mandate. Earth thronged to do Him homage.

## V.

### HOMES AND FRIENDS OF CHRIST.

**H**ERE were a few homes which our Lord tenderly loved: in which He was sure of a warm welcome: wherein dwelt the friends who were always true to Him and whom He could unfalteringly trust. One was "Peter's house," in the beautiful and busy city of Capernaum, on the fertile and fragrant shores of the Sea of Galilee, the gem of the seven seas of Canaan, in whose limpid waters were reflected the marble dwellings of the city, the blossoming oleanders that fringed its waves, and the palms that towered loftily around. There, in the family of that brave and devoted disciple, He found rest, after the fatigue of His exhausting labors of instruction and healing and journeying, and solace, after the vexations and reproaches which He endured from men of shallow and hostile character. The low murmurs of the Galilean waters as the surf broke upon the beach, the music of the winds as they soughed through the stately palms and the evergreen olives, calmed His soul, and among these beloved friends He slept in peace. There many of His mighty

works were wrought, as the great multitude surged around the dwelling, bringing the sick and all who had any malady to the gracious Healer. Once, on entering the house, He found the mother of the apostle's wife sick with a great fever. With a touch of His hand He healed her, so that she immediately rose and ministered unto them. From that blessed home our Lord began His troubled ministry. At Capernaum four great roads centered, on whose crowded highways traffic passed from Jerusalem, from the Mediterranean Sea, and from the valley of the Jordan. Four thousand vessels vexed the waters of the Sea of Galilee, rude boats of fishermen, merchant vessels, yachts of nobles, and the armed craft of conquering Rome. In its busy marts men of many nationalities met in the keen contentions of trade. The amazing miracles of the Master and His words of authority were the theme of many tongues, and a wide fame of Him went forth into all the region round about and far into the territories of heathendom.

Another of the homes of our Lord was the house of the little family at Bethany, whose members He greatly loved. Bethany was a quiet hamlet, a little out of Jerusalem, and thither He turned His footsteps after His day's labors in the hot and turbulent places of the noisy capital. Grateful to Him then were the holy calm of skies that bent in their serene splendor above Him, jeweled with the revolving worlds

that His own hand had made, the peace of fields waving with luxurious harvests and fragrant with dewy flowers, the low evening songs of birds fluttering to their hidden nests, and the brooding silences of the solemn olive-woods. With His dear friends,—Martha, full of domestic solicitude, Mary with devout tenderness listening to His every word, and Lazarus thoughtful and sensible,—He spent the cool evenings in holy meditation and delightful talk and in communion at the family altar of prayer. For that home He wrought the most striking of all His miracles in the raising of His friend Lazarus from the dead: bringing back joy to the stricken family, and asserting, almost in the very sight of the scoffing capital, His kingly divinity. In that home, or by one of its inmates, the exquisite offering of the precious spikenard was made to Him, when Mary in the promptings of her deep love broke the alabaster vase and poured the costly perfume upon the head and then upon the feet of her adored Friend, and, while the house was filled with the delicate odor, wiped His anointed feet with her own flowing hair. In that home, too, He spent one of the last nights of His stay on earth. He had turned away from the city, from its throngs of cruel men, from its profaned temple; from the heights of Olivet, looking down upon the fated city that had rejected its one Deliverer; He had spoken His tender and warning and doom-full words;

and sadly, thinking of all that He would have done for those who abused and vilified Him, thinking of that lonely, sacrificial death in which He was soon to make atonement for the sins not of Jerusalem alone, but of the world of sinners, He passed to the repose of Bethany, to the sympathies of those with whom He was more than all the world beside.

Still another home of our Lord may have been that in the large upper room of which He partook of the Passover feast with His disciples, and where He instituted the sacramental supper. He seems to have been familiar with the owner of the house, for He sent two of His most trusted disciples into Jerusalem, telling them that they would there meet a man bearing a pitcher of water, and that they should follow him into the house whereinto he should go, and that they should ask the goodman of the house for the use of the large furnished upper room for Jesus and His disciples, in which they might observe the Passover. Other homes also there may have been in which Christ was received as an honored and beloved guest, of which no mention is made in the sacred record. But from what is stated of these and of their inmates we may estimate the great, dear friendship of our Lord.

It was the friendship of a large nature. It took in men of all degrees. It touched and enfolded humanity at every point. Men of learning were strongly attached to Him; ignorant

men as well. Men of wealth were His friends; the poor were so also. Students and fishermen, rulers and servants, alike gave Him their hearts. Not only did He know all men, but He loved all men. His mission to our world was a mission of love, and so He was ready to welcome to His confidence and affection all who proved themselves worthy. The distinctions that men affect were of little consequence or concern with Him. He looked through the outward and seeming to that which was genuine and controlling. His friendships, therefore, were with real persons, with those who were what they claimed to be. For men to be His confidants, His chosen apostles, founders and propagators of His religion among men, He called plain fishermen; men of brawny arms, but of brainy heads and hearts full of warm blood, who would do and dare for one they loved to the death of martyrdom. To them He opened as fully as He could the nature of His kingdom, and although they did not fully grasp it till their friendship was sanctified in His death, thenceforth their love turned into passion, and Christ and His cross were the theme of their words and the mastery of their lives.

His own life was such that human friendships were inevitable. He was a man among men. In Nazareth, from His youth up, He was a plain, busy carpenter. He did not live in luxury. He did not court the style of kings.

He was approachable by all. The cries that came to Him for help from the blind beggars by the wayside were as irresistible as those that came from the luxurious home of the Roman centurion.

The piteous appeal of the Syro Phœnician woman, over in the regions of Tyre and Sidon, beyond the range of His usual ministrations, woke the sensibilities of His responsive soul as deeply as the courteous request of a nobleman from the court of Herod. One appealed for the healing of her beloved daughter, with a strenuous faith that would take no denial: the other for the healing of his dying son with a passionate imperiousness which mocked the discipline of delay: while heathen woman and haughty Roman alike warmed in their love to Him who pitied the brokenness of the parental heart. The snows of Lebanon had not chilled the one, nor the ice of the court the other.

The friendships of Christ are strikingly and beautifully illustrated in the relations of woman to our Lord. These relations characterize and distinguish the Founder of the Christian faith: they remove and separate Him from all others who are responsible for religious systems and serve to exalt Christianity to its true and foremost rank. Woman was the friend of Christ. He ennobled that sex in the righteous claims that He made for it; His religion was its champion; and the result has been seen in the exalta-



tion of woman to her true place of equality with man wherever Christianity has wrought its blessed works. The reward came quickly and generously to the Master Himself in the pure love and the gracious sympathy of the women who came into personal and intimate acquaintance with Him. We have already seen how it was with His friends, Martha and Mary, whose house in the quietude of Bethany was His favorite home. Mary sat at His feet as though He were a beloved brother who had many things to tell which she dearly loved to hear. Martha makes complaint to Him, with utter frankness, of her sister's neglect, as though He were the master of their house. The woman of Samaria, entirely a stranger to Him, yields to the magic of His words—words that reveal His knowledge of her secret and sinful life, startle her out of her delusions and force her acknowledgment that He is indeed the Messiah for whose coming her people were expectantly waiting.

It is an impressive incident which is given of a sinful woman coming to the Saviour in the house of a Pharisee whose courteous invitation He had accepted, that she might express her deep repentance and her glowing love. She did not look into His face, but she bowed lowly at His feet, wetting them with her flowing tears, and wiping them with her luxuriant hair, and kissing His feet, and anointing them with costly ointment. Joy came to her broken and

contrite heart as the Master graciously said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." A mother who loved the Lord, and who had been much with Him, and whose two sons held eminent rank among His apostles, when it looked as though His kingdom was growing in power, came to Him, with a generous confidence, yet with a glowing ambition for her children, and besought that they might sit, one on His right hand and the other on His left hand, in His approaching royalty.

It was not long in the course of our Lord's ministry before a group of women who loved Him, and had notable occasion to love Him, were united in care for the Master and His chosen twelve. They were women of position and property, whose influence was great and whose character and standing were without reproach. The first in this female circle was Mary that was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out. She is reputed to have been a woman of wealth and rare beauty, who was won from her earlier life by the awakening of her better nature under the influence of Christ, and who thenceforward gave herself, her fortune and her time to a cheerful ministry to the One to whom she owed herself. Her name has passed into the languages of Christendom as the representative of true repentance and devoted love, and insti-

tutions of Christian charity have welcomed to their loving hospitality the Magdalens of the sinful world. The second of this circle was Joanna, the wife of Chuzas, a steward of Herod's palace. This Chuzas is thought to be that king's officer, whose son lying at the point of death was healed by the will of Christ, so that Joanna, after the death of her husband, gladly attached herself to the great Restorer of her boy. Susanna, meaning Lily, is mentioned as one of them: and there were many others.

This choice company of noble and devoted souls belonged to the family of our Lord, and wherever He went through cities and villages that crowded the fertile territories of Galilee and Judea, bringing to their sinful and worldly populations the good tidings of the Kingdom of God, they were present with their womanly tact and their domestic skill, to make a home for the weary Teacher and the benevolent Healer.

We hear of them again among the last scenes of the life of Christ. They stood in sadness and horror on the heights of Calvary when the merciless tragedy of the crucifixion was enacted. Their sobs broke on the awful stillness of that hour of darkness. Their loving hearts were wrung by the agony of their dearest Friend. Any one of them would have taken His place that so He might be spared. Possibly they thought He would exert His miraculous power

for His own relief. They thought of all that He had done for the poor and the suffering during the years that they had accompanied Him. Ah! they could not know the still diviner work which in His wounds and bitter pain and broken heart, He was accomplishing on the cross for the atonement of the sins of the world!

There were Mary Magdalene and Mary the wife of Clopas, and Salome, and his own beloved mother, Mary, in the supreme trial of her life, for whom almost His last thought was given and His last word spoken. These, last at the cross, were first at the tomb, to which in the gloaming of the morning they brought precious spices, after the manner of their people. Again they were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joanna and the other women, and to them, so faithful and beloved, the risen Saviour first appeared: and first of all to Mary Magdalene, whose soul burned with the enthusiasm of a love which death could not destroy, and who first of all thrilled the souls of the paralyzed apostles with the victorious words, "I have seen the Lord!"

Most sacred was the relation of these true souls to Christ. He returned their love with the benignity and affection of one who brought from heaven a divine nature to be mysteriously united to our human nature, with its wants and sympathies and pure aspirations. He restored to woman her appropriate dignity and entrusted

to his world-religion the maintenance of her rights and the sacredness of her character.

Art and poetry have alike honored and preserved the love of our Lord for little children. Children loved him and were drawn to Him by that attraction which they instinctively feel for great souls who have the God-like spirit. When He took them from their mothers, and folded them in His royal arms, and laid His gentle hands upon them, and blessed them, they nestled in his bosom, laid their heads over the great heart that throbbed with a divine love for them, looked love into eyes that spake back a pure affection for them, and caressed the mighty man who was the God of children. Memorable for all time are the thrilling words of the Master as He spread forth His arms in welcome to the little ones who eagerly came to Him: "Suffer the little children to come unto me: forbid them not: for to such belongs the kingdom of God." And then, as putting new honor on the child-like disposition, He spoke, with the blessed children in His arms, to the great outside, proud, self-willed world: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." He thought of the many children whom He had welcomed to heaven, lost out of lonely homes on earth, but saved for the glad reunions that are to come, and He said, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven!"

The friendships of Christ were also with strong men. Two distinguished members of the Sanhedrim, men of learning and of enormous wealth ; men of candor, but with the timidity which sometimes marks those who are in high positions, who had sought Christ perhaps secretly to learn of the kingdom and of the way of life, proved their affection by the honors which they paid to the wounded body of the Lord, when they took charge of it, embalmed it in fine linen and costly aromatic spices, and laid it gently away in a new tomb which one of them had cut in the solid rock for his own place of burial. We recall the tender love which Christ had for the wealthy and ambitious young ruler who inquired of Him, "What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" and who could not endure the crucial test which the Master gave him. We recall the beautiful friendship, the love that was wonderful, passing the love of women, which subsisted between the Saviour and that disciple whom Jesus loved. We recall that three-fold inquiry which He put to His trusted, brave but weak, disciple, as if to fasten his affection firmly to Him, "Lovest thou me?" We recall the eagerness with which publicans attached themselves to Him and especially the zeal of Zaccheus, who consecrated his person and his property to Christian service. Men, true men in every grade of life, loved this Man of men, poured their souls into His soul, gave Him all that they had to give,

toiled with Him, died for Him. There is nothing in history more supremely impressive than the affection, which life could not altogether express, which only death could sanctify, that strong men have cherished for their divine Redeemer.

Still, the divinest fact, and the one that should touch and thrill all our souls, which makes this dark world light, which revolutionizes our human history, and evolves new destiny for a ruined race, which makes tender and irresistible appeal to each one of us, is the blazing truth, which should be engraven in every place of our assembling, and should be burned ineffaceably upon our souls, that He, the Lord of glory, was the FRIEND OF SINNERS.










THE GREAT TEACHER.

Typographie—Le Louv

## VI.

### CHRIST AS AN ETHICAL TEACHER.

HRISTIAN ethics defines the practical principles of human duty. A life conformed to the ethical system of the New Testament would be a perfect human life. The relations of men to one another would be congenial and harmonious were they entirely controlled by the dominance in each individual of the truths of Christianity as applied to personal conduct. Society and business and government would be elevated and transfigured were they modeled on and pervaded by the doctrines of life and of responsibility which our Lord has clearly established. No other religious legislator has comprehended so thoroughly the need of mankind as the Son of Man has comprehended it. No other system has been so sagaciously adapted to the conditions of the human race as the Christian system has been adapted. The more fully men, individually and socially, have accepted and practiced the principles of personal and common duty as laid down by Christ, the nearer society has come to a state of ideal perfection. It is plain to see that the supposed millenium

must rest upon the adoption and universal prevalence of ideas of conduct which belong, if not exclusively, predominatingly, to Christianity. The Christian system of morals is closely allied to a perfect system of religion: and in this fact rests its superiority. Other theories of philosophy and religion, which are of human invention, are superficial and limited: but Christianity is profound in its adaptation to human wants and its requirements of human action. It is a system for men, as they are, and as God sees that they are, and is divinely adapted to them for their elevation and their congeniality and their common happiness and prosperity.

So an able writer of our day, not writing from a religious stand-point, says: "It was the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity, that its moral influence was not indirect, casual, remote, or spasmodic. Unlike all Pagan religions, it made moral teaching a main function of its clergy, moral discipline the leading object of its services, moral dispositions the necessary condition of the due performance of its rites. By the pulpit, by its ceremonies, by all the agencies of power it possessed, it labored systematically and perseveringly for the regeneration of mankind. Under its influence, doctrines concerning the nature of God, the immortality of the soul, and the duties of men, which the noblest intellects of antiquity could barely grasp, have become the truisms of the village school, the

proverbs of the cottage and of the alley." Christian men, Christian families, Christian society, Christian nations, show the excellence of the Christian system, in the ordinary conduct of life. Apart from that which is spiritual, the ethical principles of the Christian scheme tend to the elevation of character and to the righteousness of conduct, and to the fair treatment of others on narrow or on broad fields of human relation.

The ethics of Christ tends to noble life and uplifting influence. Short-sightedness and selfishness are rebuked. Justice to others is required. We are not at liberty to look on our own things exclusively; we are to have regard for the real welfare of others. Human frailty appeals pityingly to us; and as Christ bore our sins and carried our sorrows, so we are to be helpful to the unfortunate and the suffering. We are not to measure duty by the flaccid claims of ease and self-indulgence, but we are to rejoice in the privilege of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation. Personal influence should be as the salt of the earth: personal example, as the light of the world. Manhood should stand forth in its ideal significance to us. Each human soul should be weighed in balances that bear the stamp of eternity.

The great principles of the equality of men, of the co-equality of women, of the dignity of labor, of the rights of the lowly, of the sacredness of the home, of the perpetualness of the

marriage-bond, of personal freedom, of the title of each man to himself, of civil liberty, are made fundamental and controlling. Brotherhood is co-extensive with the human family. Charity ministers to the needy everywhere. Love binds and blesses all men with its sweet and sacred cords. Such is the range and dominance of ethical purity and power.

The Sermon on the Mount, the longest and most comprehensive of the Discourses of Christ, is full of the ethics of His system. In it, with the grace of beatitudes, He puts in the forefront, poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hunger and thirst after righteousness, mercifulness, purity, peacemaking.

Then, He puts the crown on persecution. Those who bear His royal Name are to let light shine forth from them into the darkness of the world. They are to honor the old law of conduct by principles that are deeper and that sway unseen thought and feeling, so superseding the primitive commandments by a life against which they could not be leveled. Murder, adultery, perjury, revenge, the whole breed of base indulgences, were traced to their source and seat and were outlawed there. Love, by the new commandment, extends to enemies as well as to friends. Beneficence, prayer, fasting, are not of show and outward observance: they are secret graces known of God: soul treasures sent forward and laid up in heaven.

The world, with what it can give, is relegated to its true place of subordinate concern, and God is enthroned in the mind. So carking anxiety about this life, as to what we shall eat and drink and wear, is rebuked, and aspiration for the heavenly kingdom is stimulated. Confidence in God, the confidence which puts us in the place of children before a Father who is able and willing to do for us all that we can properly desire, is sanctioned and urged.

Such life, ethically ideal, making the divine kingdom dominant, may be like the entrance to a narrow gate and a strait way, but it leads plainly and victoriously to a joyful ending. It would be known here by the blessed fruits of it, and it would give free admittance to the kingdom of heaven. So the building of human life, on this Christian model and by these Christly specifications, would be like the erection of a house upon a rock, which tempests of rain and wind could not move: while anything lower and less would be like placing a structure upon quicksands, which, smitten by hurricane and flood, would fall, and great would be the fall thereof!

This ethical Discourse, in its wonderful terms, has wrought into and through it the religious sentiment. Christ could speak no otherwise. To Him life is one. Man, in this world, is the child of God. He is not to live under one set of principles as a man of the world, and under another set of principles as a member of the

heavenly kingdom. Whatever place he may hold here, the place of a laborer, or the place of a sovereign, he is to be perfect, he is to aim to be like God.

Faith is a universal principle. It is to control the whole life. It is to hold the free soul to an unwavering and constant confidence in God. And so when Christ is presented, the free soul will gladly and firmly lay hold on Him as a Saviour. Religion is the crown of ethics. It is the fulfillment of the ethical system. Christianity is the doctrine of right living. It is the perfection of duty. And any science of conduct which does not include repentance for sin and faith in the Redeemer and obedience of divine law, is imperfect and insufficient. In this is the superiority of the ethics of Christ. It sweeps the field of human relations and conduct, for time, for immortality as well.

The ambitious disciples wished to know who would be the greatest in the kingdom of whose coming they thought they saw the signs. The Lord's answer was that he who was last would be first, that he who served most would be on the throne, that the most childlike would be the most kingly.

The young ruler thought that he was an aspirant for the heavenly life. He had kept the old law. But Christ challenged Him to that full surrender which would prove his genuineness, the surrender of his worldly wealth. He had great posses-



sions, and he clung to them with a supreme love. He could not stand so severe a test. He might have been another Paul. But his name was never known.

And when Peter, roused by the incident, put in a claim for himself and his colleagues as having forsaken all to follow Christ, the Master encouraged him by the rewards which are sure to self-sacrifice, rewards which mount to hundred-fold receipts even here and the glories of eternal recompense hereafter. The doctrine of self-sacrifice was one to which Christ gave great stress in His ethical teachings. There must be self-denial, cross-bearing, persistent following of the Master if one would save his life. That life is a lost life which is employed, used up, in gaining the world, even if it amasses the whole world. The forfeit is too great. It is laying down an immortal soul for the perishable earth. The deeds of this life are in the reckoning for immortality: they, in fact, are the terms which determine decision for eternity. Christ urged upon men that they should count the cost. Count the cost of action: of the plans you make, of the enterprises in which you engage, of the warfare that you plunge into, of the structures that you build. Put your hand to the plow, not to turn back, but for tillage and for harvest. Life, to be true and fruitful, must be a service: hard perhaps, thankless possibly, little appreciated by the unintelligent, often lonely, depress-

ing, sacrificial, responded to by words which are weak and not by acts which hold strength and sense: yet self-rewarding, having the beginnings of heaven in it.

Our Lord had stern rebuke and denunciation of the pride and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. He could not brook their ceremonial formalism, their vaunted self-righteousness, their contempt of others, their falseness and avarice and pride. He honored humility and repentance and the benevolent spirit. He characterized the mean and crafty and perjured Herod as "that fox." He called the venomous Pharisees, "offspring of vipers." He told the wicked Jews that they were of their "father the devil." But He was full of tenderness for the suffering and the penitent. Out of His heart went sympathy for the lowly, help for the burdened, compassion for the distressed, forgiveness for the penitent. With withering scorn He frowned on those who would gratify their malice, or justify their wickedness, by inflictions of pain on others: but His hand was strong to heal and to raise up the wounded and fallen.

Love to God and love to man summarized all law, all commandments, all duty.

The most comprehensive and practical maxim of Christian ethics is that which, for its perfect adaptation to control men in their relation to one another, has been called the *Golden Rule*. Something like it has been suggested in other

systems, but in limited or negative forms. Christ promulgates it as an affirmative and positive and all-controlling principle. It is a law of laws. It reaches to all conduct, all acts, as between man and man. We are to put ourselves in the other's place. We are to think how we would wish to be treated in the present conditions. We are to represent our neighbor. We are to stand in our brother's footsteps. Then, as we would that they should do unto us, even so are we to do also unto them. How such a golden rule of conduct does away with harsh judgments! How it prevents the anticipation of evil, the forming of uncharitable opinions, the charges of supposed wrong-doing, the easy acceptance of dark suspicions, the indulgence of envy and low-running jealousies, the cultivating of unwarranted prejudice, the utterance of sharp and severe accusations, the reflection upon personal honor and the intimation of a lack of personal magnanimity! Stand there for your fellow-man! Put yourself in his place. Then ask, how you would like to have him judge you, what treatment you would be pleased to receive from him, and then according to your opinion so formed, judge and treat your fellow-man. Truly the practice of that maxim would work an ethical revolution in manners and morals.

But the ethical system of Christianity acquires its greatest authority and influence by the living example of its Founder. He was the Perfect

Man. In Him met and harmonized all excellences and all virtues. The boy Jesus was a perfect Boy. The carpenter of Nazareth was a perfect workman. He was a perfect Friend, a perfect Leader, a perfect Saviour. All His relations to men were squared by the Golden Rule which He announced: nay, they rose above that rule, as the heavens rise above the earth, in the incomparable grandeur and heavenliness of their beneficent experience. He spake indeed as man never spake: yet he spoke to human need and for men's recovery. He healed as God would heal: yet His healing was for the relief of the sufferers to whom He came near and whose human cries awoke His pity. He saved as only a divine Redeemer could save: yet it was our sins He bore, our sorrows He carried, our transgressions for which He was wounded, our iniquities for which he was bruised. Never has there been another so perfect and winning example in all the history of mankind. He draws all men unto Him by the power of a Love which embraces them all as an atmosphere. It is a Love that fills the world as the sunshine fills its air, pours its glory on all landscapes, streams into clefts and fissures and all deep, dark places, gilds the foliage and the flowers, glimmers on the crests of waves and makes the great sea a golden mirror, lights our dwellings and flames on our altars and cheers all our hearts and makes the whole globe glad with the life that it preserves

and nourishes and invigorates! Nothing hinders it: nothing but men's rejection of it. It gives to Cæsar the things which belong to Cæsar. It companies with publicans and sinners, and wins publicans and harlots into the Kingdom of God. It teaches all voices how to pray to "our Father." It weeps with a more than human sorrow over men and cities of men whose doom is written on the sky that bends above them. It ennobles labor and sanctifies grief and lifts the helpless and suffers that others may rejoice. It enters all homes and would make heaven in each of them. It calls to every soul, in every condition of human experience, "Come unto me!"

And this example is of power. It is the strongest force in the world. It has swayed men in all the Christian ages, in all differing nations, under all conditions and varieties of human life, as the hurricane stirs and sways the sea to its deepest abysses. It has reformed society. It has effected a humane civilization. It has made Christian government a possibility. It has brought honesty into business, public spirit into legislation, humanity into the treatment of criminals and animals, order into society, refinement into personal intercourse, blessedness into homes. There is no power like Love: and Christ's example is the example of a boundless love. It has kindled responsive love. Men and women and little children have been

ennobled and sanctified and thrilled by it, so that through trouble, through sacrifice, under burdens, under crosses, they have wrought for Christ that they might become like Him and that the world might be made better and that righteousness and peace might kiss each other and that the Golden Rule might be the accepted law of mankind.

## VII.

### CHRIST THE SAVIOUR OF MEN.



HE errand, I might rather say as implying more, the mission, of our Lord to this world was one of *Salvation*. Other things were included in it and contributed to this one overshadowing object. A Life was to be lived out here which would be as a model human life. A Teaching was to be set forth which would be a correct ethical guide to conduct. A Discipline was to be endured which would be for the support and consolation of all who are in the experiences of trial. A Testimony was to be given for righteousness which would rebuke the pride of Pharisee, the skepticism of Sadducee, the pettiness of Scribe, the formality of Essene.

But all this, important as it might be, was only secondary and subordinate to the great intention of His coming. The one purpose, masterful of all others, which brought the Son of God into the human Sonship, was to become the Saviour of our sinful race. Christ Himself declared this most plainly. "God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him." This He said in His memorable conversation with Nicodemus,

a learned member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, to whom our Lord, early in His ministry, stated the great fundamental principles of His mission. Nicodemus came to Him as a candid but timid inquirer, and he received a frank exposition of what the Master considered most essential in His system: God's love, man's perishing need, salvation by the death of the Son, faith as the means of securing the benefits of Christ's death, and the sad, patent fact, that although the Redeemer has brought light into the world on this most vital matter, men, by reason of their evil works, love the darkness and hate the light, and will not come to the light that they may be convicted and recovered. That was the platform of principles upon which Christianity rested, and it remains the same in this, as in preceding centuries, as when the Lord first announced it.

On another occasion, when the mother of the sons of Zebedee, who were of the apostles, worshiping, sought of our Lord promotion for her sons to the highest places in His victorious Kingdom, He closed the interview with words full of meaning and quite the opposite of their ambitious vauntings: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." The high places on His right hand and on His left hand were places of the cross, and the cup which He was to drink, and which they said



they could also drink, was a cup of suffering ; in His case suffering in which no friend could share, which no mortal lips could taste.

This great truth became the banner-truth of the spreading gospel. It was the watchword of the Apostles. In the dark days when the whole Jewish power was put forth to exterminate the infant church, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, boldly declared to a hostile gathering of rulers and elders and scribes and priests, that in none other than Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom they crucified, is there salvation : for neither, he said, is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved. This swept away the whole Jewish ritual, and brought Christianity to the front for Jew and Gentile alike. Paul, writing to the Romans the truth which he had intrepidly preached in all his missionary tours, in the foremost cities of civilization, declared, "God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." John also urges the same thing in his first epistle : "Herein was the love of God manifested in us (in our case), that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." Peter, in his first epistle, also says, "Ye were redeemed with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." The testimony of the whole word is, therefore, most emphatic on this point,

that, whatever subsidiary objects were in view, the preponderating purpose of Christ's coming was the salvation of men by His death for them.

The reason for this, and the necessity of it, lay in the fact that *men are lost*. We may not like to think so: but that is God's thought. We may prefer to believe that we are unfortunate, unhappy perhaps, somewhat perverse; but the divine estimate is, that we are lost.

There are two conditions into which this life issues, and there are no others: one is a condition of eternal blessedness: the other is a condition of eternal wretchedness. Those eternal states depend on conduct and character in this life. In fact, life, as to that which is real and essential, is one. It is not interrupted, in its essentiality, in that which makes it what it is, by the circumstance of death: but is only removed from one place to another. It is no more interrupted by crossing what is sometimes called the stream of death, than it is by crossing the sea from one land to another, by passing across the territorial boundary which separates one country from another. The landscape is changed: the social conditions are changed: but the man remains the same. So man continues to be what he is when he crosses the boundary which separates mortality from immortality. His surroundings are different, his opportunities are different, his associates may be different: he is in another world. But himself is the same.

The old name would call him. The old traits characterize him. And if he were to come back he would have the old personality.

Our Lord, in His teaching, makes much of this fact. He solemnly teaches, that when the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His father, with a retinue of angels, that He will render unto every man according to his deeds. He teaches that we enter now a narrow gate which leads unto life, or we enter a wide gate which leads to destruction. He teaches that by the course we now take we can lose our life, or we can find it. He teaches that it is better to cut off a hand or a foot, or to cast out an eye, if such a member hinders us from entering into life, rather than to go into hell unmaimed. He teaches that our fidelity here to the trusts that God has given us will insure great rewards in the future, like authority over many cities, and that our unfaithfulness in that which is now intrusted to us will determine our loss and poverty hereafter. And with this all Scripture agrees.

Inasmuch, therefore, as souls are lost who pass over the boundary of time into the changeless conditions of eternity without having secured salvation, and since the real life, which is based on character, there and here, is one, it is correctly said that unsaved men are now lost. They are in that relation to God which necessitates ruin. They are on the road which runs straight into

hell. They have begun, and are continuing, a sinful career, whose legitimate end is eternal death. As they will be without God and without hope who enter eternity with the guilt of their sin on them, so now they who are in the state of sin are said to be without God and without hope. On both sides of the line impenitence and guilt are characterized by the same terms. Christ teaches that the life is forfeited on this side of the line. Here and now the ultimate decision is made. One distinction only exists: in this world there is hope; in that world there is only despair. Here there is hope because the Son of man is here to seek and to save that which was lost. There, is only despair because there is no Saviour there. Christ's recovering work is for this world only. Now men may come out of their thralldom into sweet liberty. Now the bondslave of sin may become the free servant of the Lord Jesus. Now the lost may be recovered and saved.

And this, superlatively, is the purpose of Christ's coming. It crowds everything else into the background. On the front of the pictorial representation of Christ's work stands the Cross: back of it is the lowly manger and the home and shop at Nazareth: back of it is the form of the teacher with the mighty multitudes hanging on His words of life; back of it are his miracles of mercy; blind men opening their eyes on a new world; deaf men listening to the music which has

never before thrilled them ; dumb men singing for joy to the praise of their Healer ; the sick rising to duty in perfect health, the lepers clean in body and in soul, the dead happy in their restored life and the demoniacs cleared of their foul and base possessions. But, brilliant with its suggestive meanings, filling the whole picture with its light and glory, standing as in memorial of a rescued world, hope of the lost and joy of the saved, is the Cross on which the Redeemer died ! His sufferings were for our salvation. His death was for our life.

It was a favorite symbol of the early church which represented the Saviour as a shepherd bringing home, on his shoulder, from the perilous wilderness, the lost sheep which he had sought and found. Christian song has celebrated with tender terms this representation of the work of Christ. It is suggested by his own words, in which He presents the divine love under the image of a man who has a hundred sheep, one of which has gone astray, who leaves the ninety-and-nine and goes unto the mountains and seeks that which is astray until he finds it, when he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-and-nine that went not astray, and he says to his friends and neighbors, rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.

We have from Christ's lips, also, the representation of a woman who lost one of ten pieces of

silver which she had, who lit a lamp, and swept the house and sought diligently until she found it, and then called in her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her because she had found the piece which she had lost. We hear also from Him the story of the prodigal son, which has moved men of all tongues by its inimitable pathos, which is concluded by those affecting words of the father, "It was meet to make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." By all symbols, through all figurative forms, we are brought face to face with a race of lost men and with the Lord coming in mercy and by infinite service to seek and to find them. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners. It was not His will, nor the will of His Father, that any should perish. His whole life-work found its fullest expression in the word, Salvation.

Was it necessary for this that He should humble Himself? He went down to the lowest place. Was it necessary for this that He should suffer? He not only humbled Himself but He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. From lowly Bethlehem to mournful Calvary was a long pilgrimage of atonement. Bursting from heaven in their absorbing wonder, angel hosts filled the mountain air with their exulting gloria, as they announced to the astonished shepherds, "there is born to you this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

Following the suggestion of the angels, the adoring shepherds found the wonderful babe, and returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen. Magi from the Orient, guided by a phenomenal star, came to this new Light, even to the brightness of its rising, bringing, with reverence to the Child, their gifts for kings, gold and frankincense and myrrh. Heaven and earth alike were moved by this advent to the sinful world of One who had come from the supernal glory. When the boy Jesus was twelve years of age, His parents found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, who were amazed at His understanding and answers; and to their wondering inquiry, why it was, He replied, with a revelation of His divine origin, that it was for Him to be engaged in the things of His Father. Since, however, He must know our life, in order that He might be its complete deliverer, He lived at Nazareth, and was subject to His parents, and was occupied up to full manhood in the avocation of His reputed father. So, too, that He might fulfill all righteousness, He was baptized of John, was driven of the Spirit to the long fast of the lonely wilderness, and met the tempter in a three-fold trial and with a three-fold victory; and thus having suffered being tempted He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and is able to succor them that are tempted.

From the walks and occupations of ordinary life, men, whom He selected with divine insight, and whom He impressed by the peculiar grace and majesty of His person, left all and followed Him. And then came His short and eventful public life, crowded with impressive incidents, and ineffaceable on the spiritual records of the race. Miracle followed miracle in attestation of His divine power and sympathy and love. A greater than any of the prophets or wise men of old was there. In His voice nature recognized the voice of its Creator. Its limpid water turned into exhilarating wine at His word. The wild sea, tossed in tumult, heard His command, "Peace, be still!" and mirrored on its placid bosom the twinkle of over-revolving stars. Disease disappeared at His more than magnetic touch. Health flowed like a blessed river with trees of life on its luxuriant banks where He dwelt with men. Whole cities and wide regions felt the restoring power and the healing grace of His beneficent presence. Even death, at His call, gave back its prisoner to life.

Memorable were His discourses to the vast multitudes who followed Him wherever He went. Speaking to their famished souls, hungry for spiritual nourishment, He told them that He was the Bread of Life, heaven-given, more to them than the manna was to their starving fathers in the Arabian deserts. He told them that He was the Water of Life, of which if they should




drink they would never thirst again. He brought heaven to them, so that here, as there, redeemed souls should hunger no more, neither thirst any more. He told them that He was the Light of the World: that, as in the festal illumination of the Temple the people and the priests rejoiced with music and dances, so, following and loving Him, they might walk in heavenly light, even as the nations of the saved in that city which has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine upon it: for the glory of God does lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. He revealed to them His equality with the Father: He opened the doors of the eternal worlds: He wept over the people who were miserably to perish in the woes whose blackened clouds were already lowering: He rejoiced in spirit that though His message were hidden from the wise and prudent, it was heralded unto babes; and that He could sound forth the call of divine mercy, "Come unto me; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." All this, wonderful in deed and in word, led on to the tragic event, to the supreme sacrifice, to Gethsemane's agony and Calvary's death of mingled terror and triumph.

Alone, the divine Victim, the Lamb that was slain for our sins, endured an anguish of body and of mind of which we can form no conception and of which there is no parallel. It was more than He could bear. The weight of our sins, the awful burden of our guilt, crushed Him to the

Earth. His cries of agony rent the stillness of that darkest midnight. His poor body was torn with the torture of His Lacerated spirit, and His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground. His prayer, with strong crying and tears, went up to God, His beloved Father, with whom all things are possible, but who could not take away that dreadful cup from Him. The Cross was still before Him, with its heavier woe, with its renewed agony, with the hiding of His Father's face, with its public infamy and its personal anguish, on which He expressed His boundless pity and forgiveness for men, and commended His spirit to His Father, His great work forever FINISHED. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

## VIII.

### THE INDWELLING CHRIST.

ITH mystic monosyllables was ended the sublimest and tenderest prayer that ever rose from earth to heaven: the prayer of our dear Lord for all His followers. Spenser, near death, caused this prayer to be read aloud to him three times: he had never ventured to preach upon it, because he thought the understanding of it went beyond the faith which the Lord is wont to impart to His disciples.

Yet this prayer was for us: and reverently we may draw near to the divine oratory, listening and learning, as we hear the Christ, in the fullness of His infinite affection, say, in the earnest language of a suppliant: "I pray for them: I will that they also be with me where I am: I pray that they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

You will notice that after the concluding sentence, "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them," as though His loving heart

dwelt in an affectionateness that could not allow Him to be sundered from them, He adds still these last words, "And I in them."

As a German commentator remarks, "The last word of all, after the last, is, "*I in them.*" Says another, "This is the last and most approved word of this sublime prayer." And another remarks, "It is a better seal than any doxology or amen." I do not know what it means. I do not suppose we *can* understand the fullness of its infinite meanings. We can take something of it superficially ; but its interior and profounder contents are not a thing of theory or statement but of solemn experience. We can go down into them only as the Lord takes us down ; only as He reveals Himself to us as an indwelling person and presence ! It is not a philosophy that we want, but a revelation : not an exegesis, but an experience : not logic, but life : not a Christology, but *Christ. Christ in us* : the infinite in the finite : the God in the temple of God : the greater in the less : this is the reversal of our dynamics, the abrogation of our human axioms. On the surface, it means, that the Lord is in all believers with the fullness of His love and the Father's love ; that He is in them by His doctrines, teaching them of Himself and of His Kingdom, and by His Spirit who shows to them the things of Himself : and so all the commentators explain it. But it means more, far more, than this, "Thou in me and I in thee, and I in them : " here is the trinity

of relations out of which comes both the unity of believers with one another and their higher and more mysterious unity with the Father and the Son: "That they all may be one and that they also may be one in us." Christ in the saint brings the saint into God. So the human, becomes the partaker of the divine, nature. God in us and we in God are the relations of the supernatural life. How far the realization of this mysterious unity affects personality, how fully it is comprehended in the conditions of mortal life, what may remain for its perfectibility in the future experience, we may not be able to state. That there is a life in this world which though essentially human is also essentially divine we may not doubt. That there is a life beyond which rises into higher and more perfect degrees of this blessed unity we may well believe; although "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." The life in this world runs into the life beyond. Here it is begun; there it is perfected. But it is one. The union of the Saviour and the believer is one on earth and in heaven.

Leaving the more sacred and subtle mysteries of the theme, we may look at it outwardly and relatively and get inspiration in it for our tasks and comfort in it for our trials.

Man needs some greater one in him. We are all controlled by some indwelling principle, pas-

sion, person. We do not barely live our own life, which would be a bare life, if we should attempt it. Even those who affect solitariness are under the mastery of an overpowering principle or are in slavehood to an imperious passion; their seclusion does not place them alone. From the world which they claim to have left, along the highways of memory or desire or remorse, troop in upon them influences which they can shut out by no blockade or isolation. They have carried in with them themselves, with the hearts they had, with the intellectual progress they had made, with the masterful will owning no subjection. And although they may hide themselves from men and may see no longer their old associates, still are they united by unseen influences, powers that work through thoughts and unobstructed affections. Man is never less alone than when alone. The unpeopled spaces are crowded with being. Few can be with us in bodily form, but spirits, which take no space, can throng to us in innumerable companies. The withdrawal from men, therefore, may be the entrance to great assemblies. The lone watcher on the solitary column, the solitary hermit in the wilderness, the devotee in his thick-walled cell, may be thronged by those whom his bodily eye may not discern but whom his spiritual senses recognize.

Most men in the world, are controlled by sordid passions or low running ambitions. Their possessions are of inferior spirits. That in them

which gives significance to their life is far below the claim of their immortality. They are pushed on by the passion for pelf: as though it were a great object to get property whose title must be vacated in a few days: to heap up riches for other parties soon to gather or to scatter: to hold broad acres of that a few feet of which will soon hold themselves. Or they are ambitious for place out of which they will be crowded before they are fairly seated in it: for power which their unsteady or palsied hands can retain but for a little while: for honor which will die away almost as soon as the huzzas which have hailed it. For these lowest worldly, perishable things, of one sort and another, the whole being is aglow and in struggle. The immortal devotes himself, with his fine possibilities, to that which is impossible. Try as he will, he cannot be satisfied with that which is merely worldly. Succeed as he may, he cannot find gratification in that which has no permanence.

Yet on these levels the race is run. The world only is in men. It possesses them. It absorbs their being. Some move to higher moods. They would find gratification in noble sentiments. The intellectual life is absorbing. Says one, "Be sure that there has been great moral strength in all who have come to intellectual greatness. During some brief moments of insight the mist has rolled away, and they have beheld like a Celestial City, the home of their highest aspira-

tions; but the cloud has gathered round them again and still in the gloom they have gone steadily forward, stumbling often, yet maintaining their unconquerable resolution. It is to this sublime persistence of the intellectual in other ages that the world owes the treasures which they won. Their intellectual purposes did not break their moral nature, but exercised and exalted it. All that was best and highest in the imperfect moral nature of Giordano Bruno had its source in that noble passion for Philosophy, which made him declare that for her sake it was easy to endure labor and pain and exile, since he had found in brief labor lasting rest, in light grief boundless joy, in contracted exile broadest country." Humboldt sold his inheritance that he might pursue in remote fields his studies of nature. Kane consecrated his mature life to unlock the mystery of the Arctic zone. Faraday renounced certain fortune for the results of uncertain discovery. Livingstone passed out of sight that he might solve the unknown problem in the heart of Africa. Patriots have given all to country. In men have lived and worked great and worthy principles to the subjection and absorption of their entire nature. Themselves have been but the agents of something mightier than themselves, which has possessed and controlled them. Sublime ambition, lofty work, worthy service, have supplanted all selfish



passions and worked in the new man with sole control.

Sometimes another man has been in them. They have lived a life not their own but this other's. The familiar incident of the wounded French soldier illustrates this, who said to his surgeon probing and cutting in his breast, "Cut a little deeper and you will find the emperor." There was a magic about the emperor which swayed his soldiers. They were emptied of themselves and he lived in them. To accomplish his designs and not their own was all their soldiery. The great emperor marched in them on long marches, endured in them in great privations, toiled in them over snowy Alps, charged in them in the bloody charge, exulted in them in magnificent victories, and when they came to die, in their heart of hearts was enshrined the emperor himself. Forty years after his death, four thousand miles from his tomb, I met an aged conscript of the immortal emperor. He was broken and bowed, and all the forces of his life had retreated; but at the name and mention of the great commander he rose erect as a grenadier of France, and the fire of the unconquerable guard burned within him and he would have marched again to Moscow at a signal from his dead captain, who, though his body lay in the vault of the Invalides, lived in the soul of the soldier.

Here we come near to that which is practical

in our Saviour's service. It cannot be doubted that there have been and are great numbers in whom He has lived as the controller of their life and their destiny. Their most absorbing thought has been the thought of Him. Their strongest and purest and most vital affections have been for Him. Their intensest purpose has centralized in Him. Their being has been blended in His being. He has lived in all their life and vitalized everything that has remained in them and has proceeded from them. This is putting the case strongly : and you may feel rather too strongly for any experience that you have known. But it is not more strongly put than the testimony of the individuals themselves, nor than their lives warrant. This prayer of the Master came to quick and marvelous answering ! No sooner was His life ended than it passed into His followers. It was re-lived in them. They, with sublime devotion, entered into that which remained of His work. He was to them more than themselves. *They* were dead. He lived in them. Said one of them, the greatest perhaps of all in his devotion and service, " I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." As to his own and old personality he was *dead*. The fiery student in the schools of Jewish law, the bold contestant of Pharisaic formulas,

the wild persecutor of every alien faith, was no more. Saul, who came with his hot blood from Tarsus and issued a zealot from the school of Gamaliel in Jerusalem, was dead. But Paul lived, yet not Paul, but Christ lived in him. A divine power wrought in that great Apostle of Christianity. His splendid intellect, which grappled with the profoundest questions of philosophy and theology, was taught of God. His sublime eloquence, which over-matched the oratory of Rome and on the Areopagus riveted his Athenian hearers, and roused men in every place where he spoke, was from the divine Spirit who spoke in him. The generous and noble and self denying qualities which characterized him in all the relations of his life, which made him so kind a friend, so sweet a comforter, so opulent a benefactor, so patriotic a citizen, so magnanimous a foe, so mighty a champion, were all the work of God in him. It was the divine energy within him which made him first the Apostle to his own people and then the Apostle to the Gentiles, so that he visited the cities of Syria, and went over into Macedonia, and sailed along the capes of the Grecian Sea, and stood under the shadow of the Acropolis, and maintained the simplicity of the gospel in voluptuous Corinth and, by tempestuous seas, made his way to imperial Rome. It was by an inspired pen that he wrote his living epistles, of which Luther said, "His words are not dead words, they are living creatures with

hands and feet." His whole life, so full and rich and blessed, with memorials in so many important places where he himself was seen, and in so many other places where he himself was never seen, was the Lord's life in him. Nothing could separate him from the love of Christ. Because Christ was in him his spirit was life. And his desire for his beloved disciples was that "Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith:" and that they might be "complete in Him."

This wonderful Apostle has had his successors. The same cause has led to the same devotion. Christ has lived on in imperishable being in those who have given themselves to Him. Many a lowly life has been glorified by His being in it. *The missionary records are full of the devotion which He has inspired.* Friends, home, country, civilization, honors, have been freely sacrificed and left. Another life, His life, has taken the place of the man's own.

This is what we want. We want Christ in us. If the world is in us, or if we have only ourselves in us, we are in great want. The author of Robert Falconer writes: "Our hearts cry out, to have God is to live. We want God. Without Him no life of ours is worth living. We are not then even human, for that is but the lower form of the divine. We are immortal, eternal; fill us, O Father, with thyself. Then only all is well."

It is the glory of the Redeemer to dwell in the redeemed. His work is not fulfilled until we

abide in Him and He in us. He has come not only to free us from sin but to impart unto us Himself. He seeks to make His abode with us and to make us temples of Himself. He invites us to partake of Him: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him." His honor is concerned in the fulfillment of His work. Regeneration, to be perfect, not only casts out the old possessions of the mind, but it enthrones Christ there, and keeps Him there, Lord of all. He should have his rightful place.

And as it is His glory to dwell in them, so it is their glory to have Him. It is the chief glory of man. All other glories of the earth, of the universe, are pale by the side of this. There is glory in a *crown* which has been worn by great monarchs: and in a *throne* which has stood for centuries: and in *honors* which come from old universities and from grateful peoples. But the glory of having the Lord of glory within one, surpasses all other glories. There is honor in entertaining a prince or a great scholar or a noble citizen: but this honor is given to His saints to entertain the Lord Himself. "Abide in me and I in you."

Here is inspiration for service. Not to live out our lives, but to live out His life who liveth in us; not to honor ourselves, but to honor Him who is worthy of the praise and glory of the universe: not to serve any inferior being, but to serve and please Him who is superior to all other beings,

to whom we owe all that we can do, all that we can love, ourselves; herein is motive sufficient to stir all our nature. It has proved sufficient. In all the Christian ages the succession of true and toiling disciples has been preserved, apostles, confessors, martyrs, reformers, saints, in every land and in every speech, and they have all maintained with unanimous testimony that their inspiration has come from the same infinite source, their common confession has everywhere been: "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Furthermore, the power of the Church over the world must come through the disciples from the indwelling Christ. It is not they who have power. They receive it. It works through them: but it comes from a higher cause. It is a divine power. It is *Christ* who is to subjugate the world. But the world cannot see Him. It can only see those in whom He dwells. But it can see them and it can feel the influence of his divine life in them. They may be feeble and unworthy to represent His amazing love. Yet are they His witnesses: they stand for Him before the world. They are, in their pure and consecrated lives, to set forth His life, in their generous and sympathizing love to reproduce His love, in their humble places and in their lowly service, and with their feeble powers to make Christ known as the living, loving, perfect Saviour.

In the grand old capital of Normandy, rich in

the highly sculptured architecture of a florid era, among imposing civil and ecclesiastical buildings, rises the magnificent Church of St. Ouen. No more gorgeous effect of light and shadow can anywhere be seen, than where the many-tinted beams stream through its elaborately painted windows and are brought into positive effect by the dark shade of its lofty buttresses and towers. It were hard for the eye, at a single sweep of vision to take in the sublime view of its gorgeous and lofty interior. But beneath the majestic nave is placed a little font, the water of which you could almost hold in your double hand, so constructed and located that by looking into it you can see as in a perfect mirror the stately columns and springing arches and the deep vault above, with the storied windows and the holy altar and all the tracery and adornments of the sacred edifice. The vast temple is represented in the basin of water. In us should be the image of the Lord. The eye that cannot sweep through the grandeur of His character and the infinitudes of His affection and the depths of His passion may be able to see enough of Him in those who love Him to be won to His blessed service, may find enough in them to awaken admiration and to challenge devotion. The heart that cannot yet hold *so much as Christ* may comprehend the lowly who are Christ-like. The mind that would be lost in the attributes of the divine Lord may seek and find Him in the qualities of His faithful

followers. Let Christ be in us, in our hearts, in our lives, and then shall we be His consecrated temples. So may we bring the unbelieving world to the worship of our Lord. Christ is in us and we are in the world that the world may be saved by all that we can do for it. Christ is in us that we may be controlled by Him, and that we may aspire both to be like Him here and to be like Him and with Him forever. Christ is in us that He may fulfill His own purpose in His chosen and beloved people, and through them His purpose for a sinful and lost race.

Come then into our hearts, O divine and beloved One! Abide with us and make us thy temples!



## IX.

### CHRIST'S PRESENCE IN PERPLEXITY.

**T**HE promise of Christ's presence is for the whole Church throughout all time. It was, primarily, for the apostles and the five hundred brethren who were gathered around Him on the mountain from whose summit He was to ascend to heaven, who were beginning to feel the desolateness of His withdrawal from them, the bereavement into which His departure would plunge them. They loved Him with a strange love, unlike the love which they had given to any other, and they wanted Him to remain with them as He had been, their Teacher and their trusted Friend. But His words implied that He was going away and He had the upward and far-away look of one who was to pass from them into the invisibilities of the heavenly world. So, for their comfort and peace, He united with His last commission to them the encouraging promise: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." And when He said, even unto the end of the world, He included all those who should believe on Him through their word, all who should succeed them in the work of spreading the gospel

among all the nations of mankind down "to the last syllable of recorded time."

It is therefore His word of solace and of joy to us, as it will be to those who shall come after us.

He said: *Lo*, behold, and rejoice and be comforted in this: *I am with you*, your very Friend; I whom you have known and loved so well: *I am* ever present, unchanging, Immanuel; *always*, all the days, every day, in days of trial, in days of joy, in days of gloom and of sunlight, on not a single day will I be absent from you: *even unto the end of the world*, through all your labors for me and for my kingdom everywhere, until you shall be with me where I am and shall behold my glory!

Blessed assurance to every Christian! To the toilers on the frontiers of civilization and to the heralds who cry in the dense wildernesses of heathenism: to the discouraged preacher in the days of supreme indifference, when the gospel goes unheeded and the dreams of the world fill the minds of thoughtless hearers: to the bereaved and lonely children of God, when the only light is on the upward path which they have taken who have passed into the glowing gates and when they wonder at the meaning of those occurrences which no philosophy can explain: to the weak because His strength is shown to be perfect in their weakness, and to the strong because they are strong in the strength which He supplies: to those who are in the midst of

the battle, as to those who are lifting up the voice of victory: to the living in all conditions and to the dying who can never die because they live and believe in Him! It is *not*, indeed, any more, *a visible and bodily presence*. The time for that is passed. The work for which there was that manifestation is finished. It was expedient that He should go away, out of sight, into the glory which no mortal eye can look upon. But in many other ways is He present.

He is with us *by His living Word*. That which He spake to the ears that listened in Judea and Galilee and which inspired pens have preserved can never pass out of the thought of Christendom. It is the sacred truth which is imperishable, which the world needs. It is the light which shineth in a dark place. We would have answers to great questions. Who is Christ that we may believe in Him? What was His mission to this melancholy planet, and what was the work that He triumphantly accomplished? What is the meaning of Bethlehem's manger whose fame has gone into the world's poetry and has glorified the world's high art? What is the lesson of the transfiguration?

What to us are the cries from dark Gethsemane and the miracles that startled the world at the mysterious event on Calvary? What shall we do to be saved? We ask in our awakening and in our despair and in our hope. When is the acceptable time and the day of salvation?

How can we become the inheritor of eternal life? Whose is the victory that overcometh the world? These are the transcendent inquiries of human intelligence and of honest endeavor. And all these Christ now answers. As truly and plainly as he spoke to Nicodemus who came to Him by night, or to the woman of Samaria who came to draw water from Jacob's well, or to the young ruler, who came running to Him with the salutation of a learner to a teacher who could make no mistake, so does He yet speak to us, answering with divine patience and wisdom these questions that concern our life and our destiny. How readest thou? In the volume of the Book it is written, and the words of life are His own words to you, as though you heard them from His mouth. He is with us by His words, alway, even unto the end of the world. No sinner need to be in the dark as to his duty. Christ plainly tells him what he must do to be saved. No Christian, whatever may be his spiritual experience, lacks the sources of consolation and encouragement and enlightenment. Christ teaches him of the way, the truth, and the life. No man, no lost man, no saved man, no man on the road to immortality, can doubt what are the things of greatest moment to himself if he will study the preserved and luminous instructions of the divine Master. Because He has spoken, men have no excuse for their sins. Because He has spoken, the joy of believers may be full.

He is with us *by His unobscured example*. His life was in the sight of the world. It was an illuminated life. It shone on all the pathways where He trod. His footsteps have never been effaced. We can follow Him in the sweet relations of His Hebrew home life: as He passed into the solitude of the wilderness for Satanic temptation: as He came into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day for worship as His custom was: as He taught and wrought for the good of men: as he went about doing good: as he suffered and died for others, carrying their sorrows and wounded for their transgressions.

All this is before us: a sacred object lesson, from which we can learn what we should be. It is as though He were still here, leading those who love Him, bidding them, as He bade James and Peter and John, "follow me." For He left us an example, that we should follow His steps. Though He went away, His example remains. He did no sin. He delighted to do God's will. He was a dutiful child. He was a loving friend. Nazareth was made sacred because His childhood was spent there. Bethany became a dear name because He so loved one of its humble homes. Capernaum came to eminence in human thought because His mighty works were wrought therein. Jerusalem gained its chief renown as the scene of great events in His life and tragic death. He pleased not Himself. He took on Him the form of a servant. He was

about His Father's business. He loved us and died for us. We cannot mistake as to what He was. We can see Him: we can walk with Him: we can feel His touch. No brother is more real to us. No friend leaves a clearer evidence of what he is. And so again is fulfilled His promise Lo, I am with you always.

He is with us *by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit*. There is a sacred mystery in the three-fold personality of the One Divine Being. The Persons are distinct, and they are one. It is a blessed mystery, which glorifies to us the Godhead. It is a fact supremely significant. It is far more than the unitarian idea of one God operating in three modes, revealing Himself in three distinct relations to us. He is three Persons as truly as any three of you are distinct persons, and yet He is but one Being, one God. I (one Person) will pray the Father (another Person), and He shall give you another Comforter (the third Person). Although we cannot explain it, cannot even understand it, we accept it as a grateful and profound truth, which states to us the glory of Him who must be a mystery to us if He be God.

The doctrine of the presence of the Holy Spirit with Christians as Christ gave it is this: He comes in Christ's name, to glorify Christ, to take of the things of Christ and to declare them unto those who are Christ's, to guide disciples into all truth, to teach them all things and to

bring all things to their remembrance that Christ has said unto them, and to abide with them and to be in them forever. So, as one with Christ, He is Christ in them. Christ went away that He might send the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit. He, by His spiritual presence, could be more to them than Christ could be in His bodily presence. So, we have the Spirit and having Him we have Christ, forever with us. He works in us both to will and to work for His good pleasure. God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Led by the Spirit of God we are the sons of God: and if sons, then heirs, first-heirs with Christ in the eternal inheritances of the Kingdom!

He is with us *in our participation of the Holy Sacrament* of the Supper of our Lord. When He instituted it He had respect to His departure from His disciples, and so He said, "This do in remembrance of me." It is His body and His blood that are symbolized in the sacred elements, and so partaking of them we do, in a sense, partake of Him. It was in the structure of the ordinance that it should be observed by all believers throughout all time: for He said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come," *i. e.*, till His second coming to judge the world and to close the world's mournful and wonderful history. So long, in this holy communion, will He be

with His followers always even unto the end of the world. Here He comes to them in the supreme event of His mission to the earth. Those who love Him are here in the goodly company of His trusted and faithful friends who reclined with Him at the institution of the supper, His beloved apostles, who heard indeed His words, "This do," but could not understand their meaning, as the event made it plain to them and to us. We are among that great company of people and of women who bewailed and lamented Him. We stand by the cross of Jesus with His own mother, through whose soul there pierced the sword as predicted, and His mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. We bow there with the disciple whom He loved and hear His dying words.

Ah! that Cross was uplifted for us. Those nails were driven because we were the sinners. That crown of thorns whose spikes started the blood from the forehead of the Master was that which we deserved to wear. The spear thrust which wounded Him might have properly pierced us. The body, sacred body! was broken for us. The blood, blood of Divine atonement! was shed for us. As we realize this (and nowhere else do we realize it so fully) the Lord seems indeed present with us. We can feel it. His voice thrills our souls. His touch vitalizes us. His benediction falls on us. As we go away, we say, "He whom we love, was with us at the feast to-day!"



There is another, more mystic, meaning in which He is with us, which is expressed in His own words: "Ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you. Abide in Me and I in you. Apart from Me ye can do nothing. We will come unto Him and make our abode with Him. I am the vine, ye are the branches." Such language implies that *there is a common life* of the Redeemer and His members. He lives in them, and they live in Him. When by faith the soul takes hold of Him, His life streams into that soul, as, when a cutting is grafted into the parent stock, the life of the stock flows into the engrafted wood and it becomes thenceforward a part of the one growth. Christ's life came into humanity and all human souls joined to Him become Christian souls, partakers of Christ, one with Him. This is mystery: but mystery is everywhere: and this spiritual mystery is no more unsolvable than the mysterious processes which are before our eyes in natural growths and changes all around us.

The outward expression of it is in the Church and its membership. The Church is Christ's body, outwardly manifesting Him before human sight and offering itself to human study. The members make it up, enter into such confessional and sacramental union to it that they are constituent parts of it and so members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. They suffer together: they rejoice together: they serve

together: Christ and His members one. The best name for a Christian Church is *Immanuel*, God with us. This is the Scriptural name of Christ, and it therefore proves His essential divinity, and it proves also that we, in our union to him, are, as St. Peter calls the Christians, "partakers of the divine nature." And so, again, is wonderfully fulfilled His word, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." He, our Lord, is present with us now, where we are. But the days are drawing nigh when we shall be present with Him where He is. He is *with us* now, in all through which we are appointed to pass; in joy and in trial; in days brilliant with sunlight and in days heavy with enswathing clouds; in our youthful struggles, and in the easy victories of our age; in our quiet home-life, and in our battles against the world's opposing forces; while we live and when we come to die. We live and trust in our Immanuel.

We shall be *with Him* then, on the golden floors, within the massive gates of pearl, before the throne of whiteness, in the light which is brilliant as the light of a thousand suns; forever free, yet confirmed in holiness; like unto Him, sharers with Him in a life whose wonderfulness even our imagination cannot estimate, advancing in strength of holy character and in the wideness of certain knowledge through milleniums that shall never end.

## X.

### BEAUTIES OF THE CHRIST-LIFE.

**M**EN live in that which most absorbs and occupies them. He who gives his thought and time and influence and means to the success of a political party lives in politics. One may so give himself to his daily business that he has no care for anything else, that he is only a boarder at his own home, that he keeps up acquaintance with his wife and children only because of the fortunate recurrence of the first day of the week on which it is illegal and immoral to keep at his avocation, and that man may very truly be said to live in his business.

A student may devote himself to some speciality in science or to some particular branch of learning with such absorption of mind and body, such daily toil and forgetfulness of everything else, that everyone would say that he fairly lives in his speciality.

An astronomer may live among the stars.

A sailor may be so homesick for the great and wide sea when he is ashore, that his look is ever toward it, that his love goes out to the crested

waves and his heart sings in harmony with the deep bass of the ocean, that his gait on land is that of one who walks the rocking deck of a ship, and that man may be said to live on the sea though he may be ashore.

Patriots have had such devotion to their country that it has been a joy to them to give their lives to it. "My country was my idol!" said an eloquent patriot before he died for it.

Men have braved polar cold and freezing flocs that they might rescue their imperiled fellows, and so have lived in them. Livingstone lived in Africa because he lived and died for it. For Bismarck to live is Germany. For some men to live is country, or commerce, or science, or philosophy, or politics. Intense devotion, unlimited absorption or occupation, defines and designates life.

There was a man, in the early history of Christianity, who announced, "For to me to live is Christ!" That was a new and strange declaration. Men had lived, as we have seen, for vastly different things. St. Paul was then a prisoner of the Roman government at the capital. According to the custom he was chained to a Roman soldier. Those of whom he saw the most were the blood-stained veterans of the conquering empire and the slaves of the palace. To them the brave apostle made Christ known. And when he closed his letter he wrote, "All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Cæsar's

household." Right there he had made converts to the Christian faith, so that in the palace, dark with lust and reeking with crimes that cannot be mentioned, there were real saints, men and women led by the apostle to love the divine Christ. The temptations of a voluptuous court and the fascinations of a profligate frivolity could not make them swerve from a true Christian life. For Nero to live was crime and lust. For Paul to live was Christ. The palace and the prison were opposites. Debauchery and infamous vice reigned in one. Prayer and hymns, and the invitations of Christian love, were heard in the other.

To Paul to live was Christ. And so in prison and expecting any day to be summoned for trial before the heathen emperor, equally as when free; in Rome equally as in Philippi; he lived out the Christ who lived in him. This was his new nature. He had been a different man, as we well know. But the new creation had passed on him and he was a new man in Christ. To him, once, to live was rank Judaism: now to live was Christ. And all his grand and consecrated life proved it to be so.

Some of us may be aspirants for a similar life, all of us should be: and it may be of service to consider some of the elements that enter into it as a practical experience.

First of all the individual life must be given to Christ. It must be made over to Him.

This is the fundamental principle of our

religion. It is the first comprehensive experience that is required in an accepted Christianity.

The person in coming to Christ, in becoming a Christian, must become *Christ's*.

He did belong to Himself, or He belonged to the world. He made His own will supreme. He followed wealth or pleasure or fame or something worldly as the one thing that held satisfaction. But when he was convinced of sin and of his need of a Saviour from the power and from the guilt of sin, he gave himself to Christ. If he did not, if he went only half as far as this, he did not, in the deepest sense, become a Christian. He may have gone so far as to admire the Christian ethics, the morality of Christianity; to admire the character of its great and benign Founder which lifts Him above all other men of all ages; to admire the kingdom which He has set up in this world and which is so manifestly a kingdom of power and conquest; but this is not to become a Christian, and no one can truly become such unless and until he becomes *Christ's*, so that he can say, like the apostle, To me to live is Christ.

The magic lies in that name. The experience consists in transferring one'sself into Christ. There is new creation. The old personality disappears. We have seen this wrought in many cases, and we cannot doubt it. It is a *conversion*. It is a change from one person into another person, and the latter more real than

the former. Paul was an early and a very striking instance of it. The old Saul who hated Christ and would have tortured and killed every one of His followers, passed off the stage as truly as though he had died and been buried. No one ever saw him after that fierce ride to Damascus. When he fell on the highway before the light of a revealing Christ, it was as though he had fallen dead. The man who came forth from Damascus, in his clothes, was another man. His outward appearance, to be sure, was like him; but even that, no doubt, was a good deal changed, so that all who heard him were amazed.

But inwardly he was another man. Nothing remained of him as he was. New thoughts, new hopes, other purposes, a different love, a higher life, worked in him. The new Paul came on to the stage and the tragedy of a vaster and a grander life unrolled its sublime acts. Men forgot the old Saul: but they never forgot, and never will forget, the new Paul. He left to the world a legacy of devotion and service which has been an inspiration, which has thrilled our sensitive natures through all Christian centuries, and has sent forces of revolution and benediction into nation after nation, and which to-day is calling forth from Christian homes and Christian schools consecrated youths to carry Christ, whose they are and whom they serve, to lost and benighted and sinful and suffering men and women

and children on all continents and pagan islands of the sea.

St. Paul could say, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." He was "dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." He was wholly converted, wholly given to Christ. That must we be if we would worthily bear the Christian name. We cannot use this language, "to me to live is Christ" unless we are Christ's. And this must carry everything with it. We cannot be Christ's, and be at the same time the world's, or be self-controlled. We cannot say, in a selfish spirit, my property, my time, my learning, my business, my influence, for all are Christ's. Giving ourselves to Him, we give all that belongs to us to Him, and we are not our own.

That is the standard of Christianity. Religion never lowers that standard. Paul came up to it. Many since his day have come up to it. Many in our day are meeting it. For them to live is Christ. They do not live, but Christ lives in them. Their lives are all active and aglow with the Christ whose living heart beats the music of their divine walk.

Also, the consecration to Christ must reveal itself, and justify itself, in the visible conduct of life. Our Christ is a revealed Christ; He is a Christ of the world and for the world. He is not a cloistered Christ; He does not keep Himself in the clouds nor in the dazzling glories



of heaven. His work, His great redeeming work for us, was done in the sight of men, on the conspicuous places of the world. He did not atone for us in the far heavens, but He made our common walks illustrious by His footsteps on them, and our common places luminous and glowing by His endurances in them. Bethlehem was a town of no great distinction till His birth in it lifted it to a glorious renown. Nazareth was a despised village until his life in it gave it a wider fame than any royal city of the Cæsars. Gethsemane and Calvary have inspired the poetry of the people by their voices of pathos and agony beyond any other great endurances of heroes and martyrs, because the memory of His voluntary and priceless sufferings reverberates and thrills in their enduring and unforgotten names. He was in the world. He was seen among us. The tones of heaven were in His voice. The light of heaven was in His eyes. The help of heaven was in His hand. We beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father.

And since He went away His followers have reproduced his life, in lowly and unworthy ways it may be, but in methods and experiences which He has graciously accepted and blessed, and on which He has pronounced His, *Well done*.

It is not enough to experience religion in the closet. It is not enough to come alone to God in repentance and faith and to make loyal vows

in private. They who follow the Master will follow him openly, before kings and populace, in country and in city, in the temple and by the well-side. Paul's life was a life of declaration. He said, I stand unto this day, having obtained the help that is from God, testifying both to small and great. He was an open witness and confessor. He wanted to know Christ and the fellowship of His sufferings. He wanted to be a partaker of His sufferings. He would have gone into another Gethsemane and borne a cross up another Golgotha. He said, I fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ for the church. He knew what he said, when he said, I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.

From our land and from our best institutions lately went a young scholar, with the honors of high scholarship, with promotion already offered to him, to pursue further study with the advantages which German research and learning might give him. He was possessed of Christ, and his devotion was apparent in the daily life he lived, in the language which he spoke, in the purposes by which he was plainly controlled. Among the students with whom he associated he was known as a real lover of the Lord. His walk attracted the attention of a young American who had come to the German capital and had engaged in profitable business there. He sought in repeated interviews to learn the secret of the life which had won his respect and

regard. He found it in the remark of his friend : "I know of but one thing in this world worth living for, to be Christ's and to bring others to Him." So different was this from anything in his own life that it brought him to the Saviour; and he abandoned his brilliant business, returned to this country, and established himself in the State of Washington, where, with his business, he could engage in active Christian work. And this was but one instance of many where that life wrought on other lives for their union to Christ. And when, a few months ago, this young scholar, in the Austrian Tyrol, closed his earthly work too soon, it was seen that he had not lived in vain, for the life that he lived was Christ.

If we can truly say, to me to live is Christ, we must know something of it. Our Christian life must be lived out before the world. As, in olden time, men saw Him on their streets and in their homes and in their assemblies, and knew that the Christ was visible, so they must see you in places of business and study, in places where men are, and know that Christ, in the person of one who loves Him and serves Him and represents Him to them, is verily present. They must see Him in you.

You must speak His language. Such words as those which reached the intellect of Nicodemus and the conscience of the woman of Samaria, as revealed the young ruler to himself and made Pilate fear, as fell on the sad

hearts of the multitudes who in their hunger and thirst hung on His lips, as led Roman officers, awed by His language, to say, never man so spake, must be your words to your associates and to strangers. You must speak the language of heaven in the midst of the Babel tongues of the world. Christian songs have awakened responsive tones in dull souls, and Christian testimony has convinced gainsayers of the reality of personal faith in Christ.

You must interpret the meaning of discipleship. From you men must know that it means Christ, reproduced in His loving spirit, in His tender sympathy, in His attractive grace. They must see that religion is not a mere profession, but that it carries a large, generous, winning practice. Light must go out from you into darkness and wretched souls, so that duty shall be made clear to them, so that they shall see the peril of sin, the way of deliverance, the attractions of the cross and of heaven. There was profound meaning in the words of Him who was the Light of the world, to His disciples, when He told them, *Ye are the light of the world.*

You must make it clear that your religion is one of helpfulness. Help was laid on one who was mighty, when our salvation was laid on Christ: and the pitiful cry of the helpless to Him when He was here, was, *Lord help us.* Men need it now. Involved in sin, tangled in the meshes of worldliness, taken captive by

Satan at his will, they want the helping hand of a brother for their rescue. It is for us to give it, in His name.

The joy of giving it, the joy of helping to save a brother, is the sweetest joy this side of heaven; it is akin to the joy of Christ who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross. Jeannie Deans' words in the "Heart of Midlothian" are: "It is na when we sleep soft and wake merrily, oursels, that we think on other people's sufferings. But when the hour o' trouble comes to the mind and to the body, and, when the hour o' death comes to high and low then it is na what we hae dune for oursels, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly."

We must remember out of what trouble the Helper rescued us, when He sought and found us.

"But none of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed,  
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through  
Ere He found his sheep that was lost.  
Out in the desert He heard the cry,—  
Sick, and helpless, and ready to die."


Now, if our own personal consecration to Christ reveals itself and justifies itself, in such visible union to our Lord, it will be no assumption for us to say, For me to live is Christ.

It is the Christian way to live: and, so living, we shall be ready to appropriate the other part of the same Scripture, for me to die is gain!



## XI.

### CHRIST THE CONFIDING FRIEND.

 HE new relation in which Christ would stand to those who had been with Him in His blessed ministry was a relation of tender and trustful friendship. He would henceforth take them into His confidence; make His joy the joy of them all; permit them to share with Him in whatever there might be in His life and work that would take hold of their strongest enthusiasms and their impassioned devotion; and to look on with Him to the peaceful termination in the mansions of rest which He had promised to them. It was a wonderful thing that they could be admitted into this relationship of friendship with Him. They had been servants, and it was enough that they should have the honor of service under one like Him. Men aspire to the service of great, trusted leaders. They offer themselves and their fortunes in life-long devotion to one who is undertaking conquest, who is building up national power, or is on a career of personal glory. Much more might one be satisfied to be, what St. Paul seems to glory in calling himself, the servant of Jesus Christ.

But Christ advances those whom He loves and who love Him, to a higher place. "Henceforth I call you not servants: for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my father I have made known unto you."

It is for us to consider, and to share in, *the Friendship of Christ*.

We know what it is to pass out of mere acquaintance with some one with whom we have met and with whom we have conversed and labored, into the larger and riper relation of friendship. Everything is changed with that. Reserve, formality, conventionalism, the barriers that separate souls, fall away, and frankness, confidence, ease, geniality, freedom, take their place.

We learn more, too, of him who has become our friend. We look deeper into his nature and see its wealth and strength and loveliness as we could not before. We learn to build on him. We distrust ourselves until we have stated the case to our friend. In his approval we find the highest reason. His judgment is judicial with us. We enjoy his presence: we take satisfaction in labor with him, and the future is brighter by reason of this friendship. Now all this and more comes of the Friendship of Christ.

See how it leads the human soul into the place of *rest*. Men are uneasy, disturbed, and they ought to be, when they are simply in a state of



nature. There is nothing in sin to produce peace. What sort of a condition is that which is expressed by enmity with God? Who can have comfort in a world like this who has no assurance of a happy future? Christ's great call to the troubled world, is, Come unto me and I will give you rest. The soul that has the experience of His friendship is like a ship that has reached the haven. It is out of the storm and the fury of wave: it has cast anchor: it rides securely in port. For although the Christian has trials, although losses and sorrows and many adverse things may come to him, yet he has that which calms him and supports him and more than makes up for all calamities, in the love of Christ. He is united to one who knows the extreme of sorrow and endurance: whose worn feet have gone on every hard path that their feet must go on whom He calls His friends: whose burdened heart has carried not His own pains alone, but the miseries of unnumbered multitudes, yes, the griefs and the sins of a world.

And when in the trustfulness of true friendship the soul learns to lean on Him, it learns that it leans on strength, on eternal love, and it finds the place of rest, rest for the wearied soul. This is the first thing, and it is not the least thing. We want anchorage. We want something to take hold of, as when the flukes find the ribs of rock below the lashed and angry surface of the sea. We don't want to be forever tossed at random, by

any wind or storm : but to be at peace. When we repose in Christ's friendship, know that He calls us no longer servants but friends, we have security, rest now, and the promise of everlasting rest.

Notice the *reciprocity* that goes on between those who are united in this friendship. Friendship implies mutual exchange of love and confidence and favor. There is a wide difference here between the parties. On one side is greatness and power, and on the other feebleness and need. Yet Christ does not expect from His friends more than they can give : He prizes, beyond all statement, just what they can give. He does not need the things that the world puts first : but He does prize affection, faith, loyalty. He pours out to His friends the fullness of God's gifts, and then He takes from them, and is glad to take their confidence and love. And so this peculiar friendship waxes : the Great Friend lavishing of Divine blessings upon those whom He loves, and they offering their tribute of myrrh, and frankincense, and gold as symbols of an affection that would gladly give the best it could to One infinitely worthy.

There springs then a *personal interest* in each other. Being friends, the feelings and the fortunes of each are dear to the other. So gracious and personal is Christ's regard for those whom He has chosen, that He calls them all by name. How dear are the *names* of our friends to us!

If we hear them spoken anywhere our hearts bound in response. They thrill in our souls like strains and tunes of most familiar and loved music. Christ knows his own, not by looks, not by characteristics, nor by walk or manner only, but by name. He has a personal knowledge of them and a personal interest in them. He never forgets them. And they cling to Him. He is all to them. The last name they speak is His name. The One for whom they would dare the most, for whom they would sacrifice the most, all other friends, fame, property, life, is He. They are devoted to Him. The friendship mounts into fiery passion, into consuming love.

Observe here the basis of *unity*. Not only are they one in Him, so consolidating the kingdom which is gathering in the world, but they are one of themselves. One fold, one shepherd. They who separate themselves from the members, separate themselves from the Head. That they all may be *one*, was His prayer for His followers. And it is delightful to see the unity of the church, as drawing its common life from its common love. It is enough for me that one is Christ's. Our children get their Christ-name in baptism: there they become the lambs of the flock. But we get Christ Himself when we join His body which is His church. And though we may have outward denominations by which we stand in the world, to be known by the world, they should not separate us in our work or in

our communion. Our unity rests in Christ. It is sacred. We should wound Him if we drew away from our brethren, for He is in them.

Out of this friendship starts the *inspiration of service*. Great watchwords have rung in battle. Caught up in the crisis of struggle, and passed from mouth to mouth, they have been in all the air, and have fired all hearts with irresistible passion. They have saved whole armies from rout, and have wakened courage beneath the ribs of despair.

But there has been no watchword like the name of Christ, and no inspiration like the love of Christ. O'd men have felt it, kindling their burned out ambitions. Children have felt it, creating new experience in their untried souls. It has swept through all ranks, making prince and beggar, scholar and dullard, one brotherhood in the common service. All barriers have fallen down before this sublimest inspiration, and one object has risen supreme above creeds and nationalities and inherited prejudices. Christ, divine Saviour, infinite Friend, has overshadowed all the world. It is a marvel of marvels how much men have been willing to do for Him, and with what self-forgetfulness they have responded to His call for service. It is as though there were but one name in all the world to live for and one cause to die for.

We read a poem like "In Memoriam," and we feel that the poet's friendship has peopled all the

world and all the universe with emblems and reminders of his lost love. They stand on every mountain-side, along every city path: they breathe in the airs that blow from every land, and flash on the rays of light that stream from sun and star: they speak in the unnumbered voices that sound in all the tones of nature and in cathedral music and the melody of choirs: they are as the sails of ships that push forth from port, and as the flags that fly toward the piers of home: armies of men suggest them and the lonely pilgrim as well.

“I find no place that does not breathe  
Some gracious memory of my friend.  
Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;  
Love deeper, darker understood ;  
Behold I dream a dream of good,  
And mingle all the world with thee.  
Thy voice is on the rolling air ;  
I hear thee when the waters run ;  
Thou standest in the rising sun,  
And in the setting thou art fair.  
Though mixed with God and nature there,  
I seem to love thee more and more.”

And this, which is the poetry of human friendship, is the reality of Christ-friendship. He is all and in all, and life is but a poor offering to bring to Him, and consecration to His name and cause is the gladness of being.

And here we find the basis of *prayer*. Communion with Christ on the terms of friendship,

speaking with Him of the things that concern us most, stating anxieties, and fears, and sorrows, yes, and sins, and all great matters of experience, to Him, as one would do in the utter confidence of tried and genuine friendship ; asking the putting forth of His almightiness and the shaping of events in His wisdom, just as we would ask from one who had given us proof that he wanted us to ask ; what is there so true in prayer as this ? This is insured by the place in which Christ welcomes us. Not with the cringing, nor the remoteness and formality of servants, do we draw near to Him ; but in the warmth and confidence of a mutual love we speak of all our desires, as friend talketh with his friend. Prayer that can stand on that basis is genuine and involves mutual confidence. “ The Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do ? ” “ And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. ” “ The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. ”

From this blessed friendship arises *joyfulness in death*. Because He lives we shall live also. Whosoever liveth and believeth in Him can never die. When death came to the family of Bethany, whose home was His home, Christ said, “ Our friend Lazarus sleepeth : but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. ” All His friends sleep, sleep in Him ; but they will be awaked out of sleep by Him. They leave other friends : but they go to a closer union and friendship with

Him. He will never leave nor forsake them. This world is His: the other world is still more His, for it has fuller revelations of Him, and the things which are not known of Him here are known of Him there. When then we draw near to our departure it need not be with any gloom or sorrow, but with the joyful anticipation of the new meeting of friend with friend.

To such friendship, so full of all best privileges and immunities, are we called. When we gather at the Lord's table, it is the table of One who has called us friends; and therefore are we there. He meets us as we come, and says, "Eat, O friends: drink, O beloved." These symbols are the pledges of the best friendship that this world has known. It is a friendship that sanctifies all other friendships. It is a friendship that survives all other friendships. It is a friendship that glorifies all who are admitted to it.

Blessed are we if we value our calling; if we adhere to Christ; if through changes and through conflicts and trials we hold on with unfaltering constancy to the hand of our dearest Friend! For that hand will surely lead us home.





## XII.

### CHRIST IN SYMPATHY WITH THE SORROWING.

**T**HREE times the Son of Man is represented as in tears. We cannot think of Him as in a light or trivial mood. He was here on serious, earnest, burdensome business. Undoubtedly He wore an expression of calm happiness as well as of intense sympathy. The joy with which children sprang to His embrace indicates His loving and pleasant look. He was an invited guest at a marriage festival of those who knew Him, where His cheerful presence gave to the blessed estate an uncommon benediction. He closed His most tender parable with the sentiment, "It was meet to make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again: and was lost, and is found." The poor and distressed ever came to Him with hope and confidence: were attached to Him, and not repulsed by any look of His. It was only willful sinners who could not bear His majestic holiness.

We may believe that the multitudes who thronged around Him were won by a tenderness which touched their deepest sensibilities and by a divine winsomeness which was a reflection of His own heavenly glory and bliss.

But three times he is represented as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, as the weeping Christ.

The first was in His sympathetic grief and tender friendship for His friends, Martha and Mary, when their brother Lazarus had died.

The second, was in His deep sorrow for Jerusalem, when from the Mount of Olives He looked down upon its glory and thought of its approaching doom.

The third, was in the more than mortal agony of Gethsemane, when alone He sunk under the crushing weight of the burden which He bore for the world.

In the first case, there was the silent flow of tears as He walked with the bereaved sisters, who, in answer to His question, Where have ye laid him, had replied, Lord, come and see.

In the second case, it was with loud bursts of grief and voices of lamentation which could be heard by all the company who were going up with Him to His triumphal entry into that city whose fate He so bewailed.

In the third case, it was with groans and agonizing cries, when in agony He prayed more earnestly and His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

“Jesus wept.” This is the shortest sentence of Scripture, but it holds the largest meaning. It stands forth in the narrative, quite by itself, as though printed in letters of gold. In that gospel

which most fully declares the divinity of Christ, was brought out this strongest trait of His humanity. Jesus loved Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus: and they all loved Him with devoted affection. Their home was His home: and whenever He was in their neighborhood He knew where He would be received with the warmest welcome. From His work in the great and wicked city He enjoyed the retirement at evening in this quiet home of Bethany and among these loving friends.

On a missionary tour, He received, one day, a message from the sisters, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When He reached the place he had been in the tomb four days already. Very touching was His meeting with the bereaved sisters: and their loneliness and loss, and the sorrowing words which they spoke of their brother, and the trustful words which they spoke to Christ, reached the deepest fountains of His sympathy, and when He saw Mary weeping and the friends who came with her also weeping and wailing, His own tears flowed in silence, and the Jews who saw it said, Behold, how He loved him!

It is a new revelation of Christ. Miracles had shown His power. He had turned water into wine. He had fed thousands with a few barley loaves. He had stilled the tempest and walked on the rocking sea. He had healed the sick, and restored speech to the dumb, and given

sight to the blind, and raised the dead to life. He had spoken with authority, and not as the scribes. He had indicated, by great words and deeds, His title to a supreme divinity. But here in His deep sympathy with beloved friends in their sorrow He showed how strong and true was His humanity.

That scene of sadness sanctifies Christ to us in all our sorrows. We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. The old prophecy was fulfilled in Him, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." All our bodily ills, all our mental anguish, are within His tender sympathy and His sufficient help. When He was here, it is told of Him that "He healed all that were sick," so that the old word was made true, "Himself-took our infirmities, and bare our diseases." And what He was while on earth, that is He now in the heavens, where He keeps the names of all who love Him. In every sick room He is present, more sympathetic than any of His ministers, greater to heal than any physician. With you He watches the slow ebbing of the life of one in whom your life, all the happiness of your life, is bound. The stealthy progress of fatal disease is within His cognizance, and He ministers to the sick out of the fullness of His grace. You have seen how the sick ripen in character, mature in all lovely graces, get the expression of heaven on their faces, and

the disposition of heaven in their souls. You have seen how those who naturally had a strong fear of death, to which they were in bondage all their life-time, have overcome all dread of that cold stream through which our feet must pass and have come to anticipate with calm serenity the time when they should be summoned from home and friends and all the endearments of this life. You have seen the moral sublimity of that victory which has issued in immortality, when the songs of Paradise have rung in earthly homes, and the angels have come down to be the convoy of the spirit released from the flesh.

You have seen how the old could joyfully abandon that to which they had become used throughout a lifetime, and how the young in the full flush of anticipation could give up all that they had fondly looked forward to that they might obey the call to come up higher. All this is of Christ. He whose silently flowing tears were mingled with those of Mary and Martha, has come with his tender sympathy to the sick room and the dying bed, and has wrought the patience of hope and the cheer of triumph in the souls that he was fitting to dwell with Him. And after the blow has fallen ; after the household has lost its head and the sister is plunged into sadness for the brother who is no more, He comes again to the home where He loved to dwell and to the mourners who were always His friends, and says, " I am the resurrection

and the life; he that believeth in me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" And then, through tears, the soul turns to Him: "I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God." The tears of the Son of man give revelation to the Son of God. In every darkened home sits one with a form like that of the Son of God. With every Mary and Martha, with every sorrowing group on the way to the grave, walks one who can say, and will say, to the dead, Come forth. He mourns with every mourner. "Jesus wept."

We pass to the second instance.

"And when He drew nigh, He saw the city, and wept over it." The Greek language expresses here, what our English tongue does not, a difference between this weeping and the weeping at the grave of Lazarus. There it is *εδάκρυσεν*, from the verb to shed tears: here it is *ἐκλαυσεν*, from the verb to wail, implying not only the shedding of tears, but also every external expression of grief. Accompanied by a great multitude of His disciples, our Lord had left Bethany for a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, two miles away. As the procession gained the summit of the Mount of Olives, the renowned city of the world lay in grand panorama before them. Every spire sprung to the glittering sky, and the golden roof and the white marble of the temple and of palaces shone

in the glory of morning sunshine. On the whole earth there was then no such sight as that. The temple was the wonder of all lands. Old associations made Jerusalem the one sacred city. There Almighty God had enthroned His worship and revealed His glory.

Yet that city, proud and glorious, was now about to reject Christ, its Messiah, once and forever.

He was coming to it with His divine love, with His offers of salvation, to make it a perpetual praise and a joy to the whole earth. But He foresaw the melancholy result—His betrayal, trial, mocking, crucifixion. From the Mount of Olives He saw on another mount a cross, and for Him. He saw also the end, the pitiful doom, for the city: how another wall, of Roman besiegers, should be built outside its wall; how those unconquered legions of the world's mistress should surround it; how the children within it should be dashed to death; how its strong ramparts should be leveled and be buried as they are to-day twenty feet under ground; and how, alas! all this temporal ruin should be the prophecy of an eternal ruin for the souls of its people.

Before, at the grave, He had wept in silence. Here, over the doomed city, He wept in loud lamentation. Before, he wept for others' *sorrow*. Here, He wept for others' *sin*.

And as much as sin is greater and sadder than sorrow, so greater and deeper was his grief.

It was the sin of Jerusalem which caused this profound sorrow of the Son of Man. It would be cast down from its worldly throne. The worship of its temple would be obliterated. A curse would rest on its people.

Years after its overthrow, an attempt was made to rebuild it, but fires burst forth from its foundations and drove the builders away. It was doomed.

Wherever there is sin there is a sorrowing Saviour. He brings the blessings of His salvation to guilty men. They are free to accept or to reject them. But if they decide to reject, there is One who weeps for them, if they do not for themselves. His compassionate sorrow follows them to the end.

He has a heart of love for even His enemies. He would not have them to be lost. He knows the bitterness of sin's end, the remedilessness of the sinner's overthrow. His mind goes on beyond the present, where their minds stop, into the future with its certain misery, with its hopeless and endless sorrow. He knows the meaning of hell, the terrible woe of being lost, the dreadful society of devils, the utter anguish of final despair. He looks beyond thoughtless life, beyond the gloom of death, beyond the sentence of banishment, into the countless ages of the soul's wretchedness, into the unbroken loneli-



ness and sorrow of a world on which no daylight rises, in which no glad song is heard, where are no greetings of friendship, throughout whose gloomy boundaries no gospel is heard forevermore. He knows the facts of the case, and appreciates them. His eyes overflow with tears as He looks on any unrepentant sinner. His heart breaks with sorrow, as He feels for any penitent rejector of His grace. You laugh your life away. But on Olivet stands one who laments your folly and presumption. You squander your golden opportunities. But a divine Saviour, with unsounded pathos, mourns for your wretched choice. Over you, as over miserable Jerusalem, He laments, in words, which like minor music, have sobbed through the centuries, saying: If thou hadst known, even thou, in this day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. He laments your spiritual blindness: sees how Satan is leading you blindfold to a ruin whose mournfulness mocks all thought: and though He would save you, understands that you know not the time of your visitation.

Do we so weep for sinners? We do not know when the fatal line is passed. We do not know when the last hour of hope has sounded. We do not know when the eye is glazed forever. We do not know when the hardening of the heart has progressed to the last extremity. We do not know when the candidacy for hell has

ripened into reprobation. We hope, and hope, and hope on.

We pass to the third instance.

It is described in the Epistle to the Hebrews. "Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death." This refers to His experience in Gethsemane. Into that lonely garden He had retired, leaving eight apostles just outside its boundary, taking three apostles into its recesses, and then going alone into the still deeper shadow of its olive trees. We do not know what that experience was. Words are poor to describe it. There were no human witnesses of it. I give now the language of Scripture. He began to be sorrowful and sore troubled. He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass away from Him. He said, "Father, remove this cup from me; howbeit, not what I will, but what thou wilt." "And there appeared unto Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground."

In this loneliness and sorrow, with strong crying and tears, was the experience of the Saviour in the work of our redemption. The sins of the world were upon Him. It was more than He

could bear alone. It was not the agony of death: that came later, upon the cross. It was the agony of soul. It was more than death. It was bearing the death of all sinners. The agony of Gethsemane was a part of the passion which culminated on Calvary.

It was the preparation for the cross.

You that have eyes can see Him there.

You that have ears can hear His mournful sorrow.

You that have hearts can feel some sympathy for that Sufferer, who is more than man, who is suffering for you!

Out of those dismal shadows breaks the voice of piteous petition, crying to God for relief. The voice that hushed the turbulence of storms, that bid the dead come forth from tombs, there trembles in anguish, in cries almost of despair. Dimly there, now on His knees with hands uplifted to the frowning skies, then prone on the cold earth in writhing suffering, is the form that entered the door of Mary and Martha with benediction, that stood among the gathered multitudes as the representative of heavenly blessings. A strong angel, swiftly flying from the appalled heavens, lifts up the wounded man of sorrows, and girds Him with the strength of God. Yet it is only that He may pray more earnestly. The paroxysm of agony returns upon Him with redoubled force and He is covered

with drops of blood which fall down upon the ground.

It is the cost of sin. It is the burden of our woe that crushes Him. It is expiation for us that rends Him with such frightful torture. The cup which belonged to us to drink is that which could not be removed from his sinless lips. His strong crying and tears measure our release from a pitiless doom.

These are the three instances of the tears of Christ : *Bethany, Olivet, mournful Gethsemane*. Tears of silent sympathy : voiceful lamentations over a sinful city : strong cries of agony under the burden of the world's redemption.

Tears for your sorrow : tears for your sin : tears for your salvation : tears that you might weep not in vain : tears that you may weep nevermore again ; that you may be of those for whom God "shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." Sorrow you will have. This world is a "vale of tears." Sacred circles must be broken. Disappointed hopes, loneliness, want, grief, these are the terms of human life.

With all that is joyous ; with the sweetness of blessed friendship : with the exuberance of youth and the calm delight of age ; with the charm of music and the ministry of art and the solace of truth : there must be the sorrow of partings and the sense of loss. Sometime we shall walk alone. Somewhere we shall know our weakness.

We shall need Him who mingled His sorrow with that of the sisters of Bethany.

Sin is a present and a gloomy reality. It taints our blood; it spoils the fair earth; it forces on us the curse of God. From it there would be no relief, no redemption, were it not for the sympathy and the sorrow and the suffering of the Son of God. He who looked down from Olivet on sinful Jerusalem with loud laments for its folly and its guilt, is equally moved in our behalf. He discerns the day of our visitation. And now, while the offer of His salvation is open, and while we have the opportunity to repent and believe and be saved, He would have us fly to the shelter of His cross, to the welcome of His arms.

Learn these melancholy lessons of the Saviour's sorrow. Walk with Him to the tomb of Bethany. Stand among the rejoicing multitude on the summit of the Mount of Olives, hushed by the sorrows of their Lord. And, then, enter the shadows of sad Gethsemane.

And let our hearts be broken, with fullest gratitude, with deepest repentance.



### XIII.

#### CHRIST THE ZEALOUS LEADER.



THE great artists have chosen for their immortal works the impressive events in the life of Christ. The great galleries of older lands contain nothing so attractive as the pictures which represent to us the Lord. The holy cathedrals are made more sacred by those unrivaled paintings which set forth the life and the dying of Him for whose glory the temple itself was reared. Scenes in nature are subordinate to the Author of nature. Representations of the greatest human achievements cannot rival those which relate to Him in whom all men live. No pastoral scene so moves our hearts as the sacrifice of the Lamb who was slain for our sins. Before every leader is He who leads the race from their dreadful bondage out into the liberty of the sons of God. Christ's work is foremost. Christ's person stands out in unrivaled prominence. Sacred and high art can select nothing which will live in the life of the ages like the undimmed deeds and the eventful experiences of the Lord. *Men* sweep across the stage as in a drama: and the results of their life-work pass into oblivion. But the divine Re-

deemer moves on in unchanging pre-eminence, the foremost figure of the world's marvelous history, the head of a kingdom whose progress widens with the centuries and whose power augments from age to age as its conquests include more hearts and divers nationalities.

One scene has been wrought by the hand of a great Master, into an impressive picture, which, once seen, cannot be forgotten. It is in the open way of the country of Galilee on a roadside leading to Jerusalem, that city of joy and of glory to which all the tribes went up for their national festivals, that a striking group of stalwart men are represented as walking forward. One among them is a Leader and a teacher. He had been telling them in His wonderful way of the great things of His kingdom and of Himself, so that they were "astonished at His words," so that "they were astonished out of measure." As they went forward, as they drew nearer to the time and the place of His sufferings, a kind of sublime enthusiasm possesses Him; and He moves in rapt and absorbed devotion, and with quickened step, to the front of the company, as though hastening to the sacrifice! A holy light kindles His whole countenance and His entire person assumes an air of majesty.

As they look upon Him they see the Divinity that is in Him registering itself in every expression and every step. It is more than an intrepid leader who is marshaling them for the



trial. It is the God in Christ! "And Jesus went before them." They are awed by the sight. It is a new revelation of their Master. They do not know Him yet. They are beginning to comprehend the wonderful faculties of their divine Leader. They feel how far He is above them. Dim dawnings of the truth of which He has long taught them flash and lighten in their minds.

"And they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid." It was not the fear of the result. It was *the awe of Him* that was upon them. They were walking now in the footsteps of one whom they could not fathom: on whom were the signals of divinity: the mystery of whose Being and whose work He was evidently leading them to the quick solution of. He could not wait. A holy passion was burning within Him, preparatory to the great final passion. The world was waiting to be saved: He would hasten to its salvation. One over-mastering purpose controlled all others, absorbed all thoughts, all plans, all friendships, and in the strength of it He moved right forward, leading His disciples and leaving to them the impressive memory of His sublime and courageous devotion.

I have thought that in this scene on the highway of Galilee we might get the suggestion of what Jesus is and is to be to us on many paths: of what He is as *going before* His people.

So we come to *The Antecedence of Christ*.

His footsteps are foregoing in the ways of *our human life*. It is pleasant to think that Christ has been here. There is a peculiar charm in the places that have been associated with the daily lives of good great men. We like to feel, as we visit the homes and the haunts of such, *here* dwelt the great scholar, the thrilling singer, the devoted patriot, the earnest saint. On these paths he often walked: in these bowers he refreshed himself. We are sitting in the seat he occupied. We are looking on the beautiful objects which feasted his sight. Out of the rich court of Magdalen College at Oxford, by the banks of the little Cherwell and under shadowy old trees, is a walk which is still called "Addison's walk." There he loved to go. At Forest Hill near Oxford, where Milton lived, one feels, these are the very paths on which the great Puritan scholar and poet walked: these are the charming scenes on which he gazed and from which he caught his inspiration. As he sings:

"Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,  
Whilst the landscape round it measures."

At Lincoln College are the very rooms where John Wesley studied. Helvellyn is to the scholar another Parnassus because he feels as he climbs its steeps that the feet of Scott and Wordsworth and Southey in company have walked there be-

fore him. The chair of Calvin is still preserved in the pulpit where he preached. The oak still grows on the spot where Luther burned the Papal bull. The world is full of such associations. The world is made holier and lovelier by them. We are held to it the stronger because these worthy ones have had their experience in it. And if this is so of our *fellow-men* how much stronger and dearer the impression from the antecedence of *Christ* in it! He has been here. He has dwelt among us. He has walked on these ways. He has looked upon these scenes. He has felt the throb and stir and glow of this human life. The Son of God has been the Son of man.

It is not a difficult thing, as it seems to me, to accept the *Divinity* of Christ: I have more sympathy with those who fail to comprehend His full *humanity*. His whole life is crowded with the incontestable proofs that He was more than man. Divinity flames in speech and act and impressive presence; in the unrepressed witness of evil spirits and the joyful voices of angels; in the subordination of nature and in the decisive testimony of the Father. Yet He was also man, with a human body and a reasonable soul. It behooved Him to be made *like unto* His brethren. He was born as we are born. He grew in stature and in wisdom. His childhood was under the conditions of tutelage and obedience. His manhood was tested by temptation and discipline and the variety of earthly trial.

He was not lifted above the lot, nor shielded from the vicissitudes, of our mortal life. Even the divinity, with which His humanity was intimately associated, did not so hedge Him round that He did not feel as we feel, rejoicing in the things in which we rejoice and saddened by the things that bring us sorrow. On all the ways of our human life His blessed footsteps are fore-going. Every where we may say, Jesus has been here before us. The prints of His feet are on the earth. He walked here as a man before us.

He had a *human body* and it was susceptible to the influences which act upon us. A day of hard labor or long travel brought to Him weariness. He experienced physical exhaustion, and He gained restoration from sleep and quietness and the ministry of attentive friendship. He was sensitive to pain. The thorn that wounds us wounded Him. The blow that would make our nerves quiver shocked all the sensibilities of His refined organism. The nail, the spear, met acutest response to their dreadful wounding. His body was alive at every point; every fibre was charged with intensest sensitiveness. His eye reveled in the loveliness of the lily and the glories of the western sky. His responsive ear caught the majestic music of nature and thrilled at the matchless songs of birds. He was in quick sympathy with nature. He saw more in its manifold moods and its wondrous vestures and its beaming glories than our feebler vis-

ion can discern. While He suffered more He also enjoyed more. His whole bodily system and nature were attuned to finer harmonies and to keener pangs than belong to men. So He was Leader of all, ranking all, preëminent among them, above them, as before them.

He had also a *human mind*. His intellectual faculties were developed by observation and study and experience. He *grew* in wisdom. His feelings were powerfully acted upon by what He saw of human conduct and by what He knew of the inevitable and far-reaching results of actions. His pitiful lament for human weakness and wretchedness, sounds like the voice of a brother in his agony. His heart is almost broken. While His passions flamed with a holy indignation against sinners who were bold and bad in their iniquity, He was touched by the world's great sorrows, which surged in upon His great nature like waves, moaning and broken. To all the afflicted He was a friend. It was a joy to Him that by His power, He could rescue from death the son of a lonely widow, and give him back to his mother: that He could heal the sick: that He could restore the lame and comfort the distressed, and be the Healer of the world's wounds.

His whole life was controlled by the overmastering purpose to be about His Father's business and for the glory of God to save the world. Temptations came. The worldly and even the

Satanic appeal was made to Him: but He had no vulnerable point. There was no joint in the harness that panoplied the Son of God. His whole mind and soul and strength were enlisted in the one work that he had to do. He went before all His followers in His mental devotion to His absorbing and loving service. The mind that was in Christ should be in all of us. Over the world's claims and all the demands of friendship and ambition and business, should be the one claim of the race to be saved. For this should be the expenditure of choicest thought, the quickening of intensest feeling and the devotion of solemn, sacramental purpose.

Christ had also a *human experience*. He was made like unto His brethren. He was a member of a certain family. His voice uttered the dear names of father and mother and brother and sister. He loved and was loved. There were those whom He called preëminently His friends. Love and devotion and sympathy were dear to Him. After days of wearing toil and peril, He eagerly sought the home at Bethany and was refreshed in its peace and rest and loving hearts and hands. In the coldness and desertion of the world, He turned with longing tenderness to His disciples, with the question, "Will ye also go away?" He reached out for comfort and support. Having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end.

He felt also the might and woe of *trials*. He

was despised and rejected by those whom He came to save. He was abandoned and betrayed by one whom He had called into his own family. Though He had entered Jerusalem as a King, He was led out of it as a malefactor. So honor and shame, joy and pain, love and cruelty, were mingled in His human experience. In it all He went before His people, in their varied and mingled experience. I might make this more personal to us by saying that He has gone before *each one* of us in the allotments of our earthly life. We have a personal experience: we walk each one in his own way: in some particular in a different way from that of any other. Though we have a life that is common to our fellows, we also have one that is uncommon and particular. While we are allied to our brethren, we are separated from them. They cannot know all that we know, nor feel all that we feel. But we are not separated from Christ. So wide was His experience, so much was He able to take in of the life of men, that it is as if He had walked on every way on which His people go. And I venture to believe that the universal thought and feeling of all Christians in the manifold ways of their earthly life, are, that Christ has been there before them, so that they can state their case to Him and go to Him with the assurance that He can feel for them, that He has known something of it by his own earthly discipline, as though He had walked on that very path, and been through that very

door, and left His blessed footsteps for them to walk in.

The Lord became man. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Our whole life gets its deepest significance from the fact that this has also been His life. We look on the world differently when we think of it as sanctified and glorified by the life of its Creator upon it. We walk with greater trust and firmer hope and more abundant joy because we are on paths where the Lord, *our* Lord, went before us.

He has gone before us in the way of *Atonement*. It was a great problem to solve, how sinful men could be restored to favor and union with God. Probably there was but one way in which this might be ; by the voluntary sacrifice of the Son of God. No expedients that lay within the conditions of human conduct or offering could have availed. No intervention, as of angels, could have secured the needful reconciliation. On the one hand man was lost. The fact of sin was fatal. It could not be overlooked. It could not be forgiven. The interests of the world and of other worlds, the sanctity of the divine law and its claim on moral beings, required satisfaction. God alone could help. He who was injured, whose authority was insulted, was the only being who could interpose to sustain the law and to save the sinner. God enduring on account of sin and for sin ; God proving in His own person and by His own suffering the worth and sanctity



of the broken law, as well as the value of the lost soul ; would make atonement possible.

This was the work of Christ. He went forward to meet the claims of this necessity : going before every sinner to make reconciliation for him with God possible : leading the race out of bondage, by a new and living way, He came to save that which was lost. God sent His Son into the world that the world through Him might be saved. Christ hath once suffered for sins that He might bring us to God. We are to follow Him. He has gone before us on this way of reconciliation. He has suffered that we may be free from endless suffering. He has borne the cross that the burden of sin may be lifted from us. He died upon the cross that we might gain everlasting life.

He has gone before us into *the heavenly rewards*. He was on the earth, walking before His people on these paths of earthly experience, at last dying to open the way of Atonement. But His *home* was on high. His empty throne was waiting for the King to return and to receive His own. Praises that had been specially for Him had been hushed, and golden harps, during all the years of His absence, had stood silent and unstrung. His course on earth had been eagerly watched by angels who loved and honored Him and who would gladly have taken His place if their intervention could have availed. Their intense interest is shown by

their appearance at times to comfort and strengthen Him in the terrible sufferings that He underwent, and in His own declaration that legions of them would gladly and quickly move to His rescue. They had seen the final act and they knew that He was to return on high. "For Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." "I go," He said to His saddened disciples, "to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also." For us who love Him and *before us* He has returned to His home and His throne and His Father. "Now to appear in the presence of God for us." For us He careth there. He has a work for us there, as He had here. Not till the last redeemed man is brought safely within the heaven that contains the Lord will His thoughts turn away from the world on which He achieved salvation. As He was Redeemer, He is Intercessor. He presents the merits of His sacrifice as an argument and a reason why we should be saved. He stands for us, in His might and in His merits and in His mediation and nothing can turn away the Father's favor, nothing can pluck us out of the Father's hand. If He had not risen from the dead and arisen to heaven, there would have been no assurance of our victory. Now the bright pathway on which He has gone up is open for us and we shall rise to be with Him where He is. We follow where

He leads. We too shall appear in the presence of God, "whither the Forerunner, Jesus, is for us entered." He has opened the way, He has prepared the place: we walk in His footsteps and reach His royal home.

Nor does even this end His leadership. Among the blessed scenes which the Scriptures give of the heavenly world, of the happiness and rest and royalty of the saints, is this: "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." The Lamb shall lead them. Into the blessed scenes of that radiant and glorious world, into its everflowing sources of happiness, into its exalted and happy society, into its service which is pleasure and its pleasures which are pure, He shall lead them who led them through the world and led them to heaven. This Leadership is eternal. His dear footsteps will be forever foregoing. Those who have followed Him on earth will follow Him in heaven. Those who have followed Him in service will follow Him in glory. Those who have followed Him bearing crosses will follow Him wearing crowns. The Lamb shall lead them. With His infinite knowledge and love and power, with His control of all the universe, He shall lead them: calling them all by name, owning them as brethren, rejoicing to admit them to heirship with Himself.

There have been great leaders of men. There

have been those, from time to time, who have outranked their fellow-men and risen by the voluntary consent of others to thrones. Their high intelligence, their fine capacity, their lordly manners, their noble presence, some extraordinary quality, dazzling genius or executive force or magnetic attraction, have invested them with command or preëminence and they have had the following of nations or wider communities, or stood at the head of the world. By their unconquerable energy or steady ambition or trusted goodness they have led forward the race and left their names as a heritage or a talisman to the future. All through time other races and generations are roused and led by the call of their great names.

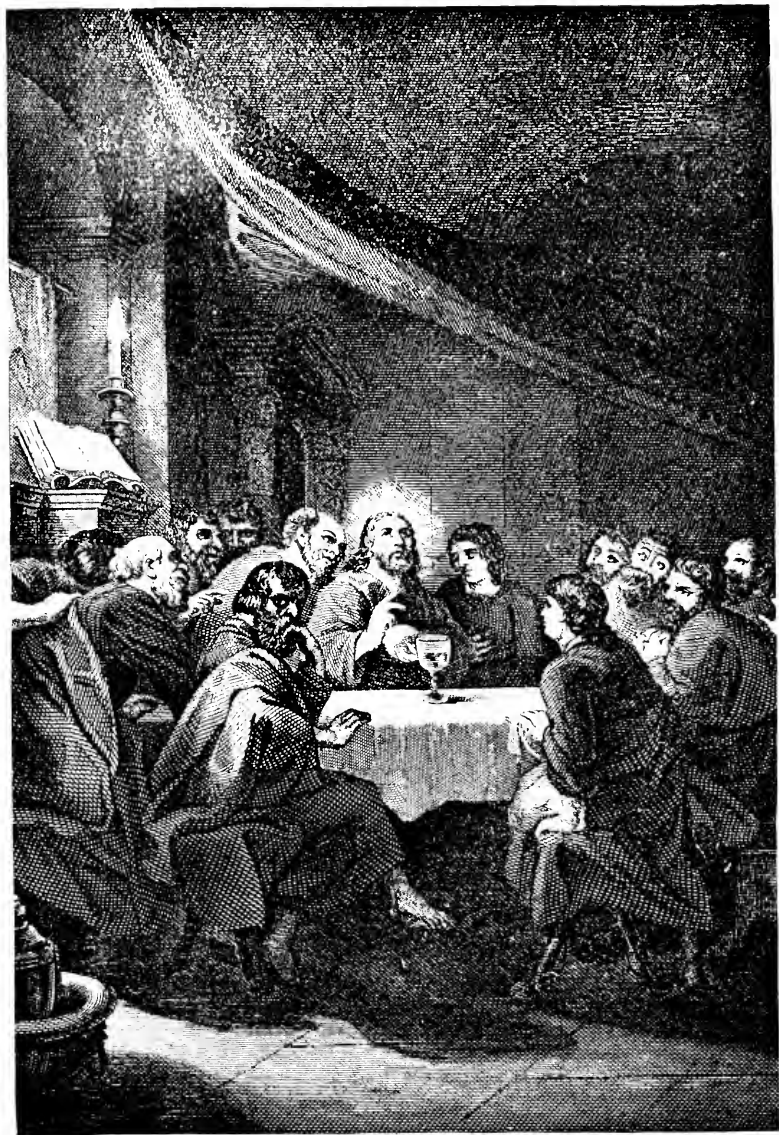
But there has been no Leader like the Lord. When Jesus goes before it is wise and safe to follow. He leads out of difficulty and danger, out of sin and sorrow ; He leads through the world's temptations and trials and conflicts ; He leads to heaven's glory and unceasing joy and He leads in heaven to experiences beyond our present thought and fancying, to scenes full of beauty, and to truth full of delight, and to a wealth of satisfaction which will only augment forever.

Clearly and sweetly then upon our hearing falls the voice of Christ, Follow me ! Where He goes before us let us joyfully follow.

“ He goes before ! And so we may not look  
Backward at all, but onward evermore :  
Keeping in sight the blessed path He took,  
Patient to bear each cross He meekly bore :  
Trusting His wisdom in the darkest hour :  
O'ercoming every trial through His power ! ”








THE COMMEMORATIVE FEAST.

Typogravure Rubens



## XIV.

### CHRIST AT THE COMMEMORATIVE FEAST.

OUR hundred years ago, on the wall of the refectory of an old monastery in Milan, Leonardo da Vinci painted his great picture of the Last Supper, in which, although the work is sadly defaced and faded, may still be recognized the majesty and solemnity of the Master, as He stated to the agitated group of His apostles the tragic fact of his betrayal. During the eventful years of His earthly ministry they had shared with him the trials and successes of His wonderful career: they had learned something of the greatness of His character and the exaltedness of His purpose and the depth of His mercy: and it was with intense feeling and melancholy apprehension that they gathered at this final feast with Him. They had noticed the urgency with which He had approached it, the importance which He had attached to it, the careful preparation which He had made for it. Christian art has only followed Christian thought when it wrought its most renowned works in commem-

oration of an event which was to be perpetuated through the Christian ages.

The very first words of our Lord, as He sat down with the Apostles, revealed the depth of His emotion and the solemn meanings which the occasion held: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." A greater Passover was to be transacted. A greater Paschal Lamb was to be slain. A diviner work was to be wrought. The Hebrew passover was for one people: this was to be for the whole world. That celebrated the deliverance of a single nation: this the redemption of the race. That was observed wherever Israelites dwelt: this was to be observed by dwellers in all the lands of the earth. Let us trace, as we may, the reasons for this absorbing longing of Christ to partake of that passover with His Apostles. He had sat down with them at other passovers. For more than thirty years He had observed with His people this great commemorative festival. But the climax of the old economy was at hand. Its ancient types were to be fulfilled in Him. Its sacred rites were to be absorbed in the simpler ceremonial of the new dispensation. The blood that had been shed for a thousand years on the sacrificial altars was to be superseded by the shed blood that once for all was to take away the sins of the world. Redemption, for which the race had waited, for which toiling minds had struggled in vain, was to be fully

accomplished by His own death upon the cross.

The time of the passion was drawing near. Calvary rose before Him. A few days more, and the great atoning sacrifice would be made. He foresaw it all. The dreadful events crowded into His mind and filled His imagination with their phantoms. He knew that Gethsemane must be endured; that Golgotha must be climbed; that alone He must tread the winepress of the wrath of God; that on His unsupported shoulders must be borne the sins of the world. The thought of it all burned within Him like a devouring flame. The mental fever fired His whole nature. He would hasten to it. "How am I straitened," He said, "until it be accomplished! With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you *before I suffer!*" Ah! that suffering was in His mind. The bitter cup that He was to drink! And he would drink it. He had come from heaven to do this work, and He would have it done. There is a mental process by which, in view of a supreme act, the whole mental power is centered upon that act, and everything contributes to its accomplishment. The love of Christ for sinners made Him long for the occasion of this passover, during which the critical and crucial event should occur by which their salvation should be achieved. "It is as if He longs for the death which is to give life to

the world." He would, if possible, shorten the delay, and speed the issue.

Everything, so far in His life, had been working toward this one fateful end. All His toil, all His teaching, all His sublime miracles, all His disinterested self-denial, were His personal contributions to the final bestowment of Himself as a willing sacrifice for man's deliverance. At this passover He intended to transform the ancient feast into a memorial Supper of His supreme love for sinners. He looked forward to it, therefore, with deepest interest. It would be the annulling of that which was typical and transient and contracted, and its transference into a commemoration that would become permanent and world-wide and which would keep alive by its simple but suggestive symbols a spiritual redemption, in comparison with which the physical preservation of the Hebrew people would be unworthy of mention. He rejoiced that the better economy was to supplant the earlier and preparatory one.

Evidently, too, His mind went forward in thought of the consummation of the earthly memorial in the communion of the redeemed Church in heaven. "For I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." He knew what the glory is of that estate into which they will be finally admitted, who share in His sufferings below, who are loyal to Him in their day of trial. At this passover, He

would meet with His chosen friends, "His little children" as He tenderly called them, in conditions of anxiety and gloom: but with them He would look forward to the glory which the Father had given Him, and which He would give to them, to the tranquility of a place which would be prepared for them, and to the rest of a heavenly home. We may believe, also, that in the approach of the awful tragedy, He wanted the fellowship and sympathy of those who were His chosen friends. He said, *With desire, I have desired to eat this passover with you* before I suffer. So closely did He connect His suffering with this interview with them! They had been with him in all His ministry, and He had made them confidants of His purposes and His acts. Although they did not fully comprehend Him, groping, as they did, their way slowly out of their Jewish prejudices, yet they had been in a measure, true to Him. They had made mistakes. They had done things which grieved Him, which sometimes provoked Him. But they had been His best earthly friends. And He was a man, and nothing essentially human was foreign to Him.

Therefore, when darkness was gathering around Him, when a trial, greatest of all trials that human nature ever bore, was instant, He wanted the succor of His friends. Their blessed sympathy would gird Him for His task. In their strength He would be strengthened for

endurance. We know how, afterward, when the consternation of His sufferings fell on Him, He took with Him into the depths of Gethsemane three of His most trusted disciples, and said to them, "Watch with me." We recall His word to them, "Rise and pray," when He was exhausted by the agony from which His own prayer had not saved Him. We recall the silent horror which He felt when at His own table His betrayer sat, with the mask of hypocrisy upon his demon face, his polluted soul consigned by himself to Satan, when the professed friend who had eaten bread with Him, who had been with Him in work and in worship, foully lifted up his heel against Him. His whole nature prized true friendship, shrunk from the treachery of professed friendship. Christ was a man, and we can, even from our human stand-point, form a feeble estimate of His great recoil from one who had proved himself to be an ingrate and a traitor, and His longing for the cheering sympathy of those who truly loved Him.

He did not wish to be alone. No one, indeed, could bear for Him the burden of human sins, nor carry for Him the load of human sorrows: but His friends, His dear children, those who owed everything most precious in their lives to Him, could stand by Him, could help Him by their loving looks and their sympathizing words and their souls saddened by His sorrow: they could watch with Him: they could rise and

pray : they could go with Him to the judgment-hall : they could boldly say that they were the friends of the Nazarene : they could protest against His illegal arrest and trial : they could smite His assailants with the sword : they could keep close to Him as He bore the cross and weep while He suffered on Calvary. Jesus would have prized their personal devotion. He had the feelings of a man. And who can say that the Godhead, en clothed in the human form, was not, in this, in sympathy with the manhood of Christ ?

He desired, also, to prepare them for the catastrophe which was near : to, once more, do for them what he could, before the blow should fall with its stunning severity upon them. He knew how poorly they were fitted to bear a trial like that which already lowered on them. They had their ambitions, hopes and projects. Their eyes were filled with the glare of a kingdom which existed only in their imaginations. Even here, when the tender words : "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer," had hardly passed His lips, there arose a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be greatest. They were aspirants for the highest places under the King. They would sit, one on His right hand, and one on His left hand, at His royal court. Filled with such ideas how could they stand before the onset of that terrible trial which would dash

their hopes and leave them without a Leader and without a solace! So the gracious Master would lead them, while He could, to truer, higher thoughts: He would have them ready, if it might be, for the final disaster.

First of all He gave them a lesson of humility. He washed their feet and wiped them with the towel wherewith He was girded: and He said "If I, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." There was no sound of the throne and the highest places in that.

Then He told them, in symbols which spoke to their hearts, of His coming death, as He gave them the broken bread to represent His body which was given for them and the wine to represent his blood which was poured out for them.

He pointed them to the mansions which He was going to prepare for them. He promised to them the presence of the Comforter who would abide with them. He urged them to love one another, even as He had loved them.

And, then, in prayer, beyond all other prayer that was ever offered, He commended them to God, and asked that they might behold that supernal glory which the Father had given Him, and might share in it.

In these various ways He wrought on their too unresponsive minds to fit them for the painful crisis which was at hand.

Furthermore, He desired to associate, with



these memorial and farewell observances of religion, the indulgence of His personal love for them. His mind went back to the time when He first became acquainted with them, when from their ordinary business He called them to follow Him; when He called Peter and Andrew and James and John from their fishing boats and nets, telling them that He would make them fishers of men; and Matthew from the place of toll; and Nathaniel and the others from their various occupations. "Ye did not choose me," He said, "but I chose you and appointed you." He dwelt upon all the time in which they had been together, upon their weary journeys through Galilee and Judea, upon instructions and mighty miracles and hard endurances and rejections, mingled with joys and blessed anticipations, upon the one supreme object of His life on earth and the training with which He had sought to make them ready for carrying on the work which He would begin. He thought, too, of the trials that would come to them after His departure; the bitter hatred of men, the wide rejection of the blessed gospel, their own disappointments. He spoke of these things to them, and said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that when their hour is come, ye may remember them, how that I told you." And that they might not grieve too much for His absence, He assured them that He should still remember them and that He would send the Comforter to abide with them.

He gave expression to His warm, undying, attachment to them. "No longer," He said, "do I call you servants: but I have called you friends." With tender sympathy He said, "Let not your heart be troubled." "My peace I give unto you." He desired that His joy might be in them and that their joy might be made full. He poured out His heart to them: "I have loved you: abide ye in my love." He told them that He would prove His greater love than all other love for them by laying down His life for them. And He assured them that whatever should come He would not leave them desolate, He would come unto them. "Because I live, ye shall live also." And He pointed them forward to eternal mansions, His home and their home, where He would receive them unto Himself, that where He is there they should be also.

So this farewell meeting, in the festal observance of religion, was indeed a feast of love. By the institution of the sacramental Supper, He established a monumental memorial of His love and perpetuated His presence with them. As often as they observed it, they would do it in remembrance of Him.

They were indeed to separate: their long and blessed service together was to be interrupted: no more would they observe the holy rites of the people of God together: no more would He who had been their Leader go before them, would He who had been their Instructor speak

to them, would He who had been their Friend dwell with them. He was about to go to His Father and to His throne and to His waiting Home: they were about to go into the hostile world, heralds of his kingdom of grace.

But they would still be bound together by mutual love: He on the throne caring for them: they in the conflict holding His name high and irresistible.

At this farewell feast He would draw them into close and indissoluble communion with Himself and with one another: a communion which no changes could shatter, nor time, nor eternity dissolve. Painful truly the separation would be. Were they not His "little children?" Was it not His own voice which had called them to His service? Had they not been in His company, under His guidance and instruction, sharers with Him in the beginnings of the gospel, in the planting of the holy church?

But He would still be with them. His example would never die. His words would sound on with the tone and thrill of other time. His spirit would animate them, and they would meet again. A few years of toil and trial, and then the world of eternal calm and joy, where they shall see His face and His name shall be on their foreheads!

For Himself, for them, for the world, with desire did He desire to eat that Passover with them before He suffered.



## XV.

### CHRIST THE BOSOM FRIEND.

**N**OT without some significance of meaning to the readers of the gospels, is this fact, that one of the disciples leaned on the breast of the Lord at supper, several times spoken of in the sacred narrative. The writer is not one of those who would take pride in stating it, as though a special privilege or honor were granted to himself in being allowed such intimacy with the Lord: like those boasters of interviews with princes and crowned heads and persons of distinction and rank who plume themselves on the event. He is a man of marked modesty who keeps out of sight his own name in the account, so that we know who it was only by inference, by setting one fact over against another. It is not told of a weak man, of an effeminate disciple, who would choose to lie off in indolent repose or dreamy sentimentality, breathing his life luxuriously away, rather than to encounter the tasks of manly service. It is told of a bold, strong Apostle, of a man of fiery energy and dauntless purpose, and nervous eloquence, of a man who was foremost to face the

enemies of his Master and of himself. The artists represent him as most like the Lord of any of the Apostles, as very likely he was, being His own cousin. He was a man of polished grace of manner, with the courage of a soldier. When any thing new or great was to be undertaken, he was summoned to undertake it. He was modest and loving, as such men are apt to be. But under his surcoat beat a heart of fire; and his gentle hand could strike a blow of sturdiness; and his polished speech had ringing in it an undertone of thunder.

He and his brother James were surnamed by Christ Himself, "Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder." This designation had a meaning in it, as had that also which Christ gave to Simon whom He surnamed Peter. For Peter was to be the Rock of the Church, as John was to be its bold and eloquent advocate. He was often associated with Peter in the Master's life, in the last scenes of it, and afterward. He was on the Mount of Transfiguration and in the Garden of Gethsemane. At the trial of Christ he walked boldly into the palace of the high-priest, by whom he was well known; and probably remained in sight of Christ when they took Him into Pilate's judgment-hall; and he kept near Him on the way to Calvary and stood by His cross in His more than mortal agony, where indeed he was powerless to aid his beloved Master, but where he could bow in tears and prayer

for Him, where he could testify his undying devotion to Him and where Christ could see him and speak to him, as He did, from the cross itself in tenderest appreciation of his precious love.

He was sent with Peter to prepare the last passover in a city clamorous for the blood of his Master. He outran Peter to the sepulchre of the buried Christ; yet reverently paused at its sacred entrance. He was a leader of the little company of Christians, after the Lord ascended, and boldly appeared in the Jewish temple as a preacher through Jesus of the resurrection from the dead. So that the historian of their acts writes: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John \* \* they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." He was sent to Samaria as one of the first missionaries of the Church. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, speaks of him as a pillar of the Church. In his old age, though his letters are full of love, he commends "faith, which is the victory that overcometh the world." To him it was given to receive the Revelation of Jesus Christ concerning the future of His Church on earth and to have the vision of the new heaven and the new earth; the sublime Apocalypse whose hidden meanings are yet to be evolved in a history of mingled terror and triumph!

Such was the man "which also leaned on His breast at supper." This was the last supper, the first Lord's supper, which we still observe,

since Christ then enjoined it upon all who love Him: "This do in remembrance of Me." It is written: "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved." And again: "He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto Him, Lord:" I have said the singular repetition of this fact has in it some significance of meaning to all who read it.

Perhaps there is a *divine side* to it to which we may give heed. It was His breast, the bosom of the Lord, on which the brave, loving, confiding disciple leaned. It is the strong bosom on which the weak and throbbing head reclines. They are moving into perils together, and the head rests on one to whom, in his feebleness and uncertainty, the disciple can confidently say, Lord! So God places Himself for us. It is not on a throne to whose dazzling glory we dare not draw nigh, remote and lifted up. It is not in some brilliant place of Leadership to which it would be in vain to attempt to urge one's way, occupied by those in honor and in favor. But it is at the table, at the festival common to the household, in the posture common at the daily meal, at the supper in the upper room where the Lord and His disciples are alone together, that we have this representation of the confiding familiarity which Christ allows on the part of that disciple whom He loves. It is not by some apparent act of condescension, it is not by laying aside something peculiar and



magnificent that belongs to Him, that He prepares the way for the disciple to lean on His breast, but it is as a matter of course, as a natural and unconstrained and every-day thing, even as one friend would conduct toward another. This is the way God reveals Himself to us. For Christ, in all His life, was the revelation of God to our human comprehension. We had failed to know God. His works had not taught us of Him. His word had but partially done it. His Providence had left us in the dark. So Christ came, to make that clear which the ages had left obscure, to bring down the divine life into the grasp of our thought and into the reach of our affection, to make God known to us.

And here is one manifestation of Him holding on His bosom at supper one of His disciples! I do not characterize this. It seems to me that any language about it would but lessen the effect, would take away from its striking and tender and blessed significance. It stands out like a picture of some old great master, speaking for itself, unable to be represented so well as it represents itself. But we are to take it in its fullest, greatest meaning, just as it is, just as it is set before us in three-fold phrase, as Christ, with the disciple leaning on His breast at supper, as Christ, so, as in all other ways of His life, giving us the representation of God! And if this gives us other views of God from those

which we naturally have, if it lessens dread and remoteness and awfulness, may it not have the proper influence upon us? May it not harmonize with the meaning which is involved in the expression, "Our Father?" May it not make God more approachable by us, more dear to us? You know how your views have changed of some one whom you have regarded with reverence and awe, as you have met him in the confidence of friendship and in the familiarity of acquaintance! Come to His table, where the Lord, among us, calling us not servants but friends, permits the disciple to lean on His breast at supper. As you think of it, it will not reduce the dignity of Godhead, it will not draw down to depreciate divine attributes; rather, it will reveal love, it will show you infinite kindness making a place for the weary, infinite strength holding the weak, infinite greatness taking upon itself appropriate care for those who are in need!

We are sure that there is a *human side* to it which is adapted to us. If Christ will permit the disciple to come so close to Him, surely the disciple will not lose the privilege. If that position is one of affectionateness, then should the disciple take it. It is but a response to the love that has redeemed him. That love was so great that it involved great sacrifice, left a great throne vacant for thirty-three long years, put abjectest humiliation upon one who had been used for countless ages to loftiest glories, reduced a

divine Creator to the contempt of His creatures and consigned Him to the ignominy and the suffering of the cross. No love on our part can match it, can be the sufficient response to it. All that we can render is called for. His voice speaks to each of us, and there is pleading and claim in it, "Lovest thou me?" If He will take us to His bosom, will allow us that place of affection, will permit us to come so near Him, where we can whisper to Him our loving gratitude, where we can call Him by the Name that He loves the best, all other names above, where we can feel our sins to the utmost and our redemption to the utmost also, surely we shall be there! We know how wonderful it seems to us when one, whom we had indeed thought of as a friend, but who in culture and knowledge and all graces and all habitudes of life had always seemed far above us, too far for us to come ever very near together, reveals a pure, strong affectionateness for us and takes us to his bosom and enfolds us with clasping arms! Our whole nature flows out to him in a new tide of love, and we become friends as we never were before. So Christ takes us to Himself, and we feel that we are one with him as we have never been before.

It was *at the supper* that the disciple leaned on His breast. If ever, at the supper, we come closest to Him, and lay our head on His bosom. Here we see as we do not elsewhere what He is

to us and what He has done for us. Those symbols set Him clearly before us in His atoning offering. We may read of it, we may hear of it, but at the supper we see it: the Body broken, wounded, suffering; the Blood flowing, shed, for us.

These sensuous objects make the fact more real to us. Then we love much because we know that much has been done for us. Our whole hearts go out to Him whose blood, whose life, went out for us. It is easy, natural, to lay our head in deepest gratitude and love upon the very bosom of One who has done this, all for us. The love is mutual. We love Him because He first loved us. "Lean hard if you love me," said a Persian convert to her accomplished and devoted teacher, one of our own best missionaries, as she saw that, worn and tired, she leaned a little upon her for support as they sat together with many others in their study of the Word. "Lean hard if you love me," and the grateful strength of the Persian woman supported the weary body of her teacher. He who has all strength and who says to the weakest of His followers "My strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness," bids us lean hard upon His bosom. If we are weak, if we are anxious, if we are troubled, if we are in any doubt or sorrow we can find support and comfort there. We must not keep aloof. We must go to the body that was broken: to the bosom out of whose side flowed the blood. Noth-

ing must separate us from the loving and beloved Christ. We must come to Him there, at the supper, if we have *not* lived near to Him at other times. But it must be then in penitence as well as in love: tears of sorrow must flow with our tears of gratitude. Better to have lived near Him *elsewhere* also, that it may be easy for us to lean on His breast at supper. These intimacies of affection should be the result of long-time love, of daily, continuous, habitual devotion. John leaned on His breast at supper because he had loved Him beforehand. He had toiled for Him among the people. He had stood with Him on the Mount of Glory. He had faced His foes with unflinching courage. He was ready to go with Him before Jewish priest or Roman governor, to stand by the very foot of His cross as one willing to die with Him or for Him.

The place of such a follower was on the Saviour's bosom. The strong arm of the Saviour would fold and hold him there. True faithful service runs into true earnest love. Lay not down your unworthy head on that sacred breast, where lay the head of one like John, unless like John you have been faithful beforehand, unless you come weary in the Master's service, unless you come from toil and testimony and revelation of glory and bold advocacy of your Saviour. Go to His *feet* and not to His bosom, if your *life* has had no love in it for Him. Go to His feet

and not to His bosom, if your feet have gone on all ways of indulgence and sin and vanity, if your bosom has known no devotion, no loyalty, no profound affection. But let not timidity, self-distrust, humbleness, keep you away. If you *love* you can lean. One without strength can *lean*. He is strong, He is all-sufficient, He is all-worthy on whose breast you can cast yourself. He is the Saviour, the all-mighty Saviour of the poor and the weak and the lost, who yet repent and love and serve.

On His bosom one may come to knowledge beyond what he could gain elsewhere. There John was to ask that which the disciples did not know, and to learn it from Christ. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." That is the place where may be communicated the divine secrets. Says one: "There is a secret in the days of God, with His own children, which sweetens all He does." In the divine intimacy He may make Himself known to the confiding believer, so that he may say as John said, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." John did not doubt. He knew. The love that he had for Christ was a living and controlling love. His letters to his beloved children in Christ glow with the assurance of his union to the Lord. The visions that

he had on Patmos, when to him the heavens were opened and the glories of the Lamb amidst His Father's throne were revealed, were no more satisfying and assuring than the blessed experiences when he leaned on the bosom of his Lord and his Friend at supper. The city, which he discerned and described, of such imperial magnificence and glory, was no more certain unto him when he saw his own name inscribed on one of its garnished foundations, than when he received the quiet answer from the lips of the Lord in reply to the question which he asked as he lay on Jesus' breast. That heaven was already begun in his soul. He who is the Light and the glory of it was already revealed to His loving disciple. The Apocalypse within him was more than the Apocalypse without and above him. He lived in the peace and joy and love of the inhabitants of the blessed land. He could have no more there that he needed, no more that could satisfy him, than he had when in the blessedness of such a friendship he leaned on the bosom of Christ at supper.


“ Then on Thy grandeur I will lay me down,  
Already life is heaven to me ;  
No cradled child more softly lies than I ;  
Come soon, Eternity !”





## XVI.

### CHRIST THE ENLIGHTENER OF MEN.

HRIST, and the religion of Christ, furnish sufficient light for every man. Undoubtedly there are mysterious things, unsolvable problems, which will remain such so long as we are in the present environment. These do not much concern us: although many men very much concern themselves with them. They seem to like to give time and thought and care to the unessentials, to the things which are unknowable or unexplainable, rather than to attend to those which are both plain and practical, and personal as well. They like to take hold of "weapons whose handles are sharper than their blades." They like to argue on what is doubtful, rather than to experience what is certain. They prefer to doubt the being of any God rather than to love the true God. They prefer to dwell where they cannot see, rather than to walk in the clear light. Nevertheless, the light has come into the world, and it lighteth every man!

Christianity sets a standard for true life. This is a vital thing for every man. How shall I live? is the first question which confronts each soul.

It is possible to utterly waste this life. It is possible to make a terrible curse of it. It is an uncertain possession. It is a hard and doubtful battle which we wage for it. Men are gravely asking, Is life worth living? That depends upon the use to which we put it: is solemnly answered by our misuse of it. We can make it worth living. We can make it a most unfortunate possession. Three centuries ago a strong thinker wrote: "I may be too old to live, I can never be too young to die: I will therefore live every hour, as if I were to die the next." Christianity teaches us to seek first the kingdom of love and the righteousness that belongs to it: that so all other things may be provided for. It holds that it is a practical heresy for any one to delay repentance and faith in Christ, with all the uncertainties and the unavailabilities that hang over every life. It teaches that the foundation is of prime importance, and that he who goes on to erect his structure upon treacherous sand, is liable to most serious disaster. It antagonizes the make-shifts and perversions in which so many men indulge and sets up a true standard for them to go by. It puts first things first; and makes great things great: it never dwarfs eternity in the presence of time, nor shuts the omnipresent God out of any portion of His universe.

Would you live up to the standard? Would you improve and rightly use the light? Then abandon, first of all, your indifference to your

real duty. Come into harmony with the representations of the inspired word. If you are a little child, know that this religion is for you, that the blessed Saviour is your Saviour and that He has a fondness for children and seeks their young love, their first and best love, that He desires to pre-empt their hearts and to possess their whole lives.

You cannot make a mistake in giving your whole lives to Him, in making the dew of your youth radiant with His love, in lighting up the morning of your days with the light that He brings from heaven. The religion of Christ is the religion of children. It is meant for them. It is going to be, more and more, in all the lands, their religion. The unfounded prejudices which have held them back, which have made many a child's pillow wet with secret tears, are to give way, and the children are to be the recruits of the conquering Lord, and as the bright heavens are full of boys and girls who enjoy Christ so the redeemed world is to be made full of them. All things indicate it.

Let the children come to Christ. The artists have loved to put on canvas the pictorial representation of that most significant saying of the Lord, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven." In the great galleries you see His benignant face as He welcomes with outstretched arms the little ones who confide in Him.

And we must love to encourage in practice what others produce in art.

If you have passed out of childhood and the ambitions of youth are stirring within you, if you are full of worldly hopes and are planning for worldly success, you have here a guide of authority and of wisdom which you will do well to heed. Many a young man and young woman feel concerned as to the calling which they shall follow in the world. It is a serious thing to decide, when before each are open so many paths. The business of the world is multiform. The professions of life have their separate invitations. What will you choose to do? To what calling will you devote your one life? Many make a mistake. It is said that a good farmer was spoiled by going into the pulpit; or a certain poor blacksmith would have made a first-rate lawyer; or that this man and that man have mistaken their calling. This is very likely to be the case. Persons decide these matters in their immaturity, and repent with their experience.

But there is one decision, which each one setting out in independent life may make, which involves no mistake, which will excite no after regret: it is the decision to take Christ as the Master, to devote the life to Him. It will not then be of very great comparative importance what the particular worldly profession or calling may be. The young man or the young woman who starts forth as a Christian, has something

worthy to live for in any vocation. Any vocation, which is fit for a Christian, has the Lord's call in it. It has good work in it. It has success in it. For the final reckoning, with which every life will be terminated, requires an accounting, not of the property which one has amassed, not of the fortune which figures in the inventory of the probate court, not of the pleasures which one has enjoyed, the travel which has enlarged the knowledge of the world, the reading which has furnished growth for the mind: but of the growth of the soul in the knowledge of Christ, the good work which has been done to set forward the kingdom of the Lord among men, the help which has been given to the church, the effort which has been made to save other men. A man may come to the end of life poor in worldly property, but rich in faith and in eternal possessions. He may have had a hard time as things go in this world, but be fitted to wear a very bright crown in heaven and to be at the head of ten cities in the coming Kingdom. Some one has well said, "Happiness may fly away, pleasure pall or cease to be obtainable, health decay, friends fail or prove unkind, but the power to serve God never fails, the love of Him is never rejected." No life can be vain that has good Christian service in it. No life is lost that holds the gain of repentance and faith and love to Christ. He has not made a mistake who has consecrated himself to the Lord at the opening of his manhood.

Christianity furnishes principle for the right governing of conduct. We all need a rule of life, a law by which our course shall be directed. We are brought into positions where two ways are open to us. Two parties make their appeal for our suffrages. Two doctrines are urged upon our acceptance. Questions of casuistry arise on which opposing arguments are made.

How shall one decide? Which way shall one turn? On which side shall he vote? Which doctrine shall he put into his creed? What ethics shall he follow?

Christ gives him the governing principle.

We have in the gospel a golden rule. One overmastering obligation holds us. If we give ourselves to God, to be His and to serve Him, we must do that which is for His glory, we must do for others what we would have them do for us, we must act in every human relation as those who are the servants of Christ. Selfishness goes down before this principle. Worldliness expires in its presence.

Before everything else the new man is a Christian. He cannot violate his heavenly vows. He cannot desert the standard of his Saviour. He must obey the Lord, whomsoever he may disobey. No friends can stand between him and Christ. Father and mother, brother and sister, must be hated so that Christ shall be loved.

Christianity affords comfort in sorrow. A factor in all life is the grief that is mingled in it.

We cannot escape it. To some souls it is rare ; but when it comes to them it is great. For some families it is long adjourned ; but then it breaks on them as the swift and heavy surges beat against the shore. Friends may stand together ; but the time will come when they will fall as trees fall before the axe of the pioneer. Two may walk together on many and long paths ; but suddenly the footsteps of one will cease, and the survivor will go thenceforth alone. Tenderest relations are sundered. Beautiful lives, made for each other, are broken apart.

God's discipline of affliction is on the sinning race. And not till the heavens shall have received all the redeemed will it be said that even for them there is no more sorrow.

Christ does not remove it : but He gives comfort in it. Christ does not remove it : but He gives a compensation for it. Christ does not remove it : but He blesses the soul in bearing it, so that, though it be grievous, it works for it an eternal weight of glory. Some of the sweetest human lives are those that have borne the hardest griefs, as there are plants that shed their sweetest perfumes when they are pressed and beaten most rudely. The most graceful plants in the heavenly gardens are those on which the storms swept most mercilessly here. All the while before every Christian are the footsteps of his Lord, who trod the wine-press of sorrow alone, who was a man of sorrows and

acquainted with grief, who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, who passed through every door that is to open for our feet, who carried all the burdens that are to be laid on us, and who will make His grace to be sufficient for us. If religion had no more than this to do for us, it should command our acceptance. If Christ had no greater work than this to do for us, He should have our immediate homage and our grateful service. But He has another work.

Christianity yields the pardon for sin. The darkest fact of the world is *sin*. It is a universal fact. We have nothing to do with its origin, with the reasons for its permission, with any of the hard questions which its existence starts. We have only to do with *it* and with deliverance from it. It is an existing fact. We are personally guilty of it. Then, only one great question confronts and occupies us: Can we be delivered from it? That question the Gospel answers, answers plainly and fully, answers for every man, answers everywhere: answers so that every one can know its meaning, so that every one can know that he is included: answers without any mistake, without any reservation, with a fullness that reaches all sinners, and a particularity that touches each sinner. It tells us that Christ has died for sinners, that He has made such a complete satisfaction for their sins before the throne and law of God that on their repentance and trust in Him they can be pardoned, utterly and



forever, and can be treated as though they had never sinned. This is the burden of the Gospel. This is the supreme meaning of the Cross. This is Christ. Forgiveness of sin, through His death, on repentance and faith. It is the wonder of the universe. It is the one thing that the angels desire to look into. It *should be* the first thing with each of us.

Moreover, Christianity holds the hope of eternal life. It has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Anything less than this would be futile, anything more would be superfluous. We are on the sea! Winds and strong currents and the forces of giant machinery are bearing us on. To what? The cry from the look-out will soon be heard. To what land will he point us? What fair shores are those which lift their fronded palms before us, from which the soft breezes bear the odors of opulent gardens and the harmonics of exultant choirs, and from which a glory streams, not of the sun nor of the moon, but which is the glory of God? What serene heights are those on which are dimly seen the outlines of palaces, whose golden domes are lifted into the sky, and that flash with the brilliance of pearls and gems? What city is that whose walls rise on our sight, whose foundations are of all manner of precious stones, and within which are processions of many nations carrying their tribute to its throne?

There no sin is found. There no sorrow is

known. There death shall be no more. And there shall be night no more. Life forever, life in uninterrupted joy, life with the holy ones, life in Christ with God !

That Christ gives. That is the sure inheritance of all those who love and serve Him here.

On these great matters, most vital to all of us, the clear light shines from the gospel of Christ. We may know all that we need to know, and know it absolutely.

George McDonald, in Paul Fabre, says : “ To many souls hell itself seems a less frightful alternative than the agony of resolve, of turning, of being born again.” They shrink from the undertaking to become Christians as though it were a crucifixion. They postpone the good resolution as though it were the contraction of a disease. They act as though the best thing they could do were the worst thing they could do. It is told of a man that as he sprang ashore from a boat, his foot was caught in one of the links of an iron chain which was imbedded in the sand of the beach. He was unconcerned until the tide began to rise ! The gray waters murmured in circles around the place where he sat. They rose above his ankles, and the moan of the ocean grew louder as the waves rose higher. It sounded like his requiem ! Then his cry for help was desperate. He was ready for any sacrifice, to lose the fettered limb, that he might save his life.

Before the hour of desperation comes, before the tide of eternity pours in upon you, be aroused by the hope of immortal life, to gain deliverance through the one only Saviour.



## XVII.

### CHRIST MANIFEST TO ALL.



**A** STRANGE footstep on Gentile territory! For the first time in His crowded ministry the Lord had left the sacred soil of Israel. Once He would go out beyond its borders, as in significant symbol of the out-reaching and world-embracing compass of His mission. Once He would leave a foot-print of His own pointing toward the realms of the Gentiles, out into the darkness and foulness and misery of the wide-spreading nations, into which His followers might plant their own and by the sight of which they might learn the lesson of their work and see the sign of the way they should afterward take. That foot-mark of the Redeemer pointing outward indicated the track of the Gospel. Though He was sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel, His Gospel was for all the lost of every nationality. Though for reasons which lay undisclosed in the divine prudence His own work was to be among the people of His earthly parentage, yet His living and His dying were for all the world. He was the Brother of every man and the Saviour

of every man. Gladly would He have passed over the boundaries of the Hebrew possession and set His foot on every shore. Gladly would He have spoken to the men of every speech in their own tongue, and taken hold with His loving and strong hand of all the down-cast and crushed. That He went out once was a revelation of His heart, a sign to His successors. That foot-print was long ago washed out by the storms that swept down from Lebanon: but the lesson of it endures like Lebanon itself! In the valleys folded by its wild ranges and under the shadow of its snowy cliffs His ministers are telling to-day to the dwellers there the story of His love and death. Farther than the flags of the Tyrian vessels ever flew His disciples have carried His Gospel.

He went at this time into the borders of Tyre and Sidon to escape, on the one hand, the Jews who were busily plotting His overthrow and, on the other hand, Herod, whose aroused conscience was pricking him to some deed of desperation. There, He entered into a house, and would have no man know it. Over in the pagan territory, He might hope to find the relief and repose and recuperation which He could not find in Galilee, where His miracles had aroused intensest interest and His words had awakened popular enthusiasm. It was a place of rest and retirement. The white rocks of Lebanon, in their substantial majesty and high repose, shed

down their graciousness and strength into His weary and troubled spirit. The cool air from the unmelted snows bathed His heated temples and the perfume of the fragrant cedars cheered Him as a cordial. Around that dwelling the mountain birds were singing their wild songs and over it the shadow and the sunshine chased each other in still playfulness. The silence was sweet. There time kept perpetual Sabbath. The toil and turbulence of the towns were far away. There was stillness like that of the falling of dew. And there was sweetness like the scented breath of morning. Surely there the Lord might rest. His tired soul and His hunted body might lie down together untroubled. He would have no man know that He was there. For a while, till He could recover Himself, He would remain still and solitary. Noon should be as midnight. Not a bird of the air nor a wanton wind should tell of the Lord. Men, as they passed by, bold mountaineers from the chase, husbandmen of the plains with their hands full of seeds for planting, should not know that there a King was sleeping and that more than a palace stood by that unguarded roadside. He would be unknown, wholly unrecognized.

But He could not be hid! As the fragrance of spices fills the atmosphere and the aroma of roses reveals their presence, as the loadstone attracts metallic iron and the pole directs and holds the trembling needle, as the majesty of

men stands forth through all disguises and royalty is disclosed in look and tone and posture, so Christ could not be hid. Divinity asserts itself. Where Christ was there He was known to be. The closed house could not contain Him. The guardianship of watchful and faithful disciples could not conceal Him. The deep woods and the bold mountain ranges around could not shut Him in. Lebanon could not imprison its God. The coasts of Tyre and Sidon were not remote enough to leave His great name and fame behind. He had traveled far, farther from Bethlehem, the spot of His birth and from Jerusalem, the capital and joy of His people, than ever before, but not far enough yet to be hidden. No silence was deep enough to exclude all voice of Him. No seclusion was profound enough to enclose all knowledge of Him. He could not be hidden. The Scripture does not say, He was not hid. It is a bolder, stronger statement: He could not be hid. He was self-revealing. He was wanted. Within those pagan coasts were hearts that were aching for Him. Hungry and thirsty, there was but *One* who could feed them and give them living water. The heathen world was waiting for His coming. And when once His divine footsteps invaded its dark and bloody soil He was welcomed as a Deliverer. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. He went unto the outcasts and the



pagans and He was hailed as *Lord*. He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel. But other sheep He had which were not of that fold, on the strange, dark mountains. Many want Christ who have never seen Him nor read His gospel. In all heathen lands there are burdened and longing souls who only wait for the announcement of the Saviour. This, they say, is what we have longed to hear: now there is life for us.

He could not be hid. *For* a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of Him, and came and fell at His feet. A year before this, in His ministry near Capernaum, a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases. They had carried back to their homes the account of the wonderful Teacher and Healer. And this poor woman, for she was a Syrophœnician by nation, had heard how virtue went out of Him and healed them all of whatsoever disease they had. And perhaps some of His precious words had also been carried to her which she had treasured in her heart for months. She was a heathen. She belonged to an accursed stock, to the doomed Canaanites, some of whom had been somehow spared. But she had heard of Christ, and that had given hope to her life and light to her darkness and patience to bear all her troubles. And now this divine

One had come to her country and was near to her. *How* she knew this we are not told. It is written that Christ would have no man know that He was there. Also that He could not be hid. *For* a certain woman heard of Him and came and fell at His feet. Did her terrible want direct her to Christ, as the needle sways and trembles till it points to the pole? Did her bursting heart feel its way to the Saviour, when her eyes had not yet seen Him and no voice had told her of His coming? Or had some faintest whisper crept along the foot of Lebanon that a stranger had entered quietly into a house, and did her waiting, longing soul interpret and prophecy that it was He? She lost no time: she was at His feet and her cry was, "Have mercy on me, O Lord." "And she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter." Her daughter's case was her own case. The mother's heart enfolded the child. And it was one cry, Have mercy on *me*, Have mercy on *my daughter*. So said the father of the lunatic son, "Have compassion on *us* and help *us*." The father and his boy stood and fell together. Compassion on one was compassion on both. So cry all true hearts of fathers and of mothers. There is no joy to them while their children are in sorrow: no light for their feet while the feet of sons and daughters walk in darkness; no heaven for them to look up to, if the faces of the others are turned to hell.

How closely the words stand together, "O Lord, have mercy on me, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." They suffered together: and mercy for one would be mercy for both. And to-day as every day, they are many, like this Syrophœnician, who are falling before the Saviour with burdens for others which are also their own. The woes of one heart are the woes of two. By the side of the suffering sinner walks the suffering saint. Heart to heart the parent accompanies the child. His life is spoiled while the life of the other is spoiled. The cry for the boy's life is the cry for his own life. The two are wound up in affection together. Blood cements them and love which is stronger than life. Have mercy *on me* is the cry of agony as parents bring their sons and daughters in prayer to God. Earth hears no other such cry. Heaven answers to no other such supplication.

Everything was against this woman. On her own part all was dark. She belonged to an accursed stock. She was a pagan. Jesus was a Jew: and the Jews looked scornfully upon such as she. He had entered her country not for healing and teaching, but to escape them both, and to get rest and strength for His work among His own people. On His part then there was nothing hopeful. His attendants were also Jews from whom she could expect only repulse. Yet through all these obstacles she urged her way and her petition. It was enough for her that

Christ was there, within reach if she had the determination to reach Him. She had heard of what He had done elsewhere. She had seen, it may be, others whom He had restored. He was a Saviour for just such as she. His name and fame had reached heathendom. And she would go to Him and seek the greatest boon. It was a *young* daughter for whom she would plead. There is something very touching in that phrase, "whose young daughter had an unclean spirit." Ah! so it is with the sinful possession often. Into young hearts Satan enters. At an early age we see the developments of sin, the sad proof that the soul is lost.

For the young Christ is wanted. We cannot plead for the children too early, that they may be saved. Far easier is it to expel these possessions in childhood, than when they have become fortified in habit, in affection, in invincible purpose. Easier to drive out the enemy behind weak barricades than when fortifications have been builded of adamant. Be earnest for the young! Parent! teacher! now is the time for the earnest plea with Christ, the cry of the soul that will take no denial. Make the case of each child, one by one, your own. Let your prayer be, *Have mercy on me!*

There is suggested here a striking contrast. In the first twenty-three verses of the chapter we have the painful account of the traditions and ceremonial of the self-righteous Pharisees.

Christ was with them: He was ready to instruct them, and to bless them, in fact to save them. They were of His own nation: they were the lost ones of the House of Israel, for whom particularly He was sent. In their sight His divine miracles were wrought. In their hearing His divine words were spoken. He offered them Himself and all that He could do for them. Yet He was hidden to them. They could not, they would not see Him. They were occupied with the washing of hands before eating, the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and tables. They honored God with their lips: but their heart was far from Him. They taught for doctrines, the commandments of men. They had their own traditions: and these were more than the gospel to them, making void the word of God. Such men wore the life out of Christ. They would not be saved and they hindered others from being saved. They would not enter into the Kingdom, and those who would enter in they hindered.

But no sooner had He reached a pagan country than He could not be hid. If he had remained there probably the whole people would have sought Him, and that beautiful prophecy would have found a partial fulfillment, "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." And the contrast lasts. Brought up with the Bible in your hands and in your language, educated by pious parents and teachers, listening to

the gospel and knowing, acknowledging even, its value, you do not accept of Christ.

Yet shall there come among you one from a land that knows not Christ nor the Bible, who has had no religious teaching, no Christian parentage, no privileges such as belong to you and have always been enjoyed by you, and in a short residence among you and after a brief acquaintance with the Bible, he shall learn such things of Christ that he shall want Him for a Saviour and shall see such wisdom in the Bible that he shall yield to its instructions and shall believe in Christ and shall say, "My only desire is to confess before men that I accept Him as my Saviour and Redeemer." "And I desire to connect myself with His Church that I may honor Him by obeying His commandments and by living a life devoted to His service."

The men of Japan and of China shall enter into the Kingdom before you! You are occupied with your vain traditions. They accept the living word of God. You put faith in moralities. They put faith in Christ. You put off your duty. They perform it. You stay out of the Kingdom. They press into it. Forms are one thing; the need of the soul is another. There is a vast difference between mere morality and true faith. There is an eternal difference between the world and Christ. You may be lost; while they are saved.

The Syro-phœnician woman was at the feet of

Christ. "But He answered her not a word." As Chrysostom says, "The Word has no word." The Lord is silent. He seems to have even turned away from her and moved on. But she cried after Him, so that the disciples besought Him to send her away. Then His speech seemed harder than His silence. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel." She came closer then: and there was a deeper earnestness in her voice, as she said only, "Lord, help me." That cry surely must avail. Yet the Lord coldly said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." The Jews considered and treated all other people as barbarians and dogs. And Christ uses their language to try her faith. Was there ever such trial? Silence: cold speech: contemptuous reproach. Dogs! Can the crushed woman bear that? Will she not now despair? Will she not go away, humbled, broken, ready to give over and to feel that all is lost.

So would it have been with many. They could not have persevered through such obstacles, indignities. But out of her despair she wrenched an argument. In her misery she used, as one has called it, "the ready wit of faith." Listen to her. "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." She accepts the Lord's own word; takes the title and the place, the lowest place, yet the place where *crumbs* of mercy fall. As Luther

says, "She snares Christ in His own words." She was willing to take the dog's place if only the wasted food of the children could be her own. Anywhere, anything, if only she could be blessed! A dog! if so Christ could be hers. "A slave of Jesus Christ" wrote one of himself who was far greater than she, a man of learning and of ancestral pride and who boasted that he was a free-born citizen of Rome. A slave! so that Christ should be the Master. The off-scouring of all things, the filth of the world, if only for the sake of Christ. "Make me as one of thy hired servants" pleaded the prodigal, so that once more I may be within the father's, *my* father's, house. Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. At the feet of Christ is more than to be on a worldly throne. That is the place of faith.

And then came victory. The Syrophœnician woman conquered in her lowliness. She knew the *heart* of Christ before and to her eye of faith it was not concealed by His words and manner, by coldness and repulse. She trusted His heart; and now it was revealed to her. "O woman!" He said, "great is thy faith! Be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" "For this saying, go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter." It was no longer a man, in the garb of a Jew, who stood before her. It was the Lord Himself. It was the King in His beauty and



benignity. His words now were all graciousness and benediction. His largesses were royal. He spoke and He gave as a King. Only to one other, in His earthly life, did He give such commendation, and that other was a Gentile also. Of a Roman centurion He said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Faith conquers all things; it conquers *Christ*. It conquers by the might which He gives. For it is "according to His working which worketh in us mightily."

Faith *looks* to the right source. It trusts in One who is able and willing to bestow in His own time and way.

Faith *waits*: waits through the whole trial, though it be through agony, through lowest humiliation, through heaviest loss. Faith *holds fast*: it holds on though the hand be smitten and wounded and bleeding. It cries with the patriarch at Peniel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Faith has an overcoming power. By it the weaker vanquishes the stronger. By it the paralytic overcame material obstacles that he might be placed "before Jesus." By it blind Bartimeus overcame the opposition of his fellow-men that he might come to Jesus. And by it this weak pagan woman, in a land of heathen, overcame Christ Himself. "Great is thy faith." So is challenged our regard and imitation. Our imitation! To that are we brought. To low faith come scant blessings.

To strong, invincible faith, that will take no denial, that will trust God though He smite the believer, that will cry out of the deepest humiliation, "Lord, help me," will come at length the royal answer, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Faith wears the crown this side of heaven. "Even as thou wilt." So the believer ascends the throne and wears the crown. His will becomes imperial. But it costs something. Great thrones are gained through great struggles, through blood. "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin," writes the Apostle to the Hebrew Christians whom he points to "Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." The Syrophœnician woman went very low but she gained her request. "Her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Her faith was the channel through which Christ's power poured in blessing. She was the conductor by which the more than electric current ran from the Saviour to the saved. She stood between the living and the dead. And through her life and restoration passed over to her daughter. "When she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out and her daughter laid upon the bed." The long sad days of paroxysm and vexation were over, and there was rest and peace and soundness.

Have you, parents of children, teachers of children, been offering the prayer, Have mercy on me. O Lord, my daughter, my son, my

scholar, \* \* and then told the story of your woe? Unanswered, tried, sorely amazed because of what you have heard and known of Christ, and now see of Him, have you still, against advice of others, against uprisings of your own heart, against the provocations of delay, held on, held steadily there, to Christ alone, with the one plea, "Lord, help me?" Have you felt that your son or daughter or brother or husband *must be saved* and that there was no real joy for you till the rescue came? That is the way of faith. That is the way to victory. The low place is the next place to the throne. The deepest darkness is just before the dawn. Sorest trials precede surest answers. Delay is not denial. Denial may be only trial. It may be only outward and in words: while the gracious, full answering awaits you. We may not fully answer the question, *Why* God so tries the faith of His true children. But we know that it brings forth a purer and stronger faith. That word which has in it benediction and coronation, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt," is only spoken when He can also say, "Great is thy faith." That word which lifts saints to the side of Christ, that they also may sit on thrones, follows a trust that has been sorely, bitterly tried and has not been found wanting. "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of

God?" The saint's own victory, the healing, the conversion, the immortal life of those that are his and for whom his unfailing prayer was lifted, and the bright heaven at last, are the sure reward.

## XVIII.

### THE UNSELFISH CHRIST.

**F**ICTION has wrought its finest characterization in self-sacrifice and devotion for others. Its ideal heroes have been those who have not consulted their own interest or happiness, but who have willingly or spontaneously or passionately offered themselves to rescue others from a dreaded fate or to crown them with a coveted delight. For this they have exposed themselves to certain peril: they have given up their own undoubted rights or possessions: they have relinquished and smothered the love that has been their brightest dowry, and doomed themselves to loneliness and sorrow and want that they might make cheerful and rich and useful other lives, that they might make other paths smooth, though their own should thereby be made rough and rocky. This self-abnegation is the crown of heroic sacrifice. It gives nobility to plebeian blood. It glorifies aristocratic descent. It puts manhood foremost. It makes him chief who possesses it whether he holds titles from noble ancestry or springs from common stock. But

especially do the writers of fiction enjoy the giving of this excellent grace to those who stand high without it; as though more than name and culture and blood and noble rank were the heraldry of genuine humanity, the devotion of the true soul to another's welfare. He, who has inherited an illustrious name, in whose paternal halls hang the likenesses of heroes, who looks out on broad ancestral possessions, who holds the keys of social eminence and political power and vast wealth, for whom it is easy to possess and enjoy all that the world can give to its votaries, who is courted and loved and obeyed and served, is made to be greater and nobler and more opulent by a glad and full self-offering in which he sacrifices everything but his own regal manhood, everything outside of himself, that himself may be more illustrious and grand.

But in this, fiction works from life. It draws its imaginary picture from actual reality. The great characters of *history* are the men and women who have sacrificed most. These are they who have been lauded in the verse of poets, who have inspired the eloquence of orators, who have given charm and picturesqueness and power to narrative, who are held up as examples to stimulate the young and the aspiring.

It is not those who have pleased themselves, who have lived merely for their own enjoyment, who have been satisfied to hold and improve

what they have received, who have made themselves the center and have wished all things to be tributary to their personal happiness and aggrandizement; it is not those who have made the world's history luminous, who have poured sunshine and glory on the annals of their time and nation: but rather those who have cheerfully given up their possessions and their rank and their services and themselves with all their endowments and advantages and influence and personal power to secure the rights and the liberties and the enjoyment of others. This devotion has been higher than any title of nobility. It has brought the high-born and the base-born on to a common level and has shown that manhood is the chief title and that service is the noblest rank. He is honored in all true history who out of discouraging environment has struggled up into a place where he could devote his strength to the welfare of his fellows, as he also has been who, possessing everything that could satisfy his personal wants, has counted it his personal privilege to deny himself that he might minister to others. It was when Sir Philip Sidney, wounded on the battle-field, refused the cup of cold water that a dying soldier near him might be refreshed by it, that his gentleness and greatness shone out more than when he enjoyed abundance in the banquet-room of his castle. It was when the first soldier of our time and land lay among his men on the ground with only the heavens for his cov-

ering and marched with them, as one of them, in his determined endeavor to cut off Vicksburg from support in the rear, that his heroic purpose was revealed more than when he directed some great action with his staff around him or rode at the head of his troops at some proud review.

Self-denial, humiliation, sacrifice, are the highest honors. These put the crown on men. In all benevolent work, in the blessed missionary undertakings, in that consecration which leads men of humanity and sympathy and love to give their lives for the uplifting and relief and salvation of degraded and miserable men, we see the daily and noble illustrations of what they are and of what they can accomplish who do not please themselves, but who hold themselves to be the servants of their fellows and the servants of their divine Lord.

“Christ pleased not Himself.” This is said with reference to His extraordinary work for us. It was something new that He did not please Himself. He had found pleasure during His eternal existence in His communion with the Father and the Spirit. They had enjoyed their mysterious and infinite being. In their great thoughts, their counsels, which embraced all space and all duration and all possible creations, in their warm and infinite affections which were full of harmony and sweetness, in their sublime purposes which laid hold of the greatest good which they could accomplish as they introduced



one order after another of beings into sensitive and enduring life, Christ had pleased Himself.

And, as that one of the sacred Persons who was charged with the responsibility of *Creation*, He had pleased Himself in calling forth upon different spheres and scenes responsible agents, made in His own image, made as nearly like Godhead as finite existences can be like infinite; inhabitants of His own heaven, retainers of His palace, servants of His throne, swift as light and burning as fire to do His will; inhabitants of other worlds fitted in their endowments for life where they were placed, fitted to learn and achieve and grow, to grow steadily throughout an existence which, begun, should never end, fitted to enjoy or to suffer according to their use or misuse of themselves and their surroundings, fitted also as a chief endowment to decide on their own course, their own character, and so on their own destiny. He had pleased Himself in launching from His Almighty hand the numberless worlds which crowd the heavens, and giving them their appointed orbits so that they move without discord on their separate but harmonious paths, those heavenly choirs, without speech, without language, whose voice is not heard, yet whose resonant line has gone into all the earth and their words unto the end of the world: in covering each world with its own wonderful drapery of organized life, trees that live for a thousand years and perpetuate themselves, flow-

ers that bloom in almost infinite variety and beauty and fragrance, fruits that refresh and please and satisfy : in peopling air and earth and water with their peculiar and appropriate denizens : and in giving to all these their appropriate and protecting and unchanging and universal laws.

In all this, and in much more of which we do not know, and which we cannot even imagine, Christ had been accustomed to please Himself.

But a new work stood before Him ; a new endeavor rose to His choice. A world had swung out of harmony. A race had sacrificed their birthright : had dishonored their Creator : had entered on a black career of sin. The question arose whether they should be saved. The problem, new, strange, momentous, confronted Christ, whether He would save them.

We do not know how much it involved. There are mysterious hints in Scripture that it involved personal sacrifices into the meaning of which we are unfitted to enter, sacrifices which God only could take the measure of, which had respect solely to the relations of the divine Trinity.

But we know some things, enough to show us that when Christ decided on the enterprise of our salvation, He took on Him a burden the like of which had never been borne, and which His shoulders only were strong enough to bear. We have never stood where He was when He came to that decision. We have never yet entered

that world that was His home. Our eyes have not seen its furniture. Our ears have not heard its music. Our minds have not formed the conception of its glory and its wealth. We have not seen God, nor the throne of God, nor the palace of the One King. But we have heard something of it. There have been wonderful revelations about it in the Book. And sometimes we have had such longings to know more of it that some of us would willingly die to know.

But this matter of our salvation involved exile from that world, discrowning of that King, abandonment of that throne, separation from those who dwelt there. "Christ pleased not Himself." To the amazement of angels, He left. The crown that had never been tarnished was laid aside. He had always worn it till then. The throne which had forever known Him as the Eternal King was forsaken. The Father, with whom He had dwelt before the morning stars sang together, in the old eternity, when there was but one Being in the universe, and *He was enough to fill it*, was left. All that made heaven, its society, its glory and beauty, its worship, its uninterrupted blessedness, all were left. It could not please Him. He loved that world; all who dwelt there, all that transpired there, all that He had been used to there, beyond any love that we can imagine. He went forth to a homesickness that never had a parallel. He went out with a heartsickness that Christ only could bear.

Here we find one deep meaning of the words, "Christ pleased not himself." He had love. Old associations were dear to Him. Old friendships were infinitely precious to Him. He could not break away without sundering ties that were infinitely strong and sacred and sweet. Let us not think it was God who did it, unless we impute to the God who did it, Godlike affection, Godlike strength of attachment, infinite tenderness of association and endearment. *He broke it all.* He gave up everything. He sacrificed everything that was precious and then—*Himself.*

Not only was the glorious abode that had always been His to be renounced, but He, if our salvation were to be undertaken, was to endure a humiliation greater than had ever before been seen. It was the supreme humiliation of the universe! For the Creator to take the place of a creature were a lowly and a displeasing thing to do. But that was not the extent of Christ's descent. That was only the beginning of it. *That* excited wonder and consternation among the angels who had always seen Him in the first place of heaven; and Judea was filled with their anxious and excited representatives when the miracle of Bethlehem occurred. In that lowly manger was one who had been used to an unequalled throne. In that puny form was the nature of Divinity. Hidden in that innocent guise was the adorable God. He who had made all things and controlled all things by the word

of His power, was now in the place of helplessness, a babe in the arms of a human mother. It behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren. If He would be the Mediator between God and man it was necessary that He who had experienced all that there is in Godhead should experience all that there is in humanity. So He became like unto us and went through all that we go through in our life of growth and development. And the Scriptures are careful to speak of His growth in stature and in wisdom and in favor with God and men.

Now, we do not think enough even of this ; we do not realize what a profound condescension it was.

But, as I said, that was trifling compared with what followed it. He went not only into the place of *lowliness*, but He went into the place of weariness and unrecompensed toil and thankless deeds of compassion. Stand with Him in His frightful temptation : stand with Him at the well of Samaria : stand with Him among the surging multitudes who hung on his words, as He pitifully healed the sick, the sightless, the dumb, the lame ; as He raised the dead ; as He helped the miserable and the sinful into light and comfort and peace ; as He bore the griefs and carried the sorrows of men. Weary days, weary nights, fasting, cold, desertion, dread loneliness, were His. But that was not all, nor the worst. He was denied, He was betrayed,

He was crucified. He saw His trusted friends deserting Him and He saw His enemies gratified in His overthrow and death. There is a mysterious awe about Gethsemane and Calvary. The profoundest mystery of the passion we do not understand. It is dimly signified to us in the urgent and unanswered prayers of the garden that the Father would permit the cup to pass from Him, and in the cry of the cross, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me! It were sad enough to bear the load of human sins, but to have that work someway separate Him from God, hide the face that He loved so well, that was beyond endurance, and that broke the heart of Christ.

We are standing now near to the truth, "Christ pleased not Himself." The nearer we come to the cross, the more we realize the endurance of our Lord, the greater will be our wonder, and the greater should be our gratitude, that He was willing to experience such sufferings for us.

For *us* He died. He was happy and glorious without us: and would have been if we had not been saved. He was under no obligation to us, nor to His government, nor to His own character, to save us. Our ruin was self-ruin. Our apostasy was voluntary. But it was gracious and noble and God-like in Him to do it. It was an eternal honor to His throne that such humiliation was permitted. It will

forever be the brightest glory of Godhead that redemption was accomplished. The central symbol and characterization of heaven is *the Lamb slain*. Wherever God is known, wherever the attributes and perfections of God are honored, there it will be forever known and celebrated that Christ became the Redeemer of men. Though He did not please Himself; though instead of the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross and became obedient unto death; yet in that service and sacrifice was His peerless honor.

Let us not seek to please ourselves. Let us not ask what is the easy and the pleasant way. Let us not shirk the hard and painful service of our Christian profession. Let us imitate Christ. Let us cherish the heroic spirit of the martyr ages. Let us be like the young Christian who said to the missionary board, Send me to the hardest place: or like another who said, Let me go where no one else will go. Let us in our work for our adorable Lord, take up the cross, deny ourselves, sacrifice personal ease and indulgence, that we may in all ways and all places, do that which will most effectively advance the honor and kingdom of Him who pleased not Himself that He might save us.





## XIX.

### CHRIST THE REVEALER OF GOD.



**A** GREAT want of our race is the knowledge of God. All men, for we throw entirely out of the account the fools who have denied the existence of their Maker, have felt their accountability to some superior intelligence, some divine Being, in whose controlling hand they are and before whom they are to stand for the decisive investigations of the world's great day. By whatsoever name they have called Him, under whatever form they have conceived of His existence, it has been a relief to them to think that there is one over them to whose sway they are subject and that the world is not driven forward by blind chance and that they themselves are not bound down by an unrelenting fate.

Various indeed have been their notions of God. The mystical and philosophic Brahman has invented a divine trinity as best satisfying his refined speculations. Grecian and Roman mythology peopled the universe with gods many. The old Teutonic race enthroned a deity of power above the world whose will was supreme

over all human things. Other peoples, unable to distinguish the Creator from His works, have seen God in the sun, which, like a divine Eye, gazed daily upon the entire world around which it circled : in the still stars, which, like sentinels commissioned by the great King, stand on all the outposts of his dominions and keep silent ward and watch over all His creatures : in the solemn mountains, on whose turreted pinnacles are pitched His pavilions, now bathed in the glory of sunlight, and then veiled in the mists of massive clouds : in the dark woods, whose awful recesses and unexplored caverns conceal the court of the avenging monarch : in the viewless tempest and the wild storm whose shriek pierces their dwellings at midnight and whose path over the land and upon the sea is marked by upturned forests and shattered tenements and dismantled wrecks : in the cataract whose mist rises like the smoke of sacrifice to His throne and whose voice is like a ceaseless anthem upborne to His praise : in the broad, deep stream, whose waters fertilize vast territories : in the solemn sea, whose floods ebb and flow as though by their own will they daily and nightly visited the shores of many lands, now gently advancing and retreating along their sandy bounds and then madly dashing against their rocky coasts.

A God, of some kind, men will have. They know that they are weak : that somewhere there

must be power. At times they feel a reaching out for better sympathies, for holier love, than they can find in beings like themselves. Yet meagre and unsatisfying are their best unassisted conceptions of the Divine Being. God is remote. Eye hath not seen Him. Ear hath not heard His voice. Heart hath not felt the throbbings of His heart. Man feels like an orphan. He feels like a stranger in his father's home. He feels that the God has no sympathies with him. He cannot apprehend the Great Spirit, the awe of whose presence falls like a heavy, dark shadow upon him. He feels after God, if haply he may find Him. He looks into the depth: but the depth says, "He is not in me." He looks to the height: but the height says, "He is not here." He takes the wings of the morning and flies to the utmost bounds of the earth: but there he finds Him not for whom his soul languishes. He searches the darkness and the light: but they both declare that He is not in them. He questions the planets as they roll: but from their cold spheres they answer nothing. He calls to the universe peopled everywhere by His power: but all peoples and worlds say, "We know Him not." Still the baffled inquirer knows that God is, and that He is everywhere. Perplexed, saddened, the solitary orphan sobs for his Father. His human heart yearns for divine, paternal sympathies. His voice moans in anxious inquiry: "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where I

can find Thee. Draw me, and I will run after Thee. Oh that Thou wert as my brother!" To man thus dejected and forsaken, comes one fairer than the sons of men, representing Himself as their elder brother, yet claiming equality with God, and says, "Behold Him for whom you long, for whom, elsewhere, you seek in vain." It is Jesus. And He says unto us, "I am the way and the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me. If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him." And when, like Philip, we say, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," we may, each one of us, hear Jesus saying unto us, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then 'show us the Father?' Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else if my *word* is not enough, believe me for the sake of the *works* which I do and which none but God can do."

*In Christ* man's greatest want is fully met. In Him he finds his God. Let us think of *Christ, as revealing God.*

The Scriptural doctrine is that His advent was *the manifestation of God.* Says the beloved disciple, "For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father,

and was manifested unto us." The whole force of the Scripture representation is to this effect, that Jesus Christ proceeded from God and was God and revealed by His life the heart of God to the race. Exclude these ideas from its teachings, and the Bible becomes mere rhapsody and its meaning is emptied out. The Son of Man, who is also the Son of God, was not wholly of human, nor wholly of divine, origin. As it is stated in the Apostles' Creed, he "was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary." That divinity might become incarnate He subjected himself to the necessities of our estate, and that He might be the more closely related to us and might reveal Himself more fully to us, He separated not Himself from the entire experiences of our humanity. That we might comprehend Him, He appeared in the likeness of men, felt the burdens of our nature, shared in the infirmities as in the joys of our lot. "The Word was made flesh." "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world." "He that was in the form of God, and was made in fashion as a man." "In whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "The Father is in me and I in Him." "Who is the image of the invisible God." "I and my Father are one." "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Such passages as these, numerous and striking, force us to the conclusion that this

extraordinary person, this Jesus, with his wonderful gifts and claims, with His remarkable life and death, was indeed divine. As we meditate upon them all, we exclaim with the Roman centurion at the cross, "Truly this was the Son of God!" With Thomas, we cry, "My Lord and my God!" With the disciples gazing after their ascending Lord, we worship Him. With "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them," we say, "Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

Christ's advent was the manifestation of God to men. That great fact is the most luminous truth of Scripture. It is the sun of revelation, the center, the light, and the life of all the other truths which circle around this.

The motive for this revelation was sufficient to secure it. It might be thought a strange thing and improbable, not to say absurd and impossible, that God should thus reveal Himself to creatures. But we have seen what men are, to what conclusions they come, when unassisted. The great majority are pagans; the minority struggle after unattainable truth. But God wishes to be known. All His works are proofs that He does not seek to conceal Himself. The things that are made declare their Maker. The visible creation reveals the invisible Creator. Ourselves

announce God to us. But who is the God? asks the wondering student of his works. Where is He, that I may behold Him? What is He, that I may comprehend Him and worship Him? These results that we see around us allow us to place no limit to His attributes. That Power which could create the worlds, whose number no finite mind can compute, is such that we stand abashed before it, and because we can say nothing else which expresses the idea any better, we call it *infinite*; the *infinite* being as incomprehensible by us as the *God*. And then the providence of God, how vast it is! Who by searching can find it out? It reaches to the tiniest flower on whose fair bosom sparkles the dewy gem; to the star whose light reaches us only after a journey of a thousand years; to the little birds that sing in many a shady covert, the sparrows that fall not unobserved by the eye of God; to the cattle on a thousand hills; to the pearls that lie in the unfathomed abysses of the sea; to the painted leaves of the forest with which Autumn adorns the departing year; to every wind that blows and every shower that falls; to the ripening corn and all the fruits of the harvest time; to the dweller on the mountain side; to the dweller in the thronged city, to those who go down to the sea in ships, to the kings on their thrones, and to lonely, watching ones in their exile.

And this all-reaching, all-governing providence, we also call infinite. And so as we in-

investigate the divine attributes, all, all is infinite. We are lost in the boundless, incomprehensible existence which we call God. We can only bow down and adore, in awe, afar. There are no sympathies as yet between us. We cannot fall on the bosom of our Father: we cannot come to Him as dear children: He is to us the dreadful God, the almighty and everlasting Jehovah. Now, here it is that the revelation of God in Christ becomes significant to us. In order that God may reveal himself to us, in order that we may know Him, in order that His attributes may come within the range of our perception and sympathy, in order that this distance between us and God may be bridged over, He becomes Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh, the fullness of God revealed bodily. In no other way can the result be reached so well, so directly, as by the incarnation of the Son. And the same motive which would lead God to express Himself at all, which would lead Him to the work of creation, would also lead Him to appear in the likeness of men. Man is God's chiefest work out of heaven. The life of God brought into the history of the life of the race would be no disparagement of His glory, while it would most intimately and impressively and tenderly reveal Him to us. We cannot come directly to Jehovah. The finite cannot stand before the infinite. We must have some medium through which we can approach the God-



head. His throne is too awful for us. The light in which He dwells is too dazzling for our weak vision. *Christ* therefore is what we want. Christ the way, the truth, the life, meets human need. We can come unto the Father by Him. To secure such perfect adaptation to a glorious end, the very end of God in all His works, is surely not beneath the benevolent God. If He would have us know Him and, because we know Him, love Him, He will reveal Himself lovingly to us, and that He has done in Christ. "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."

The most important perfections of God can be communicated to us through Christ. There is much of mystery about the Incarnation. It is a great, solitary, wonderful fact in the world's otherwise trivial history. But if we take it in its most obvious significance, in the simplest but greatest meaning which it was designed to embody and manifest, God in man, doing and dying for the sins of the world, then it becomes a full and apparent and perfect and glorious revelation of Deity. What we want most of all to know is that God loves us, that He sympathizes with us, that He can be reconciled to us, that there can be union between us and Him. If we know these things, if they can be brought home to us as evident and felt realities, then the greatest result is gained. God in Christ secures this. If we accept this one fact, all the rest becomes plain, necessary truth. If God

was in Christ, if Jesus was the Son of God, then how closely to us is brought the infinite heart of God, then how real appears His love to us, then how are we drawn to Him in confidence, in filial affection, in holy intimacy !

“No man hath seen God at any time :” but we have seen “the only begotten Son, who hath declared Him,” “who is the image of the invisible God.” We look in wonder and in love at His life. It is all pure, holy, blessed. It is full of the largest sympathies, the tenderest love, the divinest compassions. It goes to the lowliest, the most miserable, the guiltiest, the most abandoned, with its radiance, its charity, its cheer, its benediction, its warm regard. It arrests thoughtful and wise men, like the young lawyer and the learned Nicodemus, with its loftiness and its disinterestedness. It touches the heart of sympathizing, charitable, affectionate woman : and she loves and trusts and clings to Him through all adverse scenes and fierce persecutions, not ashamed to wash His feet with tears and wipe them with the hair of her head, not reluctant to open her house to Him against whom the doors of Pharisee and scribe were shut, anointing His head with costliest ointment, weeping at His cross which she is the last to leave, and watching at His sepulchre which she is the first to reach. It beams on the trusting heart of childhood, when His words, “Suffer the little children to come unto me,” fall like sweetest

music on their ears, and they look up to His face with smiles and nestle in His bosom as lambs in the bosom of the kind shepherd when he gently carries them in his arms.

It rises before the poor, the unfortunate, the friendless, the sad, the heavy-laden, with a quiet, attractive loveliness and assures them of aid and comfort and rest. It rebukes the cunning craftiness, and meanness, and oppression of wicked men by its nobleness and sternness, and purity, and awful goodness. It is a life ever serene, majestic, simple, reverent, loving, Godlike. And through it all and in its crowning work, His mysterious death, God reveals Himself to us, as God was never conceived of before, could never have been conceived of. Here is love, rich, overflowing, unequalled. Here is compassion, mercy, placableness, tenderest union to us, benevolent sympathy for us, all indeed that we need to know of God, to lead us to trust Him, and to love Him. When we look upon God in Christ, He is no longer the stern, remote, incomprehensible, awful Monarch: He is our kind, most loving Father. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And such a Father! And this is *God*, doing all that Christ did, feeling for us all that Christ felt, suffering for us all that Christ suffered, dying for us as Christ died. Need we anything more? Is not this a most precious revelation? Let us then not stay away from this God of ours. Let us not doubt and won-

der and despise, until we perish, as though the great God could not condescend to all this. Let us receive and welcome the revelation and say of one who manifests such qualities of goodness, such attributes of greatness, every thing indeed to win us: This God shall be my God.

This revealing of God through Christ is suited to our nature. Responsive chords were struck whatever Christ did in the sight of men. Their heart-strings thrilled at His every tone. Many indeed stood aloof and mocked the carpenter's son. Jews in their bigotry, Greeks in their wisdom, despised Him. Pharisee, Sadducee, scribe, priests, doctors of the law; what was the Nazarene to them? But ah! there is a world of meaning in that one recorded fact: "The common people heard Him gladly." He taught them "not as the scribes." Rough soldiers, men hardened in war, sent by those in authority to take Him, dared not touch Him, though He stood alone, unarmed, so awed were they by His words, so unconsciously did He draw them to Himself by His wonderful power, and their only excuse was, "Never man spake like this man."

Wherever He went, along the Sea of Galilee, into the solitary wilderness, into the village or the thronged city, the multitudes were around Him. He was a joy to many an aged Anna and many a waiting Simeon. Many a Mary sat


gladly at His feet and heard His words. Rude fishermen were beguiled by Him away from their nets and boats. The publican left his taxes to be gathered by others. Gentle and pure-hearted women, those who ministered to Him, and wept for His loss, loved him through all to the fatal end.

Now this wide, deep love, this unconquerable attachment, shown to Christ while He was alive; yes, shown still stronger by those who since His ascension have loved Him whom they have not seen, loved Him so well that many floods could not drown their affection, nor many fires consume it: that rack, sword, cruel death, no device of man, no temptation of Satan, could make them swerve from it, proves that this revelation of God, of His heart, of His perfections, is just what is suited to our nature. The best way in which God can reach man is through Christ. God, as revealed in the person of His Son in the flesh, has power over human hearts beyond any other power which could have been brought to bear upon them. In this divine Person, who wept like an orphan over Jerusalem, who prayed as a child for an erring parent for those who crucified Him, who, though He had not where to lay His head, toiled on for those who would not receive Him, who bore reproach, persecution, desertion of friends, who at last died for those who nailed Him to the cross, is the Friend, the Brother, the God, for whom the

human heart, convinced of its need and roused to its guilt and its danger, everywhere longs. O this sight of God as He is in Christ, this seeing the Father in the Son, this baring of the divine heart before us, is the greatest, dearest, divinest truth on earth!

## XX.

### CHRIST THE PEOPLE'S PREACHER.

 **Q**N one day our Lord's audience was made up of publicans and sinners. They wished to hear Him once; and they streamed together to the place where He stood and quite surrounded Him. It was a picture for a painter. He so calm and grand, with a look of nobleness, and of tenderness mingled on His fine face lighted ever with a radiance from His own heaven, sympathy in every expression of His features, and every movement of His person, and every tone of His rich voice, the central figure on the open market-place: they rough and harsh, from their hateful tasks or their low living, with the grime of the world on them; old Roman tax-gatherers, hard with the hand of oppression, and the exacting clutch on the poor and perverse; old Jewish transgressors, bred in sin, adepts in wrong and lust and hate, glaring on Him with eyes blood-shot and faces foul from the slums, men who never before met in peace, surrounding with wonder and inquiry and hushed stillness this Man of men, the great Healer and Teacher of the time!

They came near unto Him : the hands of some of them might have reached His hand : they could look into His placid eyes : every word could be heard by them : the shadow of His person would fall on them as the sun declined.

They came to hear Him : feeling that He had something to say to them : knowing that they needed to hear what one like Him should speak. There they are. One can see the group in that Jewish town.

What will the Saviour say to them ?

It is a matter of thrilling interest to know. We can imagine what He might have spoken of : He who knew all things : He whose home and throne were ever of old in heaven : He who knew all that was in man and whose eye ran along every path on which the guilty feet of the men before Him had ever been. What will He say to them ?

It is a matter that concerns us. For what He said to them is what He would speak, what He does speak to us. If we are not publicans we are *sinner*s, and we need the very words which they would need : with them we should come near to Him to hear His word.

Outside was a group of scowling scribes and Pharisees, big in the conceit of their piety, whose envious and hateful murmur could be heard : " This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." The Lord heard : the publicans and sinners heard. And He spake : so artlessly



is it told of Him: taking no notice of those proud Pharisees in the outer rim of His audience: looking only into the eyes, looking deeper only into the hearts, of these who were nearest and who wanted just the right word, who were waiting for it and who perhaps would be saved by it: He spake this parable unto them. What man of you, He said, stretching forth His hand to them, speaking so personally that every one of them felt that He was addressing him, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me: for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance. That was Christ's first word to those hard but listening men. They knew that they were sinners: that they were lost: and He wanted them to know that they were thought of and loved and sought for: that there was a Good Shepherd who was seeking them to save them.

What man of you; any one of you having a flock of one hundred sheep, if one were lost, would leave the ninety-nine in the accustomed

pasture-ground, and would go after the lost one until you have found it.

There is a great meaning in the little word which is rendered "after;" it implies that he goes with the intention and strong purpose to find that strayed one and to bring it back. His whole heart is in the undertaking and he will not be balked in it. He will climb the mountain sides: he will ford the mountain streams; he will breast the mountain winds and through flood and tempest and wilderness will persevere until somewhere he will find the lost. And then he will not drive it before him and whip it back to the flock, nor even commit it to a hireling, but will lift it to his own shoulders and bear it over the rough way, rejoicing that he has not searched in vain; that the wild stream did not sweep it off on its torrent; that the wild beast did not seize it as his prey; that the wild storm did not pelt it to death. So glad is he, that, on reaching home, he calls his friends and his neighbors together and bids them rejoice with him that he has found the sheep that was lost.

The publicans and sinners could all appreciate the parable. Then the Saviour applies it to them: telling them that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance. They knew, those rough men knew, what he meant. They knew that even then the Good Shepherd stood before them,

that he was even then seeking them to save them.

*They* were as the lost sheep; *He* the Shepherd seeking to save. It was not a story merely that they were hearing: it was a statement of themselves. They could anticipate, as they stood there in the market-place of that old Galilean town, those wonderful pictures of the early Christian art in which the Saviour is depicted as the Shepherd bearing home on His shoulders the lost but found sheep. His tender words were words for them. The Hebrew scriptures were full of the figure of the strayed sheep and of the Lord as the Shepherd of the people. And now in fuller meaning than that of the old scriptures, He who was always the Shepherd of the flock set before these listening sinners His own undaunted activity and loving solicitude and heavenly joy in their recovery. What other message could have been so timely and so true? What else could He have spoken so fitted to touch and subdue those hard natures which would yet respond to sympathy and love?

Among them perhaps were some women, mothers, wives, sisters of the men grouped around Him. He, who saw into their hearts, who perhaps knew that some of them longed for peace and forgiveness, quickly spoke a word for them.

Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle,

and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it she calleth her female friends and neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over the sinner that repenteth. It was a small thing, one piece of silver, ten of which were not worth two dollars, but it was one-tenth of all that she had. They could understand, those Galilean women, the story of the quickly lighted candle, the broom flying across the floor, the diligent and unceasing search into every corner and cranny, until the white coin was seen and recovered. Every piece of that coin bore the image of the Emperor: and that image was not effaced though it were covered with dust and the sweepings of the floor. They knew that they, lost women, sinners, bore the divine image and that however depraved they might have become in association with men of sin and perversity, yet they were thought of and valued and sought for; and they could not help feeling in that great presence that the very Saviour whom they needed stood before them, within reach of their soiled hands and sordid souls.

Those were blessed words of hope, taken from the experience of their household life, assuring them that the anxiety pictured in the lighted candle and the sweeping broom and the successful search, was that which He felt for them, that

out of all their sins, their lost condition, they might be rescued, and that He had come for that.

And I think that many a poor desolate woman's soul in that strange group around the Master beat with a new hope as she felt sorrow for her sad sin and looked into those eyes of heavenly pity. That was Christ's second word to the gathered sinners. And then He impressed upon them, out of what they knew of the joy of finding a lost treasure or a prized coin, their own relation to those who would like to rejoice in their salvation. Likewise, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Let one of you now repent and begin a new life and you shall waken a joy throughout heaven: God will rejoice and angels will rejoice over a soul lost and found. There *is* joy: now, immediately on the conversion: and it is just as natural as when a glad woman rejoices for the piece of silver that is found, or as when a shepherd exults that his wandering sheep has been rescued from the perils of the mountains.

But this is not all; the Saviour has still another message for them; perhaps He sees that their hearts are made tender by His kind, loving speech. They did not expect such words from Him; *He* so pure and good; *they* so mean and sinful. Unexpected words of kindness break down, proudest, hardest natures. It is told of our

bold Gen. Hooker, who lately died, that, during the war, in the severe winter, he visited our military prison at Rock Island where three thousand rebel prisoners were confined. They were all drawn up in line for his inspection, and he scanned every man from head to heel, as he passed before them. At the end of the line the General halted and half wheeled his proud horse and lifted his plumed hat with knightly grace to those rebels as though they had been princes, and with gentle look and voice said: "Young gentlemen, I am sorry, very sorry for you, and hope soon our differences will be settled so that you all can return safely home again." It was so unexpected and so different from what they had been accustomed to hear that it thrilled them like a current of electricity and instantly from those "ragged rebs." three thousand throats gave a ringing cheer for fighting Joe Hooker.

Christ then told them that tenderest, sweetest of all His parables; the story of the prodigal son. A certain man had two sons. The younger of them, fretting to be free, asked for his portion of his father's estate, and, gathering it all together, went out into a far country and spent it all in riotous living. A mighty famine came on there and he began to be in want. He joined himself to a citizen who sent him into his fields to feed swine. He would fain have filled his belly with the pods that the swine did eat; but no man gave

even those unto him. In that degradation, sin and want, the spendthrift came to himself. He said, How many of the lowest servants, the day-laborers, of my father, have bread enough and to spare and I, his son, am perishing here with hunger. I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy day-laborers. He did not even ask for a *home* in the house, not to be a house servant, but a common day-laborer. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to the servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring forth the fatted calf and kill it, for there can be no other such occasion of joy; and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry. And to the elder son complaining of this treatment of one who had devoured his estate with harlots, the father said, It was meet that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

O how much there was here for those publicans and sinners who stood around Him ! They were like the prodigal. They knew it, knew it well. He had drawn their picture. He had photographed themselves. They had left their father : had spent all : were in want. Every rough face turned toward Him there was the face of a prodigal. The blood-tints that stained every eye told of sin. The leer that lurked under the brow of one, the defiance that shot from the contemptuous expression of another, the stolid indifference that mantled the whole look and position of others, were the betrayers of interior depravity, revealers of personal guilt.

And what words were these that they were hearing ! No accusation was hurled at them : no scorn met their aggravated guilt : no reproach was leveled at their long, bad lives. This Man above all other men ; this divine Teacher of His race, looks at them with a face softened to deepest pity, stretches out to them an open palm, speaks to them in words which thrill with love, calls them from their sad bad lives as a brother with a dying agony might call, as a father in full compassion and ready to forgive might call !

The three parables are a three-fold argument and appeal. First, we have the silly sheep exchanging the green pasture-grounds for the wild barren mountains, showing the folly of the sinner in forsaking the place of peace and safety. Then, we have the coin fallen and lost upon the



floor and concealed in the dust, its stamp unerased and its value undiminished, showing the self-degradation of the sinner, yet with the possibilities of his recovery.

Thirdly, we have the younger son in his ungoverned willfulness, breaking away from home, squandering his inheritance, and degrading himself to vile companionship and the care of repulsive beasts. First, there is lost one of a hundred, then one of ten, then one of two. First, a comparatively small proportion of all is lost, then a tithe of all, then a superlatively large amount, one of only two sons. First it is a brute, then a coin, and then a man. The sheep, the silver, the son, one in the wild mountains, one in the floor dust, one in the swine-pens, bring out vividly the wretchedness of the sinner. The Saviour's hearers knew the meaning of those parables, for they spoke of their own experience.

Yet they were not left in despair: their position was not hopeless. Over against the wandering in the wilderness was the determined seeking of the shepherd: over against the concealment in the dust of the floor was the labor and looking of the woman: over against the self-will and vileness of the prodigal was the waiting, longing love of the father, not willing that he should perish but that he should come to repentance. Then in each case, is the after-joy: the joy of the neighbors with the shepherd, the joy of the female friends with the woman, the joy of the household

with the happy father, figures of the joy that makes heaven glad when any lost sinner repents.

The sheep is brought back: the coin is restored: the son is at home again, the best robe is brought forth, the seal-ring and the shoes are put upon him, and the stalled calf is killed and there is feasting and merriment in the old house again. The Saviour looked into every eye around Him, spoke to every heart of that group of publicans and sinners, woke memories and fears and hopes and repentings, let us believe, in many souls of them, so that those dead became alive again, and those lost were found.

Christ, the Preacher to the people in Galilee, speaks the same truthful and tender words to every reader. Those beautiful and touching parables, with the color of heaven running through them, are His divine messages to every one of us. We are the lost sheep, we are the lost coin, we are the lost prodigal. And there is joy waiting for our recovery: joy, as it may be, of a mother, who has waited long in heaven, as the father of the prodigal waited, for the best tidings from the earth: joy, as it may be, of a child, plucked like a bud out of the earthly conservatory, made glad by the word that fills the heavens with supremest joy. Many dear old friends of other days, of the happy youth-time, as it may be, the loved, the departed, the longed-for, wait and watch for the decision that shall waken among them the new, old joy.

## XXI.

### CHRIST THE UNCHANGING FRIEND.

**W**ITH loving thoughtfulness the early disciples dwelt upon the character of Christ. Forms of expression start upon us from their writings and addresses so full of sweet pathos and sterling trustfulness and triumphant joy, that we are arrested by them and from the general subject of the epistle or discourse we turn to this new theme of which, whatever was his particular subject, the heart of the writer or speaker was fullest. As the primitive rocks of our globe rise through all subsequent formations and crop out in almost every land, so through all other themes, penetrating and rising above them, does the greatest of all themes project itself, in the expressed thought of the early Christians.

With them, Christ is the granite foundation and the enduring topmost stone. Especially are we struck with this in the nervous, forceful writings of the chiefest of the Apostles. His great soul was full of Christ. Though he would not dare to say it of himself, trembling as he did lest, after having preached to others, he himself should be a castaway, yet his life assures us that Christ

was formed in him the hope of glory. Christ was with him the first and the last, the beginning and the end, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things. And so, whatever was his theme, Christ was always the foremost character in it.

As in some grand and matchless harmony, through all the life-song that he lifted up to the praise of the Redeemer, Christ was ever the sweet and crowning and finished refrain. He determined to know nothing among the people to whom he wrote or spoke, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It was a title sufficiently honorable for him to sign himself the servant of Jesus Christ. Though a scholar among scholars, he gloried in that which the wisdom of the world considered the foolishness of the cross. As a free-born Roman citizen he longed most of all to visit the capital of that proud and all-conquering empire that he might "preach the gospel to them that are at Rome also." In his masterly argument in the Epistle to the Romans, on the weakness of the law and the efficacy of the gospel as a reliance for lost men, it is with exulting and triumphant language that he concludes the eighth chapter, on the impossibility of the separation of Christians from their Lord.

If in another epistle he mentions the name of Christ, he appends to it the phrase "who is blessed forevermore." In another place when he had occasion to say the faith of the Son of

God, he adds, "who loved me and gave Himself for me." If he speaks of the love of Christ it is "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." It is not enough to speak merely of the gospel, but it is "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."

In the Epistle to the Hebrews there is a singular sentence which stands in the midst of practical exhortations, as an independent proposition. It rises like a monument to Christ in the path of common Christian duty. It is as though this one statement were enough to fortify any requirement of Christ. Do this: do that: be faithful here: be earnest there: be watchful everywhere: because, "*Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, and to-day, and forever.*" It is enough to strengthen any appeal to connect it with the name of Christ. His immutability is the proof of every argument: the complement of every creed, the crown of every work. All duties are corollaries from that sole proposition. It was enough for the dauntless warriors of France to know that the eye of the adored Emperor watched them as they moved fearlessly into the shock and strife of battle. It is altogether enough for the soldiers of Immanuel to be reminded that their great Captain is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever: that the eye that has watched the progress of the great earth-struggle from the first, that has marked the spot where each faithful warrior has fallen, still

watches the fortunes of the contest and will give each one still who falls the grace to shout with the last breath, Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This sentence reveals that loving trustfulness with which the Apostle and the early disciples clung to Christ. Some fact in regard to Him who loved them and died for them rises through the tide of rhetoric and the deductions of logic: stands as the corner-stone of every argument and every appeal.

Here it is *Christ's unchangeableness*. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." This is a sublime and interesting statement and one well fitted to cheer on in the life of faith those to whom the Apostle was writing and all who inherit or receive the treasure of such a truth.

The fact of Christ's unchangeableness announces to us *His divinity*. Its foremost effect is to awaken our adoration. There is but one being of whom it can be said, He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. Change characterizes the world's inhabitants. We speak of the everlasting hills. But they are only of recent origin. Mighty internal forces have remodeled the surface of the globe, crowding up the mountains and depressing the beds of the seas. The wear of the elements is constantly, slowly but constantly, leveling the hills and ere long they are to be burnt up. The present is

one in a succession of changes which have altered the entire appearance and adaptation of the solid earth. Different orders of beings have heretofore peopled this planet from any that are now living upon it, and when the "new earth" shall be reconstructed after the final conflagration it will undoubtedly be the habitation of very different beings from those who now dwell upon it. Change too passes over all the works of man. Empires pass away. Cities, once the seats of commerce and busy life, the capitals of power, turn into heaps of ruins. Thrones crumble. Armies, nations, races, fade away like dissolving mists.

"Like the baseless fabric of a vision,  
The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve ;  
And, like an unsubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind."

But above the world, Creator and Lord of it,  
is One who changes not.

"Of old He laid the foundation of the earth :  
And the heavens are the work of His hands.  
They shall perish, but He shall endure :  
Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment :  
As a vesture shall He change them and they shall be  
changed :  
But He is the same, and His years shall have no end."

“With Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” This attribute of divinity is His. We may feel therefore that we come to one who is no less than God Himself. Gratefully and humbly we should adore Him. Whenever we address Him, as He presents Himself to us, in His various offices of grace, whether as our Prophet, our Priest, or our King, we should say with Thomas, “My Lord and my God.” From our hearts, in harmony with the praise which rises before the throne from the angels and the elders and the heavenly hosts, whose number is ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, should ascend the ascription, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” At all times, when we feel the need of superior strength and better wisdom and pardon of our sins and justification with God, we can call to mind the fact that our Redeemer and Advocate is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.

Christ’s unchangeableness promotes *perfect confidence* in Him. We have in our hands the record of His love for man, of His love for, and His gracious dealings with, His people, of His promises to His enemies and to His friends. We know what He has been to us and what he has done for us. When the world lay, prospectively, in the guilt of sin, when its populations were all



seen to be estranged from God and exposed to His just and deserved curse, Christ came forward as their Redeemer. He proposed, voluntarily, to die for them, at such time as should be best; in the meantime, to have His purposed death so announced to them, that they could look forward to it as a sure thing and rely upon it. When the ages of darkness and human guilt, preparatory to His advent, had rolled gloomily into the past eternity; in the fullness of time, when the scattered races of men had universally corrupted their way and their hearts, so that the need, the necessity of Redemption was everywhere felt; when the earth bore upon its torn and scarred surface the signs of the curse, and death had ridged all its plains with graves so that His presence would be hailed who is the resurrection and the life; when the population of the globe had become immense; when human power, in the rise and fall of successive empires, had declared its weakness; when human wisdom in the seats of its finished learning and through the instructions of its sages had manifested its utter insufficiency to grapple with the greatest truths and to satisfy the wants of the mind; when even the Hebrew system, with all its ceremonial magnificence and impressiveness, with its pure morality and its types and shadows the promise of better things to come, had deteriorated from its ancient purity into empty traditions and formal routine: and when the way was

prepared by divine providence for the spread of the gospel, Christ, long-promised and long-awaited, came ; came, to achieve the redemption of the world. He lived among us in such a wonderful manner as to demonstrate His claim to be the Son of God, speaking as never man spake, walking in a pathway such as no other one hath ever used, enduring what mere humanity has never endured from devils, men, and even from His Father.

At last, after a pretended trial, after cruel mockings, after basest ingratitude, sinking under His cross, pierced with a chaplet of thorns, bearing the world's sins, wounded for our transgressions, as a lamb to the slaughter He went to Calvary to die, the just for the unjust, the Saviour of sinners. Such as He was throughout that life, in that fearful dying, such is He always. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." He loves sinners still, with the love that He had when He left heaven for them, when He cried, as a heart-broken parent for lost children, to all the weary and heavy-laden, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." We cannot reflect on what He has done from the over-flowings of His affection for us without feeling a most perfect confidence in Him promoted by our thought. Christ's dear love and gracious dealings with His people also promote confidence. It is for them He preserves the world which He created. Were it not for His people He would permit the

fire to burst forth and consume the globe. The true history of the world is the History of Redemption. The great mind of Edwards seized upon this central idea, and in his profound work on this subject we can see developed the true theory of human history. Thrones, principalities, powers, armies and navies, the contests of nations and races, arts, sciences, inventions, improvements, trade, commerce, learning, enterprise, discoveries, these are but the digressions of history : its main volume is the work of Christ. The thread of the world's story is the love of the Redeemer for His people. Before He came, His thoughts were given to them. Throughout the commotions and changes of all time, He has rescued them, at one time calling them to go into a land that they knew not of, at another urging them forth from doomed cities, again bearing them safely in the ark over the sunken world, bringing them forth with a mighty hand from the house of bondage, causing their enemies to flee before them, raising up defenses for them among the powerful, conferring upon them gifts of position, power, influence, control, until, once despised, they are now the foremost in all the qualities of greatness. And He who has thus guarded and blessed His people, is the same, yesterday, and to-day, and forever. "If He be for us, who can be against us?" Who can fail to have assured confidence in Him?

He stops not with what He has done. His

promises to them, which shall in no wise fail, insure still larger and ever increasing blessings throughout all time. His people are to have dominion, and through them Christ is to reign supreme over all the earth. Shall we, can we doubt, distrust, such a Head over all things to His Church?

Besides, we have been, personally, the sharers in such blessings from Him, that we ought to cherish the firmest trust in Him. He who has loved us, who has died for us, who has pardoned some of us, and accepted us as co-heirs with Himself, is forever the same, and forever will delight to exalt and bless us. What He has done for us is only the proof of what He is willing to do. What He has been to us, through changes, trials, fears, joys, that are past, He is willing still to be.

Memory, therefore, may bind us, by its spell, to the cross. Thoughts of other days may be as golden links to hold us true to Christ, who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.

Christ's unchangeableness pledges to us, the *divine sympathy*. If there is any fact that stands boldly, prominently, out in the recorded life of Jesus, it is His intense sympathy for burdened and distressed humanity. Moved by that, He came among them, on His redemptive work. The sight of earth's woes, the hearing of its groans, the agony of its struggling, perplexed, dissatisfied generations, touched His infinite

heart, and drew forth expressions and acts of tenderest benevolent sympathy. And while He was with men, He was moved by their sorrows and distresses. He saw them wandering and scattered and defenseless, as sheep that have no shepherd, and He longed to take them in His arms and carry them in His bosom, and lead them beside still waters, and protect them within His fold. The poor, the orphaned, the distressed, those who bore heavy burdens, and whom the great and powerful and rich scorned, were those to whom He preached the gospel, and whom He most tenderly welcomed to Himself. Through the thick darkness in which they groped on sin's mountains He caused the pure light of His love to beam upon them, in which they could walk safely, fearing no evil. Over the floods upon which they were tossed fearfully, He caused His voice to be heard by them saying, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: he that cometh to me shall never perish." We might take up particular instances of His manifested sympathy, and learn from them what He will be to us who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.

As He looked from Olivet upon the city that slumbered beneath Him, He broke forth into lamentation over it as a Father might bewail the ruin of his children, until His utterance was broken by His grief, so that the sentence is preserved for us interrupted by his tears. "If

thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace,—but now are they hid from thine eyes.”

When grieved by the continued rejection which He received from those among whom most of His mighty works were done, so that He could not forbear a declaration of the woe which they were bringing rapidly upon themselves, as if oppressed by the fearful thought and willing still to do what He could to save them, His heart gushes over in one more appeal to them, “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.” With all that wealth of love which was paralleled only by the wealth of His exhaustless supplies, He utters to all the needy this unlimited promise, “He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” And what were all those marvelous miracles which distinguished and graced His life but the manifestations of His blessed sympathy for the poor, the suffering, the sorrowing? In the clear waters of the Pool of Bethesda, where the infirm man was healed, you may see mirrored the heart of Christ toward you, whatever may be your bodily or mental maladies. He whose life is summed up in that expressive and comprehensive phrase, “He went about doing good:” who restored the withered hand of one; who gave the blind men sight, and caused the deaf to hear His words, and made the lame leap for joy; who called back to life

the only son of his mother, and she a widow ; who brought joy to the saddened house of the ruler of the synagogue by raising from death his youthful and lamented daughter ; who loved Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus so well that He restored him to them after he had been dead four days ; He will feel for you whatever may be your sorrows and distresses.

You cannot lack the tender sympathy of Christ : for He is the same, yesterday, and to-day, and forever. And every scene and act of His blessed life which brings out to view His love for others, His tenderness for the burdened and bereaved, is a pledge of the same sympathy on His part for you. In all your afflictions He is afflicted. When you watch by the sick, Jesus watches with you. When alone you suffer and feel that no one cares for you, you are not alone, for He is with you who will never leave nor forsake His people. When you mourn over the waywardness of those for whom your prayers have been mingled with your tears, you may be sure of His sympathy who came unto His own and His own received Him not. When you stand solitary and smitten by the grave where you have buried the best part of your life, you shall hear his sympathetic voice whispering to you, "Thy friend shall rise again." And when your fluttering and disturbed heart fails to appropriate all the truth of the assurance, you shall hear Him again saying, "I am the resurrec-

tion, and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me shall never die."

Into that heart that will entertain Christ and will believe His words shall come solace and strength sufficient to bear all trials, to press forward along every burning track, though it be even in the footsteps of Him who trod the wine-press alone.

Christ's unchangeableness assures us of a *certain way of salvation*. As a Saviour also He "is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." The same love that led Him down from heaven to this world, that led Him forth among men on His divine ministrations, that led Him to endure the agonies and pains of His fearful death for sinners, still fills His heart. He looks now from the heights of heaven with the same compassion upon all who are estranged from God that He had when from Olivet He looked upon Jerusalem and wept over it. The same melting words of entreaty and sorrowful sympathy which He addressed to sinners in tones which broke their hearts, He would still address to us. The same plain and simple terms of salvation on which He ever invited the lost to Himself are the terms which He offers to us. And these terms He offers to every one of us. As His redemption was not a Particular Redemption, but a Redemption for all men, a Redemption so broad as to include every sinner in it and not a particular,



limited number of favored sinners, so none are now excluded from His mercy, unless by their own voluntary rejection of Him. If any one among us is lost, it is because he will not come unto Christ that he may have life. His arms are thrown broadly open to welcome and clasp us all. He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance : and if any do perish it is by grieving first the heart of Christ and then by hardening their own hearts.

His sweet love and pity are ever and ever the same.

He looks upon those who are children, with the same tenderness with which he looked upon the children of Perea, when He laid His hands upon them and blessed them and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God." That sweet Saviour longs to be their Saviour. He has never taken back those precious words, "I love them that love me and those that seek me early shall find me."

The same full pardon which He freely bestowed upon the sinner who brought an alabaster box of precious ointment, as He sat at meat in a Pharisee's house, and began to wash His feet with tears and to wipe them with her flowing hair and to anoint them with the ointment, when He said, "Her sins which are many are forgiven her," would He gladly bestow upon any and

every one of us, no matter how many and great our sins have been.

That divine grace which He manifested when in tones of pity and love He said unto a broken-hearted sinner, "Go, and sin no more," He would delight to manifest to us. The Saviour of the Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven devils, would be the Saviour of the most guilty one. He who told the story of the Prodigal Son to illustrate his own feelings for the wayward, would to-day welcome to His heart anyone who has wandered away in the sins and misery of the world like that guilty prodigal. The same love that He had for the rich young man, who went away from Him sorrowfully, because he could not quite give up the world for Christ, He has for those now who only lack the one thing needful. The sad, melting words, wrung from His heart, over the rejection of those for whom He came, "How often would I have gathered thy children together—but ye would not," reveal His feelings toward those who now reject Him. Nay, that still more pitiful prayer, which, even in His dying moments He offered for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," showed what Christ's feelings are for those who have crucified Him afresh by rejecting Him as a Saviour. He whose life is given to us in the gospels, whose heart is bared to us in these instances of His pity and compas-

sion and forgiveness, "is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

The personal appeal comes to us, Will we accept Him as our own Saviour, and find, as those found who came to Him when He was on earth, how great and rich and full His love is?



## XXII.

### CHRIST'S CLAIM ON MEN OF INFLUENCE.

**I**N all our so-called Christian communities there is a body of men, varying in number, in different places, but unvarying in their position, who accept Christianity intellectually, but who stand aloof from Christ personally and practically. These men would consider themselves discredited if opposition to Christ or indifference to His Kingdom were imputed to them. They would not be considered so unintelligent as to be thought uncognizant of the perpetual miracle of the history of Christianity in the world, which as Mr. Lecky characterizes it, was such "that its teachers should bend the mightiest monarchs to their will, and stamp their influence on every page of legislation, and direct the whole course of civilization for a thousand years." Sometimes they think of themselves as neutrals: not regarding the maxim of the Master, "He who is not with me is against me." Perhaps they claim that they are Christians, though without any standard of Christianity that would sanction the claim.

Generally, and more fairly, they honestly con-

cede that they have not accepted Christ as a personal Redeemer and Lord : *i. e.* have not gone to Him for salvation from their sins, and have not yielded their lives to Him in unconditional obedience to all His commands. Still they hold the Bible to be the Word of God, Christ to be the Saviour of sinners, religion to be the duty of man, faith to be the door into the Kingdom, the Holy Spirit to be the renewer of the soul, death to be the end of probation, eternity to be the realm of destiny. Indeed, accepting the Scripture, they accept its doctrines, and recognize its prescribed duties.

They are men of greater or less influence : to whom a certain number look as models or examples for themselves : at least as those to whom less decided and less intelligent men can point in the way of excuse for their own inattention or indifference to Christ. I propose to consider here *The claim of Christ on men of influence.*

The claim of Christ is the claim of one who is worthy of the deference of such men. There is not one of them who would deny that proposition. Whatever may be their opinion of Christians, they have a sincere respect for Christ. Whatever criticisms they may level at the way in which the Lord is represented by those who assume to follow Him, they have no animadversions to make either in respect to His person or His character or His mediatorial work. In

their thought they exalt Christ to the first place. He is Lord of all. He is perfect in His attributes and in all that makes Him what He is. His redemptive office is one that demands the homage and gratitude of all men.

There is no need, therefore, of argument to convince them that the Saviour is worthy of their deference. When then He comes to them with the claim for their lives, for their love and loyalty, for their obedience and service, they should readily, gladly, gratefully, yield to the claim, and say like Thomas, "My Lord, and my God!" They have nothing to object to the worthiness of Him who makes the supreme demand upon them. They respect the reverence which He has received from uncounted numbers of believers, the devotion which has made men and women and children willing, most glad, to sacrifice anything and everything most dear for Him, the love which has proved itself to be the most intense of human passions as it has burned and glowed and endured for Him. His claim upon them, therefore, should have quick and thorough acquiescence. They should ask, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" He is worthy who asks for their lives.

The claim of Christ on men of influence should be accepted because Christianity is for strong men. "Solid food is for full-grown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil." The truth of

Christianity is the weightiest truth that challenges human thought and attention. It is all solid food, and is, therefore, for full-grown men, for those who by reason of experience have had their senses exercised to discern good and evil, to distinguish the true and the false. It is indeed simple in its essentials, so simple that a child can grasp it: but its very simplicity commends it also to mature minds. It is clear truth. The great maxims of law are clear and simple. The facts of science are plain to the understanding. The regulations of life are such that common men can comprehend them. But all these are more or less profound. Indeed, the greatest truths are both simple and profound. The sea has shallows in which a child can wade: it has depths beyond the sounding of the strongest man.

The greatest question that a human soul can ask is the question, What shall I do to be saved? The answer to that question is within the reach of humble intellect: it has meaning in it deep enough for the profoundest philosophy. No man loses his self-respect who makes that question foremost. No man misuses his time or his abilities or his opportunities who lays everything else aside till that question is settled. It is a question whose relative importance is measured by the worth of the immortal soul. It is a question whose rank may be determined by the bliss of heaven or the woe of hell. It is a question that starts from the cross of a suffering Re-



deemer: that finds its importance in the transcendent sacrifice of the Son of God. The brightest intellects that God has created, the mature and disciplined spirits whose studies have swept through peopled space, who are old and learned in the ways of God, recognize no subject more vast than this, more worthy to look into. Men of influence can find nothing which commands their attention more thoroughly. The claim of Christ, through the work of His redemption, is the first claim upon the strongest minds.

The whole range and sweep of revealed Christianity, in all its doctrines and demands, challenges the notice, nay, the unqualified loyalty, of the sturdiest minds. Longinus, who was called a "walking library," the acutest critic and scholar of his day, a pagan, as we say, called the first sentence of the Bible one of the most sublime in any writings. Measure, if you can, the thought of *God, in the beginning, creating*. Sir William Jones wrote, "Independently of the divine origin of the Scriptures, I have found in them more true wisdom, more practical good sense, and warmer benevolence, a higher strain of thought and poetry, than I have found \* \* in all other works put together." He was the broadest scholar of his time. Christianity cannot be exhausted by you. The deeper you go, the richer will be its veins and deposits of truth.

Strong men have found the claim of Christ to be imperative and exhaustive. They have found

that there was solid food in it for full grown men, that however thoroughly their senses had been exercised to discern truth, there was in it that which was important and deep enough both to employ and to satisfy them. It has won on its merits. It has stood all tests. Nothing else has encountered such enmity as has the cross of Christ. Every sword has been unsheathed against it. Ingenuity has spent itself to destroy it. But it has held its place: and it has had the support and the loyalty of the best minds. The roll of faith is a roll of eminent names. Standing among the common men who have embraced Christ, are the scholars of many ages, are the leaders of human opinion, are the men of most eminent manhood, are those who have wrought most efficiently for the good of their fellow-men.

The books of widest teaching are the works of Christian writers. The science of best authenticity rests on the research of Christian explorers. Men of thought, men of action as well, men of the study and men of the cabinet and the camp, have stood for Christ, have acknowledged that they owed all to Him. Their best life has been their life in Christ. Their common confession is, Christ liveth in me. Gladstone, bearing the burdens of an empire, is kept in serenity, because he daily communes with his Lord, who is the Lord of all men. He has lately written: "All I write, and all I think, and all I hope, is based

upon the divinity of our Lord, the one central hope of our poor wayward race."

Bismarck, when he presided in the imperial cabinet, daily led his household and his servants in family prayer for divine strength and light, looking to Jesus the beginner and the finisher of faith. In palaces, in universities, in senates, in workshops and in ships, wherever there is leadership, there is also faith in Christ. The strongest men are on His side. You join those who weigh the most, intellectually and morally, when you become a Christian.

Men of influence owe it to themselves not to be on the side of Satan. His service is a degrading service: it is as mean as wicked. There are two sides, Christ's and Satan's. Those who are not with Christ are with His enemy. He takes no cognizance of neutrality. Neutrality is ruled out. It simply, is not. The enrollment of men is under one standard or the other—the white banner of Christ, the black flag of Satan. Man must be a free man or a menial: and freedom is only in Christ.

Not to be with Him, for Him, is to be against Him. Such is His own decision. Men, therefore, who hold places of influence, who decide for other men, who carry a following, who are thought to be good enough to go by, should be sensitive as to their own Leader, should be careful not to be for themselves on a side which their intelligence and their conscience pro-

nounce hurtful and destroying. Every man of influence should be self-respecting. He should hold himself aloof from the leader of bad influence, from the instigator of all evil, from that infernal power by which woe with sin has desolated the fair earth and robbed its people of their peace. It is a simple duty which every such man owes to himself, if there were nothing else to be thought of, to be opposed to Satan.

On the principle of simple consistency men of influence should yield to the claim of Christ. Some of them are fathers, and they claim respect and obedience from their children. Some of them are employers, and they claim diligence and fidelity on the part of their employees. Some of them are magistrates, and they claim loyalty and respect for law on the part of citizens. In whatever position they are, they expect gratitude for favors, they expect kindness in return for kindness, they hold that love should be esteemed, that dependence should be acknowledged, that correct principles should regulate business and hold society together. It is as plain as an axiom with them that one man should appreciate what another has done for him.

Consistency, simplest consistency, with their own demands, with their own sense of what is right, with the practical principles which they avow and insist upon, requires that they should yield to Christ's claim. He is your Creator,

your Redeemer. You owe everything to Him: everything of the world that is worth having, everything spiritual, holy, heavenly. His law is supreme over you. His love is unbounded for you. His work, His sacrifice, His agony for you, are beyond words to express. His kingdom is the one government to which you owe your highest loyalty. Over everything of personality, of family, of society, of nationality, of common brotherhood, rises the august and comprehensive and loving claim of Christ. You cannot reject it, without rejecting your own most cherished principles. You cannot ignore it, without casting contempt on all your better judgment in all other affairs.

You believe and profess that men who have influence in society, in politics, in business, in education, in the progress of mankind, should use that influence for all that is best in all those spheres of action. How can you be consistent with yourself if you do not yield to the claim of Christ for your best service and influence, for your open and avowed loyalty to Him? Is it for you, and such as you, to take the course which would abolish the sacraments, which would do away necessarily with the organized church, which would leave Christ without any open following, which would antagonize His ordinances and His commands? You cannot really maintain it. You must see that on your own principles you should return love for

Christ's love, you should carefully, rigidly, loyally, fulfill all that Christ requires of those whom he has redeemed.

Men of influence should yield to Christ's claim because they have influence. Influence is a sacred trust. It is a providential power. God has permitted you to have it for a holy purpose. You might have been where other men are, who are low-down and craven and mean and who lack spirit. The splendid ascendancy which you have is the very royalty of manhood. This fine authority which comes from your station, from your intellectual supremacy, from your consistent character, from your excellent living, is the regalest crown that can be worn by man. The power that you easily wield over other men, because you are their natural or ordained superior, is higher than any that is represented by scepter, or that is conferred by suffrage.

No throne stands on such eternal principles. No aristocracy has such undisputed title. No lineage, traced by blood and sanctioned by deeds, gives such undoubted right. You stand where you stand, because you deserve, in the judgment of your peers, to stand there.

You cannot misapply or misuse your influence without disloyalty to Him who has the highest claim upon you. To refuse to yield it all to Christ is treason to your best friend, to your own divine redeemer.

God claims it for Himself. Christ, by the

misery, and by the merit, of His passion, claims it all, to be employed and consecrated in His service. Christ wants the best. He summons the noblest. He does not call for only the forlorn hope.

One of the great pictures of Defregger, the finest artist of our day, in the Pinakothek at Munich, is entitled, *The Last Muster*. The armies of the Tyrol have gone down in disastrous battle. The young men who were enrolled, the flower of those mountain valleys, have fallen in defense of their homes. The veterans, schooled in the hard discipline of war, have yielded to superior force. The call comes back from bloody fields and crowded hospitals for fresh recruits. Then comes the last muster of old men, who have long ago seen service, who have retired with the wounds and scars of ancient battles, who are unfitted by age and feebleness for further hardship, yet in whose aged bosoms the patriotic fires burn and who are ready to give their last energies to home and children and country.

Christ calls for the choicest muster. He calls for the men of chiefest influence, whose power is acknowledged: for those who stand in society in the very foremost rank. The divine Leader calls for the leaders of men. Because you have influence, because where you go others will follow, because you should lead upward and not downward, Christ's claims come to you

with authoritative obligation. He musters you, with the mandate of kingship, into His service. Were you less than you are, you should be Christian. Because you are all that you are, the Redeemer's claim is stronger upon you. The ascendancy of your personality intensifies the Lord's demand for your devoted service. The dominion that you hold through the spiritual suffrage of your fellows, co-ordinates your life with the kingdom of Christ on earth.

THE END.













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