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THE DOCTRINES OF OUR FAITH

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THE DOCTRINES OF OUR FAITH

A Convenient Handbook for
Use in Normal Classes,
Sacred Literature
Courses and
Individual
Study

BY

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Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

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AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED TO THE
MEMORY OF

Franklin Howard Kerfoot,
PREACHER, THEOLOGIAN, LEADER.

Loyal in every Relation, and Heroic in the
Discharge of Duty;

The Author's Beloved Colleague and Friend.

1703840

Publisher's Announcement.

The several chapters which make up this little handbook of Doctrine, were published in The Baptist Union, as a series of articles in the Sacred Literature Course.

They served their purpose well, and met with high favor at the time of their publication. Prof. Dargan has here made a valuable contribution to the exposition of Christian Doctrine, and in this permanent shape his able exposition will be passed on to other and larger circles of readers.

In answer to many calls which have come to us from different sources they are now published in this convenient form and will be of service in B. Y. P. U. Christian Culture Courses and in Sunday School Normal Classes, and also for individual study. They are printed as they first appeared with such revision as the author could make while reading the proof.

With the Author's permission we have added an Introductory Word from Dr. Geo. W. Truett, also an Appendix in a Confession of Faith, for use in Baptist Churches, written by the late Dr. F. H. Kerfoot when pastor of Eutaw Place Baptist Church, Baltimore.

**Secretary's Office, Sunday School Board,
Nashville, Tenn.**

Announcement for Normal Course Students.

This book is No. 6 in the Convention Normal Course. For its completion according to the plan herein indicated seal 6 will be awarded.

Because it seems desirable to offer in the several sections of the Normal Course a limited number of studies, a selection has been made of eighteen from the thirty chapters of this book, and while students should read carefully the remaining chapters, a study of the eighteen selected is all that is required. At the close of the book these selected chapters are indicated and questions to guide class or individual study as also questions for review and examination are printed.

The plan of study is very simple. Each lesson is to be studied in the usual way, previous lessons being reviewed by means of the questions submitted for that purpose. At the close of the study the class teacher will submit an examination. (See page 241.)

Suggestions and outlines for class teachers and others who teach Christian doctrines, are offered in a small volume entitled "Doctrinal Outlines of 'What Baptists Believe,' and 'The Doctrines of Our Faith,'" prepared by Dr. P. E. Burroughs, Educational Secretary (25 cents postpaid).

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A WORD INTRODUCTORY.

The Sunday School Board is rendering a most helpful service, by putting into permanent form the several papers on "The Doctrines of Our Faith," written some years ago by Dr. E. C. Dargan, of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and printed in The Baptist Union as a series of suggestive doctrinal lessons for the Baptist Young People of America.

Those papers were unquestionably read by very many of our Baptist people with the keenest sense, both of pleasure and of profit. They suggested the practical necessity and became the basis of a series of careful lessons for many classes of our Baptist young people.

The writer thus used them with the young people of his congregation, and the interest they awakened was delightfully surprising. That experience very clearly demonstrated that there is an eagerness upon the part of many of our people, both old and young, to know more of the great fundamental doctrines of God's Word, so that they may be able rightly to answer every man who asks for a reason concerning the hope that is in them. He expects thus again to use them with his young people this winter.

These papers from Dr. Dargan are unusually clear in statement, and are so well written that the babe in Christ and the learned theologian must alike be deeply interested in them.

The time is surely most propitious for a faithful restatement, in every Baptist Church in the land, of the fundamental doctrines of God's Word. Every

Baptist ought to know why he is a Baptist, and to know it from the specific commands of God's Word. Not to have such knowledge is for our churches to be harmed in every way. Probably not since apostolic times have Baptists had such an opportunity as they have to-day for faithfully teaching the whole counsel of God. If they will give themselves to such work in the right spirit, the increasing favor of God and of men must be upon them.

It is earnestly believed that our churches would gain strength in every way if the pastors would at once arrange for a series of teaching services, week by week, wherein they might carefully discuss before all their people, especially the young, the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. Such a series of services would kindle a general interest in the study of the Bible such as we have not seen before, and thus would the faith of God's people be strengthened and their zeal for His work augmented in a way not otherwise possible. Surely, this is a consummation most devoutly to be desired.

Most cordially do I welcome this new book from the Sunday School Board, and most heartily do I commend it to brother pastors everywhere, to the end that they may at once use it as a text-book in a series of doctrinal studies for their young people. Within the next six months the book ought to be in the hands of tens of thousands of our young Baptists, for their earnest, personal study. That it may have a speedy and very wide circulation, is the fervent hope and prayer of

GEO. W. TRUETT.

**Study First Baptist Church,
Dallas, Texas.**

The Doctrines of Our Faith.

CHAPTER I.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND THEIR GENESIS.

In beginning a study of the doctrines of the Christian religion it is proper that we should consider, by way of introduction, the general subject of the

**The Reality
of Our Reli-
gious Beliefs.**

reality and sources of our religious beliefs. As we take stock of our objects of thought, we notice that there is a very wide range of matters which engage our attention and influence our actions. Among these objects and forces there is a large number which falls under the description of religious beliefs. Whatever may be the truth of these beliefs, whatever their prevalence, whatever their nature, they are a very noticeable part of human life. Anyone who takes the trouble to think upon both the practical activities and the intellectual problems of our age cannot fail to see how large a share of these are those which we call religious. We must deal with facts. It is a fact beyond all dispute that we have religious beliefs; and for us Christians that means, of course, Christian doctrines.

Let us first compare our religious beliefs with other beliefs or opinions, as we see these in the various departments of human thought and effort. Take that

**As Compared
with Other
Things.**

great field of effort which we call business. All the way up from a day laborer's job to some vast commercial enterprise, there is in this sphere of human action a set of opinions and practices which are commonly accepted, disputed, and acted upon. In the great world of politics we find the same thing: some rules of action are commonly accepted, others are in dispute, and these furnish a motive of men's actions in the State. In literature, science, and art we observe the same general state of things. Certain principles, a body of doctrines, a fund of knowledge, are found. So in the matter of religion—in all kinds of religion—there is a more or less well-defined set of doctrines considered as things taught, or beliefs considered, as things accepted. With us, as already said, this body of doctrines makes up what we sometimes call the Christian Faith, meaning by that the sum of things made known in the Christian Revelation and accepted by Christian believers. These religious beliefs are worthy of our careful study, not only for their value in themselves, but because of their comparative interest. There is no reason why the principles of any form of human activity should be studied to the neglect of religious doctrines.

This brings us to consider the relation of faith to knowledge in regard to these religious doctrines. Are we properly said to *know* them, or only to *believe* them? Here we must make two distinctions. One is between the objects of knowing, and the other is between the words knowing and believing. In regard to the things which we may be said to know or believe, of some we may say that we

**Relation of
Faith to
Knowledge.**

know them, of others only that we believe them. Yet, this distinction is not of much value, for, in the last resort, we shall find that we should properly describe many things as only objects of belief which we often describe as objects of knowledge. Again, if we undertake to distinguish between knowing and believing we shall run upon another difficulty. It is impossible to draw any sharp dividing line between knowledge and belief. Knowledge at best is only strong belief, and while we have a vague sort of feeling that knowledge is more real than belief, we often use the words without strictly observing the distinction. For example, a man may say of another man: "I know he is honest," when as a matter of fact, he only believes it, and, strictly speaking, can only believe it of anybody. On the other hand, of the very same man in another conversation, we might say: "I believe he is honest," when we really mean more than that. We have a proverb that "seeing is believing." Now surely, if we may claim to know anything, it is what we see, and yet we know we are often mistaken in seeming to see. The fact of the matter is that we may call our perception of objects either knowledge or belief, according as we hold them strongly or less positively. Thus the body of doctrines which we as Christians hold may be called knowledge or belief, and either term will not be far astray.

A third point of view from which to regard our religious beliefs is that of their prevalence as compared with other branches of knowledge. All the branches which have been mentioned prevail among men, more or less widely, and this is equally true of religious knowledge. Here again we must make a distinction between the numbers who have this knowl-

**Prevalence
and Power of
Religious Be-
liefs: Exten-
sively.**

edge, and the strength of their convictions. In other words: How many have this knowledge, and to what extent do they have it? Comparison with other branches is here again in point. It is, comparatively, only a few who know much of politics or of art. Only a minority of men are artists, and yet art is a great force in the world. Only a minority of men understand business to any large extent, and yet business is a great force in the world. Only a very few men understand science, but that does not argue that science is not worth knowing. So it is in regard to religious knowledge. It must be sadly confessed that only a minority, even in a Christian country, have any real and deep acquaintance with religious doctrines, but this is no argument against their value and importance. It should be our earnest desire to learn more of these matters for ourselves, and also to get others to know them, too.

The other distinction comes inside the circle of those who may be said to have knowledge. For all have not equal knowledge. Not all statesmen are equally learned in state-craft. Not all literary men are equally well versed in literature. Not all real and devout Christians are equally well informed upon the Christian doctrines. Some know more than others, and this will, no doubt, always be true.

Now all this has been said in order to show that religious belief, or knowledge, is a real, important, and even vital part of our thought and action. No other branch of knowledge can justly make any better claim to our study. In fact, as I think, no other branch can make so good a claim, and I hope that those who will fol-

**The First-rate
Importance of
Religious Be-
liefs.**

low me in the chapters which are to come after will enter upon this study with earnestness, and with the profound conviction that the things which shall engage our thought are eminently worthy of our best efforts.

We come now to ask: "How do we come to have these religious beliefs?" Or, to put the question in another way: "What are the sources of our religious

**The Sources
of Our Reli-
gious Beliefs.
External
Sources: Per-
sonal.**

knowledge?" A moment's reflection will enable us to see that these sources are two-fold, external and internal. That is, we get knowledge partly from outside ourselves, and partly from within. In order to have knowledge we must both be taught

and learn; and here again there is no difference as to nature, between religious knowledge and other branches. All our knowledge is of this general character, partly from without, partly from within. Let us look first at the external sources of our religious beliefs. How do we happen to be Christians, to know anything of the Christian doctrines? We should answer very promptly: Because we have been taught them, perhaps from our earliest childhood. It is sometimes a silly fashion to sneer at this way of receiving religious knowledge, and to call it "traditionalism." The sneer is very empty and superficial. In every department of human knowledge that is worth the name by far the best element is traditional, that is, handed on from one to another. If you were to take from the scientist all his science except what he had learned by his own personal efforts, there would be little left. By far the most of what we know we take on trust from others. In religious matters we have received instruction from our parents and teachers, from ministers, from our companions and friends; and per-

haps, we have received more knowledge from these personal sources than from any other quarter. This personal contact is of the utmost importance. We should rejoice in receiving knowledge at the hands of others, and rejoice still more to pass on the truth to those with whom we meet.

We owe, of course, much to books and other literature. Above all others we should feel our obligation to the Book of books, the Word of God. But besides

Literary. the Bible there are many other books which have given us instruction and religious knowledge. We should be very diligent in cultivating religious literature. There is a profusion of excellent Christian literature, and we should constantly seek to use it wisely and well.

We must turn now to the other sources of our beliefs, those which I described as internal, or from within. These may include assent, or acceptance, on

our own part. Here again, religious knowledge stands upon the
Internal Sources: Ob- very same footing as all the others.
ervation and Each man must receive into his
Study. own mind in the various ways of

mental acquisition the things which are presented to his acceptance. How do we learn anything? How do we learn mathematics, or history, or music? There may be a great body of instruction in these matters, but if it remain outside of us it is a mere truism to say we shall know nothing of them. We must put our own minds upon the things which are offered to us by others, in order that we may know. When we come to apply our minds to the Christian doctrines, there are at least three ways in which we may have knowledge of them, namely: observation and study, reflection, and experience. Of these, observation and

study form the connecting link between the external and the internal sources of knowledge. By looking into these things for ourselves, by reading, by study, we keep adding to what we have learned, and we gain strength of conviction by getting more and more evidence of the truth of those things which we believe. In other words, we should keep on learning more and more of religious knowledge, extending our inquiries in many directions. But besides

Reflection.

this constant reaching out for more, there should also be abundant reflection. We should turn over in our minds the things we have learned, comparing various doctrines with one another, verifying them, reasoning upon them, and thus making our mental possession more and more our own. One more internal source of knowledge is what we call experience.

Experience.

There are many things in religion which we can know only in this way. This is deeper than any other source of knowledge, and it must be to each man the final court of appeal. Do the things presented to my thought agree with what I know and feel within? Are the doctrines of religion a real experience to me personally, or simply some far-off speculations? This is the main question. I hope all who enter upon the study of these chapters have had a real experience of religion, but, if not, that they may find that pearl of great price in these studies.

Now these various sources of belief do not act separately. We only have to mention them thus for the sake of study. The workings of the mind are somewhat like the parts of a machine.

The Mind a Unit—Its Activity Various.

When the machine is in motion all its parts must be going, and yet we may think of each separately. So in learning the doctrines of the

Christian faith. All or several of these sources of which I have been speaking, both external and internal, may be working at once, supplying us with knowledge.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIBLE AS REVELATION AND AUTHORITY.

A part of our traditional Christian belief is that the collection of ancient writings known as the Bible is a true message from God, and being that, is a final and trustworthy authority for all

Three Considerations Essential to a Right Conception of the Bible.

our religious beliefs. There are here three things very necessary to be held clearly in mind, for there is great difference of opinion concerning the Bible; and a right conception of it as a basis and

source for religious belief is therefore essential. These three things are: (1) How we may be sure that the Bible is a true revelation from God; (2) The nature of the Bible as a message from God; (3) How to use the Bible as the final authority for our religious beliefs and actions. Let us take up these topics in their order.

I. WHY DO CHRISTIANS ACCEPT THE BIBLE AS THE TRUE REVELATION FROM GOD?

It is evident that this is a fundamental doctrine, and therefore one of the greatest importance. It has always been important, and in our times it has been made a question of the utmost moment. It is incumbent

How do We Know it is a Divine Revelation.

upon every Christian to have clear and strong

convictions on this point. Nothing less can satisfy the demands of our own hearts and minds, as well as the demands of the age. Only a brief outline of the argument can be here presented. Those who wish to pursue it further will find help in one or more of the three following books: Basil Manly's *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration*; Henry Rogers' *Supernatural Origin of the Bible*, and D. W. Faunce's *Inspiration as a Trend*. The outlines of the argument may be seen at a glance from the following statements:

1. *The unbroken Christian tradition accepts the Bible as divinely inspired and authoritative.* Through the Christian centuries, from the earliest times, this

**Tradition
so Declares.**

conception of both the Old and New Testament Scriptures has been common to Christian believers. Here and there men not Christians, though professedly such, have challenged this doctrine, and there has been difference of opinion, even among real Christians, in regard to some particular book or books, and in regard to the method and extent of the divine inspiration granted to the writers. But apart from these minor differences, which it is not necessary here to discuss, the common Christian creed has been, and still remains, that the Bible is the inspired, true and commanding Word of God. The force of this tradition and consensus of opinion is very great. We may, perhaps, feel it the more if we compare it, as in the former article, with laws of tradition in other departments of knowledge. Among physicians there has been for many years, and still remains the doctrine that quinine is the best medicine for certain kinds of fever. No doubt here and there a few have denied it, and the practice of physicians has varied as to the application of this remedy, but still it remains a fact that

among those best qualified to judge there is practically an unbroken consensus of opinion in regard to the merits of this drug. Now this by itself does not prove that quinine will cure every kind of fever, but nobody can deny the force of the argument. For centuries, among those best qualified to judge, the Bible has been accepted, and still is accepted as the very Word of God, and this should have due weight.

2. *The Bible witnesses to itself as the Word of God.* It does this in two ways: both by direct statements scattered here and there throughout the book, and also by the character of its contents.

**Internal Tes-
timony.
Scriptural
Statements.**

(a) The witness of the Bible to itself is clear, frequent and decisive. In the Old Testament, the Prophets claimed to speak by direct command of God. Our Lord in many passages recognizes the Old Testament Scriptures as the Word of God, and in one place (John 10:35), he said: "The Scripture cannot be broken." (Compare Matthew 4: 4, 6, 7, 10; 11: 10; Mark 14:27.) Likewise, in the writings of the Apostles, we find frequent and emphatic recognition of the fact that the Old Testament came from God. Especially notice 2 Peter 1:19-21, particularly the last verse, where he says: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Consult also the well-known passage in 2 Timothy 3:16, where (R. V.) it is said: "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable," etc. In regard to the inspiration of the New Testament, we have the promise and directions given by Christ to the Apostles. (See Matthew 28:19, 20; John 14:26; 15:26, 27; 20:21, 22.) And in respect to the apostolic claims, see 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, where the Apostle distinctly professes to teach by divine revelation

through the Spirit, and thus claims for his writings the authority of God. See also the same epistle, 14:37, 38. Also 1 Thessalonians 4:2, 8. We have also in 2 Peter 3:15, 16, a recognition by that apostle of Paul's inspiration. It is thus plain that the Scriptures by direct statements testify to their own divine origin and authority.

(b) In addition to this, the character of the Bible is such as to give a warrant of its divine authority and origin. It would be impossible to pursue this argument at any length in so brief a

**Unique
Character of
the Scrip-
tures.**

discussion as the present. It is well brought out in the work of Henry Rogers, mentioned above. The sum of this discussion is that the Bible is not such a book as man would have written if he could, or could have written if he would. It bears upon itself, in the truths which it reveals, in the exalted moral character of its teachings, in the permanency and power of its influence, the proofs of its divine authorship. No other book in all literature has borne, or bears, such a character as this.

3. *The voice of Christian experience confirms what has already been advanced.* This is not by itself conclusive, but it corroborates most strongly what has already been argued.

**Christian Ex-
perience Cor-
roborates.**

Coleridge is credited with saying: "I believe the Bible is divine because it *finds* me." The most spiritual and devout among Christians discover a singular agreement between the divine Word and the inward witness of the Spirit.

II. WHAT SORT OF MESSAGE FROM GOD IS THE BIBLE?

**The Nature of
the Bible as a
Message from
God.**

There are several points of view from which to answer this question.

1. *As to the means of communication.* In Hebrews 1:1, 2, we read (R. V.): "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son." Now, as we have seen, our Lord passed on these words to his Apostles. In his prayer, recorded in John 17, he says, (verse 8), "The words which thou gavest me I have given unto them." We thus see that while the Bible is of divine origin and authorship, it comes to us through men who were specially chosen, instructed and sent of God, with these messages which have been gathered together into our Bible. It is, as Peter says, that holy men spake as they were borne along by the Holy Spirit.

**The Means
of Commu-
nication.**

2. *As to form.* The Bible comes to us in great diversity. There were oral messages, as in the case of the early prophets with their "Thus saith the Lord;" as in the case of our Lord himself, who wrote nothing, but taught by word of mouth; as in the case of the Apostles, who gave much more instruction orally than they left on permanent record. But many of these oral utterances have been recorded. Our Lord's speeches and sayings constitute a great part of the Gospel record. Then there is a good deal of history in both the Old Testament and in the New. In the Old Testament there is a large element of poetry, in the Psalms and other poetical books. In the New Testament we have the Letters, some to individuals, but chiefly to churches and other groups of Christians. And there is prophecy, of which we find the most in the Old Testament, and some, more especially in the Book of Revelation, in the New.

**Form of
the Message.**

3. *As to contents.* As has just been indicated, we find great variety in the Scriptures—wonderful variety—and yet there is striking adaptation to different ages of men, and to all ages. It is one

**The Contents
of the
Message.**

of the most remarkable things about the Bible, that it bears so strongly the color of the place and time of each of its separate writings, and yet speaks so clearly and strongly to the human spirit of all times and lands. Of course there are many difficulties to be encountered in making a special study of the contents of the Bible, and this striking difference in its contents calls for broad and discriminating treatment.

4. *As to character.* What needs to be said on this point has already been anticipated. These different writings are animated by one spirit, and they have one great aim in view, which is to

**Its
Character.**

lead the human soul to its Creator and Lord. Question arises as to the absolute truth and freedom from error in all details. Critics have sought to find flaws in the accuracy of the record, but we must bear in mind that the Bible was not intended to teach geology or any other science, or to record history except as this serves its spiritual end. We must also remember the different times and characters of the human authors. Making just allowance for such things as these, we may say with all confidence that, passing by a few minor difficulties which may yet be explained, the Bible is free from error, as the absolute authority and guide in matters of religion.

III. HOW MUST WE USE THE BIBLE AS AN AUTHORITY IN RELIGION?

How to use the Bible as an Authority in Religion.

Little needs be said on this point, but yet it is important to bear in

mind several things.

1. *We must use it with intelligence.* It is not fair to study God's Word without using upon it our best understanding. We must endeavor to enter into its

Intelligently.

spirit; but it must also be used with discrimination, because of the va-

riety of its contents and the different ages in which its revelations were made.

2. *We must use it with confidence.* To read or study the Bible half doubting it, will not bring the spiritual blessing which the reader is entitled to re-

With Confidence.

ceive from its sacred pages. As said above, there are some unexplained difficulties yet remaining,

and some passages are hard to understand. Our method of interpretation may, in some instances, be very much at fault, and our mental faculties are subject to weaknesses. All this must be remembered. Yet, as we trust a guide in difficult places, though he is but human; as we trust a physician, although we know he may make mistakes; as we trust our own senses, though even they sometimes deceive us—how much more should we trust that divine Word of which the Master himself said that it "cannot be broken"?

3. *We should study the Bible with all reverence.* In subjecting it to the kind of study which we use upon other books, we must not lose sight of its divinity. We

Reverently.

must not forget that in it God speaks to us. I am persuaded that in our own times we greatly need to

cultivate a spirit of reverence in dealing with divine things, and especially with the Word of God. It is only too easy to treat it flippantly, to use its language in jest, and thus impair our own regard for its sacred character.

If now the Bible is such a book as has been claimed, its place as a text and source of religious beliefs is unique and commanding. Its clear teachings are in-

formation of inestimable value in

Conclusion. themselves, and all that we may

The Authority learn or infer from other sources

of the Bible about religious truth is to be tried

Apparent. by this divine test. In the follow-

ing chapters our appeal is to the Word of God, not to the speculation of men.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEING AND NATURE OF GOD.

This great doctrine lies at the very basis of religion, as both the Bible and our own reflection teach us. There can be no religion without God, and there-

**A Funda-
mental Doc-
trine.**

fore no thought of religion without the thought of God. Hence, after determining the sources and authority for our religious beliefs, the first one of these which we naturally take up is our belief in God. We consider in this article the being and nature of God.

I. THE BEING OF GOD.

Is there a God? A momentous question! Is it not better to put it thus, Is the God of the Christian faith a reality? If so, how does he exist? And then we must ask the further question: Is there but one true God? In answering these questions we discuss the reality, self-existence and unity of God.

1. *The Reality of God.* How may we be reasonably sure that the God whom we worship really exists, and is not simply a thought of our minds? We do not know him by actual sight, or hearing, or touch. We cannot prove his existence by any mathematical demonstration. The Scripture tells us (He-

**The Reality
of God.**

brews 11:6): "He that cometh unto God must believe that he is." Rational belief that our God is a reality is easily justified.

(a) The Scripture assumes the existence of God as a necessary starting point for all else that it contains. It nowhere argues the matter. In the opening verse of the divine revelation, we

**Assumed by
the Scriptures.**

have the majestic words, "In the beginning, God——." The Scripture also assumes the mental and moral weakness of him who dares to think there is no God. It says (Psalm 14: 1): "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

(b) Our reason, candidly consulted and followed, amply justifies and confirms the assumption of God's reality; and this it does in various ways. (1) By the argument from Cause. Our

**Reason
Justifies the
Assumption
by the
Argument
from Cause.**

minds are so made that we must believe in causes. Any intelligent child can puzzle the wisest philosopher by asking for the cause of things. And after we get back to the First Cause, inquisitive childhood has been known to ask: "But who made God?" This intuition of the child is one of the confirmed mental habits of the man. It can never be laid aside. For everything that we see we know that there must be a cause, and following this chain back, we must either assume a first cause itself uncaused, or else a beginning of material things without a cause. Now the more rational supposition is to assume an intelligent and self-existent first cause, as we shall see presently.

(2) By the argument from Design. There are marks in all nature of an intelligent purpose. How

any man can believe that the nice adaptations which we find in all the universe, from the orbits of the suns down to the adjustment of an insect's eye, could have come by chance or by the operation of blind and uncaused law, is itself a marvelous thing. For without an intelligent designer, one or the other of these things must be true. There cannot be poetry without a poet. There can be no song without a singer. There is no law without a law-maker; and if this universe is under the reign of law, it is under the reign of a Law-giver.

**By the
Argument
from Design.**

(3) By the argument from man himself. The spiritual and moral nature of man is itself a convincing indication of the existence of a greater nature of the

**By the
Argument
from Man.**

same kind. Man carries in his own constitution the image of his Creator. We are self-conscious, that is, we think, and we know ourselves as thinking. We can make our own thought the object of our thinking. We know the difference between right and wrong. However much we may argue and differ as to the basis and details of morals, we cannot dispute this solemn fact. Can any rational mind, unprejudiced and candid, really believe that such beings as we are could have come to be by chance, or the evolution of matter? The assumption of a great Mind and Spirit above our own alone satisfactorily accounts for all that is best in man.

2. *The self-existence of God.* How does God exist?

**The Self
Existence
of God.**

This, of course, is a deep problem, and it behooves us to speak with caution, yet there are certain indications in Scripture and reason of the mode of the divine existence.

(a) Being the First Cause of all things, he is himself uncaused. There is no contradiction here; because, as said before, we must, as a starting point, assume either a first cause or no

**He is the
Uncaused
First Cause.**

cause, and that brings us to say that we must assume, if we deny God, the uncaused existence of mat-

ter. If we have to assume that material things exist without cause from all eternity, we still must begin with an assumption. It seems far more rational and credible to assume the self-existence of an intelligent mind than of lifeless matter.

(b) This is the clear teaching of Scripture. When God made himself known to Moses at the bush (Exodus 3:14), and Moses asked for his name, God said: "I

**Scriptural
Testimony.**

am that which I am," and the name "Jehovah" is an assertion of the divine existence. This is also implied

in the first verse of Genesis as compared with the first several verses of the Gospel of John. In these passages, "the beginning" doubtless refers to the coming into existence of all material things, and prior to these God is.

(c) Thus we have the conception of the eternity of God. He never began to be and will never cease to be, but is eternally self-existent and sufficient. The

**God is
Eternal.**

reason of his being lies wholly in himself forevermore. The Scriptures also represent this in various

ways. One of the most striking and well-known passages is the second verse of the 90th Psalm, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Third: *The Unity of God.* Are there many gods or

only one true God? We shall discuss the mode of the divine existence as a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost in a later chapter. There are not three Gods nor many Gods, but only one true and living God.

The Unity of God.

(a) Our own reason would make this necessary conception. There would be no room in the universe for two infinitely mighty and perfect beings. If God be greatest of all, then all lesser things are from him, and are not God. If there could be any other,

Demanded by Reason.

such another would be an equal or a rival, neither of which can be admitted. If we imagine such gods as the heathen believed in, imperfect beings, we might imagine many of them. But the God of the Christian revelation is a perfect being, beside whom there can be no place for another.

(b) This great truth is abundantly taught everywhere in the Bible. It is the very warp and woof of Scripture. Some striking passages will readily occur to mind, as Deuteronomy 6:4:

Scriptural Testimony.

“Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our God is one;” John 17:2: “And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God;” James 2:19: “Thou believest that God is one: thou doest well.”

II. THE NATURE OF GOD.

What kind of being is God? Here again we come upon a deep and unspeakable mystery, of a Being so great that we can have no adequate conception of him.

The Nature of God.

Our minds are not large enough or clear enough to take in so great a thought, and we must always keep before us that our knowledge of God, even at the best,

is necessarily partial and incomplete. But though imperfect, it may be correct as far as it goes. We do not know anything, perhaps, with absolute correctness, but it would be foolish to reject all knowledge on that account. So we should joyfully know whatever we can about God, but we should never act as if our knowledge were or could be complete or final. Bearing in mind these things there are three aspects of the divine nature which we must carefully consider. These are that God is Personal, Spiritual, and Perfect.

1. *God is a Person.* We can only describe God in terms suited to our own understanding. When we speak of a person among men, we mean one who thinks,

**God is
Personal.**

feels, and wills. Now, we are told that man was made in God's image, and with reverence, therefore, we must say that God, to a certain

extent, exists in man's image. If it were not so we could never understand him. So, when we say that God is personal, we only mean that, like ourselves, he thinks, feels, and wills. Doubtless many things in his nature go far beyond these things, of which we have no comprehension, but all the Scriptural representation of God brings him before us as a real person.

2. *God is a Spirit.* Here is another difficult conception. We cannot see or touch a spirit any more than we can see or touch our minds, and yet we may

**God is
Spiritual.**

have a decided belief in the existence of spiritual things. We can only get at the truth by denying that God is material. How he can

be personal without being material is beyond the range of our experience and of our present conceptions, but we need not deny the fact, which is at once the deduction of reason and the clear revelation of Scripture.

Our Lord teaches us this very distinctly in John 4:24: "God is a spirit."

3. *God is Perfect.* His nature passes in all directions beyond our thought. Our very thought of him is only like a point in boundless space. What we

God is
Perfect.

know we know, but all around what we know is the infinite unknown. For this reason we must be constantly on our guard. We cannot confine the perfect nature of God within the limitations of our own thinking. In mathematics infinity can neither be increased by multiplication nor decreased by division. It is not subject to the ordinary rules of arithmetic, and yet infinity is a necessary thought in mathematics. So we cannot measure God's nature by the boundaries of our own or by the small logic of our reason, and yet we must think of him and try to understand him as far as possible, by our human analogies and faculties. The perfection of God shows itself in many ways, and these we shall consider more fully in the next chapter. Let us stop here, dwelling reverently upon the majestic thought that our God is an infinite and yet personal Spirit.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

The perfection of God, which we considered in the last chapter, involves his character as well as his nature. Here again we can only speak of God in our human language and after our human analogies. It is thus that he is brought to our view in the Bible. The

**The
Perfection
of God.**

Scripture writers always employ words and phrases which, because they are so thoroughly human, help us to understand God. Yet they never degrade the Creator and Lord of all. Expressed to us in human terms he is still the Almighty One whose greatness is unsearchable. Far beyond all we can think the measureless perfection of God extends. One of the brightest hopes for the future life is that we shall know more and more of the great and glorious Being whom we adore as Lord and love as Father. But we need not, and should not, wait for heaven to learn all we can about God. In the Scripture he is revealed to us as perfectly holy, wise, just and good.

I. THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

1. *The holiness of God is his perfect moral purity.* He is perfectly good and always right. While this is no merely negative quality, it is most easily

The Holiness of God is His Moral Purity. understood by denying all wrong or evil of any kind or degree in the divine character. To say that God is holy is to say that in him is

no trace of any evil whatever. No kind of wrong of which we have any experience or any imagination has ever had or can ever have any place in his perfect nature. And if there be any kind of evil or badness of which we have no experience or can form no conception, this also is and forever must be wholly outside of God. The Scripture (1 John 1:5) expresses this in figurative language thus: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." The connection shows that the apostle has in mind moral excellence, and so it is as if he would say: "God is perfectly good, and in him is no badness at all."

2. In the most striking and beautiful language *the Bible in many passages asserts and enforces the holiness of God.* When Moses, awe-struck and

The Scriptural Testimony.

yet eager, came near the burning bush the divine voice proclaimed: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). This was a most suitable impression to make on the mind of the great law-giver in the very beginning of his work. All through the sacrifices and other observances of the Law one of the most conspicuous and frequent lessons is that of God's holiness. The parts of the tabernacle, the priest's garments, the preparation of the sacrifices—all this and more was intended to impress on the people of Israel the great lesson that their God was holy. In the poetry of the Bible full recognition is given to this great trait of the divine

nature. God is described as "the high and holy One who inhabits eternity, and whose name is holy." In the prophets also this character of God is fully affirmed. In the striking vision given in Isaiah 6, God is represented as seated on a throne and before him the seraphim hide their faces and their feet as they cry: "Holy, holy, holy!" In the New Testament also this view of God is strongly set forth. Our Lord, in Matthew 5:48, asserts the moral perfection of God; and in Matthew 19:17 and Mark 10:18 he declares that God only is perfectly good. Peter (1 Peter 1:16) quotes the Law as giving basis for human character in that of God: "Be ye holy, for I am holy;" and in the grand vision of the Revelation (4:8) the four living creatures about the throne are represented as crying day and night: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God Almighty!" What a precious thing it is to have the thought of a Being, who is also our God and Father, whose character is one of flawless moral perfection.

II. THE WISDOM OF GOD.

1. Again we are compelled to use the conceptions and language of men to express in some degree what may be called *the intellectual element of God's character*. For with us wisdom is both a mental and a moral quality. A wise man is not only one who has large knowledge but large faculty for knowledge and for putting knowledge to good use. So in ascribing perfect wisdom to God we do more than assert the boundlessness of his knowledge—we claim for him

The Wisdom
of God.
Our Concep-
tion of it.

perfect skill in employing his omniscience for ends in accord with his holy nature. We may define omniscience to be the fact that God knows everything—all objects and all events, past as well as future. But wisdom, in God as well as man, is more than knowledge—it is the good use of knowledge. As God's knowledge is of all things, so is his wisdom consummate.

2. *The Scriptures are full of statements as to the divine wisdom.* In Romans 11:33 Paul breaks forth in the adoring exclamation:
Scriptural Testimony. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!”

And in 1 Timothy 1:17 he says: “Now to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” And there are many similar teachings both in the Old Testament and in the New. Frequently are the works and dealings of God brought forward in illustration and proof of his infinite wisdom. In one profound passage (Ephesians 3:10) the Apostle speaks of exhibiting to the heavenly intelligences by means of the church “the manifold wisdom of God.” The word here translated “manifold” literally means “many-colored.” In his gracious dealings with men in the gospel God displays to admiring angels his wisdom in a thousand glorious hues!

3. *Many problems arise in regard to God's wisdom.* We mortals can not always see that his ways are best; but it is an unspeakable comfort to the soul in doubt and storm to rest on the great truth: The perfect God is perfectly wise!
How to Meet Relevant Problems.

III. THE JUSTICE OF GOD.

The holy perfection of God's character asserts itself in his relations to his creatures. God deals with all beings exactly as they deserve; he treats all men and all other beings in perfect accordance with his own perfect character. This is his justice.

The Justice of God.

1. *The nature of justice.* The holiness of God is what he is in himself; his justice is his holiness in relation to others. When we see and experience and do wrong in the relations of men

The Nature of Justice.

toward each other, we are somewhat prepared to value the idea of perfect righteousness in dealing. The ideal of human government and conduct is that of strict justice in dealing. We never see it in perfection among men, but the approaches toward it, and the falling short from it, that we see, alike help us to idealize perfect justice. God has it, and he alone.

2. *The Bible fully teaches this great and blessed truth.* Abraham in his wonderful interview with God in regard to the overthrow of Sodom (Genesis 18:25), dares to ask: "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" He knew that God was

Scriptural Testimony.

just. In Deuteronomy 32:4 we have the noble utterance: "All his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." God himself declares through the prophet (Isaiah 45:21): "There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me." The New Testament

fully confirms this conception of God's righteous and just dealing. In Romans 7:12 Paul speaks of the divine law—which of course reveals and expresses the divine character—as “holy and just and good.” Speaking of the engagement of God for Christ's sake to forgive sin, John (1 John 1:9) says: “He is faithful and just.” In the vision of the Revelation (chap. 15:3) the heavenly throng praise God by saying: “Just and true are thy ways, thou king of the ages” (R. V.). Nothing in all Scripture is more strongly declared than the righteousness, the absolute justice of our God.

3. *Inferences from the doctrine.* (a) As God is perfectly just it follows that he will punish sin. The holy nature of God recoils in abhorrence from sin, and the perfect justice of the Lord

**Inferences:
God Will
Punish Sin.**

of the universe will visit evil with appropriate penalty. This is fully taught in the Bible, as we shall

hereafter more clearly see, but it must be borne in mind as a necessary deduction from God's perfect justice.

(b) The thought of our Father's perfect righteousness in all his dealings with us and

**God's Right-
eousness Re-
assuring.**

other beings should be the greatest comfort to us. We can not always see, but we ought always and un-

falteringly to trust the unswerving justice of our Lord and Father.

IV. THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

1. The word goodness is somewhat ambiguous, being sometimes equivalent to holiness, the freedom from all moral evil, and sometimes meaning kindness.

The Goodness of God. Defined. benevolence, and the like. *It is here used in the latter sense, and includes all that side, or element, of the perfection of God which is included in*

such terms as love, mercy, loving-kindness, tender mercy, pity, compassion, gentleness, benevolence, complacency, forgiveness, and others. This very wealth of words itself shows how great a characteristic of God is his goodness! How glad we are that the holy and wise and just God is also good! This is what brings him within our range, and helps us to get near enough to him to appreciate somewhat the glorious perfection of all his other qualities. If he were all else but good we should have to admire, but we could not love him.

2. *Most fully and beautifully do the Scriptures set forth the goodness of God.* The thought of it runs like a golden thread through all the fair fabric of revealed truth. The passages are so abundant that it is hard to select.

Scriptural Testimony. In Psalm 33:5 it is said that "the earth is full of the goodness of God," and there are many similar expressions in the Psalms. In Romans 2:4 the apostle speaks of the "riches of his goodness," and urges that it should lead to repentance. But the crowning conception of the divine goodness is reached in the thought of God's love. Our Lord tells us of it in John 3:16; how God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son; and John sums it all up in the profound and glorious saying (I John 4:8, 16): "God is love."

How great and adorable is the God of our Christian revelation! What a privilege to know and love such a Being! What a comfort to trust in him at all times!

Cause for Exultation.

“I see the ill that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within,
I hear, with groans and travail cries,
The world confess its sin.
Yet in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed stake my spirit clings:
I know that God is good.”

CHAPTER V.

THE POWER AND WORKS OF GOD.

We have hitherto been thinking of what God is. We are now to think of what he does. The power of God is his ability to do, and his works are the outward effects of his power. Here, as in

**What We
May Know of
God's Deeds.** all other cases, our knowledge, though real, is limited. It is not in us to conceive all that God can

do, nor actually to know all that he has done and is doing. There is a beautiful expression in the prophet Habakkuk (Hab. 3:4), about the "hiding of his power," and the writer of Proverbs tells us that "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing." Under the guidance of Scripture and with such deductions as we may safely make, it is our privilege to have some knowledge of the wonderful might and the wonderful deeds of the great and holy God.

I. THE POWER OF GOD.

As God is the Perfect Being so must his power be in complete accordance with his nature. We say that God is almighty, or the other word, omnipotent. These words are meant to express the perfection of God in doing.

**The Power of
God. Omnipotence Defined.**

1. *Omnipotence is ability to do everything that can be done.* It expresses the absence of any limit to God's power, but it does not mean the doing of contra-

dictory things. That a thing should be and not be at the same time is impossible, and is not the object of power. That black should be white, or that up should be down, are contradictions. It is mere hair-splitting to raise such questions in regard to the divine omnipotence. Everything that can be done God can do, and that is enough for our thought.

Yet we must bear in mind that not all things which seem impossible and contradictory are really so, and doubtless many things which seem to us to involve

**Reasonable
Inferences.**

some contradiction are perfectly plain and simple to the divine hand and mind. This is true of things in

both the moral and the physical sphere. Our Lord reminds us in a well-known saying (Matt. 9:26) that the things which are impossible to men are possible to God. The sum of the matter is, that we should never trifle with this great truth by asserting God's ability to do contradictory things, nor yet limit his power to those things only which seem impossible to us. On both sides we need to exercise caution.

2. *The range and reach of God's power.* To what objects does the power of God extend, and what things does it embrace? (a) Things in our view and

**Objects of
the Divine Ac-
tivity.
Things Known
to Men, but
Beyond Hu-
man Power.**

yet things impossible to us. We see a multitude of things not involving any contradiction or inherent impossibility, that are simply beyond our power. They could be done, if only there were power enough. Man groans over his limitations. Marvellous as are his powers, he yet sees thousands of things that can be

done, but that he cannot do. These God can do. It

helps us to form some conception of the greatness of God's might by thinking of just these things.

(b) Things beyond our experience or imagination. In addition to those objects which we see can be done, there must be a multitude of things of which we have no

**Things
Beyond
Human Ken.**

knowledge, and of which we cannot form any conception, which God can do, and does. How God by a word could raise the dead is beyond our

knowledge, but if we admit the omnipotence of God, there is no inherent contradiction or impossibility involved in a miracle. The apostle Paul had the logic of the situation, when before Agrippa he said: "Why should it be deemed a thing incredible if God should raise the dead?" Again, the wonderful works of God throughout the universe, the vast majority of which are utterly beyond the range of our observation, are mostly inscrutable to us, but these are all the objects of God's power, and the products of his creative will. This brings us to our second thought.

II. THE OUTCOME OF GOD'S POWER—THE UNIVERSE.

The great universe lies to some extent within the range of our observation, and to a smaller extent in actual contact with our senses. We have experience

**The Universe
the Effect of
God's Power.**

of the laws of nature, and of the manifold workings of the divine intelligence, as expressed in material objects. All this universe is the

creation of God, and is subject to his control, and in these two words we set before ourselves God's relation to his universe.

1. *Creation.* It is a great name that we have

for God—the Creator. The Scriptures so reveal him. The first verse of Genesis,—“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,”

Creation the Deed of God. is the gateway to all the divine revelation. The tremendous fact

that God, by the direct exercise of his will, brought all things into existence, is stated in these words, and throughout the Scriptures this same thought constantly runs. God is back of nature. It owes its existence to him. All things that exist and the laws of their being are alike the deeds of God. We may, perhaps, make this glorious thought a little clearer by specifying some particulars.

(a) God brought all things into being. This is a first thought, as we have before seen. We must assume either the self-existence of God or of matter.

God Instituted the Being of Things. The Scripture teaches us, and surely our reason harmonizes, that God was first and he willed all material things into being. Just how God

performed this great deed we can, perhaps, never understand. The Scriptural representation is couched in human terms simply to declare the great fact: “And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.” He who has no beginning is himself the beginning of everything that is. It was an ancient truism that out of nothing, nothing comes; and that is true, because everything that is came of God; but it is not true in the sense in which it was meant, for God called into existence that which before was not.

(b) Creation also involves the directing of material things to ends. Matter is not only not the cause of itself, but it is not the cause of the shapes which it

**God's Plan
Purposeful:
The Material
World an
Organism.**

takes, for God not only made matter, but he also makes its forms. We can better understand this, for our own intelligence can work matter into different forms, and it is easier for us to trace the designing

mind of God in the laws which regulate nature and in the wondrous effects of those laws. It is illogical to consider the law as the creator. If material things are subject to law, they were put under law by the Creator, and so those wonderful processes which we see in nature are themselves striking indications of the divine mind and power. The theory of mere chance, or what is sometimes called "a fortuitous concourse of atoms," is a great absurdity. No man, who has not a theory to maintain, would ever think of it as even a possible explanation of the universe.

(c) Creation is also displayed in the making of spiritual beings, that is angels and men. God not only made material things and the lower orders of living

**The Spiritual
Creation.**

beings, but we are told in Gen. 1:27 that "God made man in his own image." The mind and nature of man,

wonderful in itself, and wonderfully connected with the body, is the work of God. We cannot understand ourselves fully, but whatever there is in our constitution which is wonderful and admirable, should lead us to admire the creative mind that made a mechanism so perfect, a union between the spirit and clay so marvellous. In our bodies there is nothing but what is in the earth beneath us or the air above us, but in our minds we know there is more. And this wonderful creature is God's work. Besides man we are told in Scripture that there are higher spiritual beings. "Man was made a little lower than the angels."

We have no actual experience of angels, but there is abundant teaching in the Scripture that such spiritual beings really exist, and are the servants of God. It may be also that the planets and suns are inhabited by other orders of intelligences, some superior, some inferior, to man. All this we can only conjecture, but whatever beings there may be in all this universe above or below man, these also are the products of God's power.

2. *God's Control of his Creation.* This thought will be more fully discussed in the next two articles, but for completeness it must here be mentioned. There was an old theory

**God's Control
of His
Creation.**

that the Creator, after he had made the world and subjected it to law, turned it loose to work out its own

destiny, as a clock-maker winds up a clock, and lets it go. But there is no ground in reason or Scripture for such a view of things. We may say that God's control of his creation is exercised both in relation to natural laws and to human affairs.

(a) Having made the world and put it under law, God still exercises control over those laws. In our study of natural sciences, we are in danger of losing sight of this great truth. We become

**The Maker of
Laws Regu-
lates their
Operation.**

so taken with the wonderful laws of nature as to lose sight of the Law-giver. In ancient times, the presence of God, directing amid

natural forces, was more profoundly realized than it is among us. Men thought of God in the wind and the storms, in the lightnings, in the recurring seasons, in all things. Of course they made mistakes in dealing with these conceptions, and thought of many gods instead of one, or sometimes confounded nature itself

with God; but we in our times are in danger of losing sight of God altogether. The Scriptures, however, clearly teach that God really controls the forces of nature.

In relation to human affairs, also, the control of God is distinctly and frequently asserted in the Bible. It is true that men are free moral agents, and yet

**“Man Pro-
poses, God
Disposes.”**

they are under the control of the great God. God has not altogether left men to their own devices, but exercises over them wise and loving

guidance. On this point, again, the Scriptures are ample and convincing; their teachings will be more fully discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

As we saw in the last chapter God has and exercises a real and direct control over the universe which he has made. We are now to think a little more definitely

**The Problem
Stated.**

of God's direction of his affairs, which are also the affairs of his creatures. The question may be asked: Whether God may not voluntarily have placed some limit upon himself when he made laws for nature to go by, and when he made man in a measure free to choose his own way? Without discussing the question fully we may say that if God has put any barriers around his own free action he has done so of his own free will, and for purposes of his wisdom and grace; and thus the sovereignty of God is shown and attested even in any supposed limit which he may have placed upon it.

I. WHAT IS GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY?

That is, what does it mean, and what does it include?

It is of the utmost importance to have as clear thought on this great matter as it is possible for us to attain.

1. *What is meant by God's sovereignty?* **That**

God is sovereign means that having perfect knowledge and perfect power he governs all things according to his own will. **Meaning of the Term.** Two elements are found in this thought: that God works by a plan, and that he is still at work in his universe.

(a) *God works by plan.* In Ephesians 1:11 Paul speaks of "the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"; and there are many other such Scriptures. As has already been so often said, we must think of God in human ways or not at all. **God Works with a Purpose.** We must try to express him in human terms or not at all. Now as among men thinking goes before doing, plan and purpose before achievement, so we may be sure that in some way, the same thing is true of God; he thinks before he acts. If he thinks, he plans; and he purposes according to his knowledge, as we do, then he purposes according to perfect knowledge. Thus we come to those two hard words *foreknowledge* and *foreordination* (or predestination, as it is sometimes called). We should not be afraid of these terms; they are only meant to express the reality of God's rule over all things, and to assert that his rule is as real in regard to things future to us as in regard to those which are present or past.

(b) *God still works in his universe.* It is conceivable that God, having made the universe and subjected it to laws, might have withdrawn from it and left it to work out its own way, like a machine wound up and set going. **God Works Constantly in His Universe.** But this notion, though sometimes held by philosophers, is negatived by a better line of thinking, and also by the clear teaching of the Bible. Our Lord tells us

(John 5:17): "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." And there are many other passages where the present activity of God in his world is either stated

God's Immanence.

or clearly implied. This is the doctrine of God's *immanence*, that is, his remaining with and in his world.

But now we must not push this idea so far as to fall into the very hurtful error of supposing that God is one with the universe, that all things are but God expressed in outward form. No; he is a personal Spirit, pervading and yet distinct from the things that he has made.

God's Transcendence.

This is the doctrine of God's *transcendence*, that is, his being apart from and superior to his

world. Thus God manages his creation by being always with it, and yet always above it. We must hold both these truths, or we shall go wrong.

2. *What does God's sovereignty include?* We

God's Sovereignty Includes All Things.

are now to consider what things fall under this divine rule or management which has been described as purposed, continual, present and personal. A brief answer is all that is needed—it may be put in two

words: All things. But this means: (a) Things in our view—nature, in all its boundless extent and numberless details,

Things Seen.

men in all their works and ways, past, present and future; time, in all its unfolding and continued progress. But the sweep of God's rule goes even further

Things Unseen.

and takes in: (b) Things beyond our view—heaven, the universe beyond sight and thought; the angels,

and whatever other beings and intelligences may lie out of our range of knowing or thinking; eternity, the

backward and forward reach of time till it is lost. What a wonderful thing is God's sovereign rule over all his works! Let it not terrify us—it is the rule of perfect wisdom and perfect love.

II. HOW IS GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY PROVED?

A doctrine so great and difficult as that of the divine sovereignty should rest on adequate proof. In other words, if we hold the views outlined in the preceding section, we should have the best of reasons for so doing. It devolves upon us, therefore to set forth clearly, though briefly, the reasons why we have such a belief in the sovereignty of God as has been given.

God's Sovereignty Proved.

1. *Proof from Scripture.* This, of course, is of the first importance. If the Bible be, as we hold it to be, a true message from God, then what it teaches on this subject is God's affirmation to us concerning the nature and extent of his rule over his own works.

Scriptural Testimony.

The reader will do well to study the following passages, only a few of which can be selected for discussion here: Genesis 50:19, 20; Exodus 9:12, 16; Psalm 33:8-15; 46:8-10; 90:2-4; 103:19; 119:89-91; Isaiah 14:24; 46:9-11; Daniel 4:35; Matthew 11:25-27; 25:34; Luke 22:22; John 6:37, 39, 44, 65; Acts 2:23; 4:27, 28; 13:48; 17:26; Romans 8:28-30; 9:14-24; 11:33-36. 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:3-12; 2:10; 3:9-11; 2 Timothy 1:9; Hebrews 2:10; 1 Peter 1:2, 20; Revelation 17:17.

A careful study of these passages of God's Word, together with others which a reference Bible and a

good memory may suggest, will show how deep and firm a hold this doctrine of the divine sovereignty had on the minds of "the holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." But not only in such passages as these, where the doctrine is more or less distinctly affirmed, do we find sufficient basis for our belief in it, but it also pervades the general teaching of Scripture and is constantly assumed.

**The Doctrine
Both Taught
and Assumed
in Scripture.**

In the Psalms, for example, the overruling power and presence of God in all heaven and earth are so constantly expressed or implied, that a world of glorious truth would be weakened or obscured if we forget them. In the prophets the same thing is true.

**Specific
Examples.**

Sometimes the statements are exceedingly definite, as in Isaiah 14:24: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Nothing can be clearer than that. In Christ's conceptions of his Father the idea of sovereignty, even in details, is prominent. He sets us the best example of how to regard the sovereign will of God when he says (Matthew 11:26): "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." In the teachings of the Apostles the doctrine is emphatic. Peter (Acts 2:23) in regard to the crucifixion of Jesus says: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Paul in many well-known passages (see above) asserts and justifies the doctrine. And he concludes one of his discussions with a rapturous pæan of praise (Romans 11:33-36) because of this great truth: "For of

him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."

2. *Proof from reason.* Sovereignty, complete and perfect, is a necessary deduction from any proper conception of God. If things are not regulated at all,

**Proof from
Reason.**

but go by chance, then God is not superior to chance. If they are fixed by law, then God is under law as a subordinate, instead of over it as its Maker. If events are determined by fate, then is fate mightier than God. But none of these things can be admitted. The perfect God, whom Scripture and right reason alike make known, is perfect in knowledge and in power, and there can be no being, force, or influence greater than he. If we limit in any direction the actual and complete sovereignty of God we encounter as many and as great difficulties as we think to escape. The safest and soundest position to take is to accept in all its fullness the great truth, explaining as best we can its difficulties, and waiting humbly for more light.

3. *Difficulties of the doctrine.* There are great

**Difficulties
Considered.**

and to some minds, insuperable, difficulties growing out of the doctrine of divine sovereignty as it has just been presented. The way to treat these difficulties is to face them candidly, and, where we cannot explain, say as much.

In general in regard to these difficulties two things

**They are
Theoretical
Rather Than
Practical.**

must be said: (a) They are theoretical rather than practical; that is, they are problems of *thought* rather than of *life*, either spiritual or active. Sincere Arminians and devout Calvinists are trying to do much the same kind

of Christian work, and enjoy much the same religious experience.

(b) These difficulties are fully as much philosophical as theological; that is, they are problems for the intellect, and they meet us in some form or other, whatever system of thought we have. If

Philosophical Speculations.

we hold to fate, chance, law or determinism, we cannot escape these vexing problems. In fact, they

are less difficult to the Christian thinker than to any other. He can wait for the solution and not despair of it.

What are the main difficulties? First: *The problem of natural law.* God has put

The Main Difficulties: The Problem of Natural Law.

nature under law; how then does his will overrule nature? We answer that the divine plan is expressed in the law itself, and that any departure, or seeming departure,

from law is both competent and credible in the case of the perfect God.

Second: *The problem of man's free will.* This is more serious, because it seems to involve a contradiction in terms. How can a man's actions be of his own choosing and at the same time

The Problem of Man's Free Will.

be fixed by God's foreordination? We may not be able as yet to see how this can be, but we must think

of God's plan as itself including man's freedom. God's purpose was that man should be endowed with free will to choose his ways, and be accountable for his actions. If a ship is moving westward and you run from prow to stern you are going east and west at the same time. This is no contradiction, because the greater includes the less.

Third: *The problem of sin.* This is the most serious difficulty of all. How moral evil could find a place in the government of a perfect and almighty God we simply cannot understand. But the

**The Problem
of Sin.**

Its Presence.

fact is that it is here, and it is under God's control. We shall simply have to wait for light on this subject, while we deny that God is directly the author of sin, or responsible otherwise than by wise permission for its existence and prevalence.

In regard to the punishment of sin, also, men sometimes ask: How can God justly punish sin which he has permitted, or which is included in the fore-known actions of men? This grows out of

**Its
Punishment.**

human responsibility, and out of the perfect holiness of God. If man be free he is responsible; if God is holy and just sin must be punished.

CHAPTER VII.

GOD'S CARE OF HIS CREATION.

This is commonly called the doctrine of providence, and it is closely related to that of sovereignty, which was the subject of our last chapter. It is one of the greatest and most blessed doctrines of our faith, involving great difficulties of thought, but full of precious comfort and help.

The Doctrine of Providence.

I. THE DOCTRINE STATED AND EXPLAINED.

God's sovereignty and love, wisdom and foresight, care and control are all combined and directed toward the objects of his creative power. Singling out especially the idea of God's care for the things that he has made we may define the doctrine of providence.

The Doctrine Stated and Explained.

1. *Definition of the doctrine.* It is simply God's wise and benevolent care of all things. Great things as well as small, and small things as well as great fall under the divine care. There are no exceptions.

Definition.

(a) The universe in all its broad reach, and down to the minutest details of its life and action, is the object of its Creator's wise and loving oversight. From vast cosmic systems, suns, moons and stars, down to atoms and molecules; from created intelligences like the seraphs and angels, and un-

God Cares for the Universe.

known principalities and powers down to the minute, microscopic creature which finds its great world in a drop of water; nothing is too great, and nothing too little, to escape the divine care.

(b) Of course this providence includes man, and it is in this that we are most concerned and interested. Individuals and nations, and the whole countless mul-

**God Cares
for Man.**

titude of human beings, past, present and to come, all share in the great God's tender care for those who were made in his own image. There is no need to make little of the doctrine, or to try to limit in any way the scope and reach of providence. The civilized man and the savage, the infant and the aged, the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor—all men everywhere are under God's direction, and are the objects of his concern.

2. *Distinctions to be observed.* Yet there are some distinctions to be made; we must not confound the divine care with the forces which are only the expression and

Distinctions.

outflow of his providence; still less must we identify God himself with any work or creation of his own. God's world is not God himself, nor is he the means by which he takes care of his world.

(a) We must distinguish providence from the reign of law. Hooker's famous saying about law—that its seat is the bosom of God, its voice the harmony of the

**Providence
not Merely
the Reign of
Law.**

universe, that nothing is too great to evade its power, nor too little to miss its care—may well be applied here; but law is not all of providence. For God is behind and over and with the law. It is his tool, it is not he. Nor does it rule him out of his own sphere. Law does not

operate as a coequal and still less as an overruling force with God—it is only a part or an expression of his care. Law thus has the authority and force of God, but itself is his and inferior to him.

(b) We must also distinguish providence from fate. There is no such thing as fate. It is only a name, a superstition. There is no person, nor being, nor force, which can rightly be called fate.

Providence is not "Fate." It is a mere abstraction. The ancients dallied with this conception,

but the modern mind rejects it with contempt. Nowadays we must choose between God and law—fate is a back number.

(c) And this brings us to say that we must also distinguish between God's providence and his foreordination. God has not set aside his providence by hard and fast decrees. He has decreed

Foreordination Does not Supersede Providence. what has been, is, and shall be forevermore; but the decree includes his own care. He has not decreed himself out of loving and constant

touch with his creation, but into it. The decree does not supersede providence, it contains it.

II. THE DOCTRINE JUSTIFIED IN REASON AND SCRIPTURE.

Can such a doctrine of the divine care as has been stated be proved? Can it be

The Doctrine Justified in Reason. reasonably shown that God does exercise the kind of providence that has been asserted? Most assuredly.

1. *Preparatory proof.* Before taking up the Scripture passages which teach our doctrine we may no—

tice that this thought is a necessary and proper deduction from any just view of God.

**Reason
Prepares the
Way.**

If there be a personal God, a Creator and Sovereign, his controlling care of his creatures and subjects seems a foregone conclusion. As has been already intimated, it would be passing strange, not to say unreasonable, if a Sovereign Lawgiver should legislate himself into inactivity, or a Divine Creator should permit himself to be forced from the field by any of his own creatures. God's presence and superintendence in his universe is the most natural and reasonable supposition. Absence and unconcern are inconceivable of a perfect God.

2. *Scripture proof.* But we are not left to reasonings like these, however clear they may be, for our doctrine. For if the Bible teaches anything with

**Scriptural
Testimony.**

clearness and emphasis it is the truth of God's providence. Not all the sayings of God's Word that bear on this doctrine can be here adduced, still less interpreted. But the following are mentioned as clearly teaching or implying the doctrine, and of these a few will be discussed. See Psalms 37, 103, 104; 121:3; 145:9, 15, 16; Proverbs 16:9, 33; Isaiah 45:5-7; Jeremiah 1:5ff.; Matthew 6:24-34 10:29-31; Luke 12:22-30; Acts 17:28; Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:6, 7, 19.

In the beautiful and rhythmic flow of the 37th Psalm we hear, like the murmur of the tide, the sweep of God's loving care; in Psalm 103 the praise of a devout heart finds amid its variations of

**Specific
Examples.**

expression the one ever recurring theme of God's helpful presence; while in Psalm 104 the world and nature share in the same unceasing watch of love. All is summed and

centered in the sweet phrase of Psalm 145:9, "The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works." In Isaiah 45:5 God says of Cyrus: "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me," showing his selection and use of men as instruments of his work among nations. No clearer statements (as is most blessedly fitting) can be found than those of our Lord Jesus. In Matthew 6:24 and following verses he teaches that our care should not anticipate and usurp God's, but the rather should confidently rest in his: "Be not anxious * * * Your heavenly Father knoweth." In the comforting words reported by Matthew (10:29-31) he tells us that God cares for the falling sparrows, and keeps count of the hairs of our heads. The loving Lord was not afraid to be emphatic in asserting his Father's care. In his great speech on Areopagus at Athens, Paul (Acts 17:28) declares that in God "we live, and move, and are." Other parts of the same wonderful discourse (verses 24, 26, 30) bear also upon the same truth. The special care of God for his own finds immortal expression in Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Amid the troubles of life how sweet it is that God has spoken on this great subject with an emphasis that should shatter doubt!

III. THE DOCTRINE AS RELATED TO OTHER TRUTHS.

No truth stands alone. Difficulties are often manufactured by not taking proper notice of the right relations of truths to each other. For truths, as well as forces, work together. So the truth of God's active, personal care of things co-operates with and includes rather than contradicts some other related truths.

**The Doctrine
as Related to
Other Truths.**

1. *Law and progress in nature.* There is both law and development in nature; but providence is no bar to these, in fact, providence includes them. Science is only learning how God works, it does not (unless misguided by an atheistic bias) work against God. Providence is greater than law, speaks in law.

**Law and
Progress in
Nature.**

2. *The march of events.* Here we see (a) the hand of God in history. The course of events neither makes nor mars God's sovereignty. He rules, and overrules—the course of events is only a course, it does nothing but go on as God appoints. History is unfolding providence. (b) More especially the growth toward consummation of the Kingdom of God in the world is evidence of his directing oversight.

**The March
of Events:
God in
History.**

**Progress
of the
Kingdom
of God.**

3. *The actions of free men.* This was considered in the article on sovereignty. We need only repeat that God's providence is so large as to include the freedom—they do not exclude each other. But it is proper to say in regard to evil actions that they are permitted, and in regard to good actions that they are helped.

**The Actions
of Free Men.**

4. *The Christian Life.* This will be more fully unfolded farther on; but it is our duty now to say that God's care takes in all the elements and stages of our Christian experience: conversion, growth, perseverance, prayer. To him be the praise and glory of our salvation, and gratitude unceasing for his care of all things!

**Christian
Experience.**

CHAPTER VIII.

THE UNITY AND TRINITY OF GOD.

We come, in this chapter, to consider one of the great and glorious mysteries of our faith. **God One and Triune.** It embraces the blessed truth of God's oneness as that is related to the Scriptural revelation of God in the characters, or persons, of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I. THE DIVINE UNITY.

There is only one true God, the Maker and Lord of the universe, the Creator, Preserver and Savior of man. Let us first notice **The Divine Unity.** two great errors as to God's oneness.

1. *Errors to be shunned.* (a) The first of these is called pantheism. It accepts the divine oneness, but makes it a oneness with the universe. It is not properly a belief in God at all, but rather a philosophic theory which denies the reality of God. It identifies God with everything; it declares that the whole universe, the sum total of all forces and objects, is God; that God exists only as he is expressed in things that exist. It is sufficient here to say that such a view has no countenance whatever in Scripture; is thoroughly and wholly opposed to the Biblical representations of God as a personal Spirit and Creator; and that on the philosophical side it is, and

must remain, for all that man can see, an unproved speculation. Whatever shadow of truth may linger about pantheism is amply enfolded and justified in the doctrine of providence. God is in and with his universe, but he himself is not the universe.

(b) Polytheism. Among civilized people this view of the divine existence has now come to be regarded as an exploded superstition; but among heathen nations

Polytheism. it still in a measure prevails. This recognizes many gods instead of one God. One of the greatest endeavors of the Bible is to counteract this error, for idolatry was a constant temptation to Israel, and was a hurtful influence in the world during the early days of Christianity. It finds abundant refutation, therefore, in both Testaments. One form of perverted Christianity comes perilously near this error in its recognition of something like divinity in Mary, the mother of our Lord, and in the saints. Whatever truth there may be in the thought that there are spiritual beings in the universe, superior to man and capable of working for and with him, is sufficiently provided for in the Scriptural doctrine of the angels. But these are God's messengers and man's helpers (Heb. 1:6-14); they are not gods.

2. *Proof of the doctrine.* The Scriptures are clear enough on the point, but it is well to notice that there are also other considerations in favor of the view that God is one, and but

The Doctrine Proved. Advance Considerations. one. (a) When we sift thoroughly the notions of atheism, pantheism, and polytheism, we find them unsatisfactory, not to say irrational.

But when we propose to our minds the thought of one true personal God, somehow it fits better; it seems more like the truth. Now this may be due in part to education

and rearing—we have been brought up to this view, and so it seems the more natural. But it is not altogether due to this cause. For we find among ancient polytheists a yearning for the one God, and among some almost a definite belief in him; and among philosophers of almost all times, even those who do not accept the Bible as a message from God, a decided tendency in this direction. It is not too much to say that the conception of the one God is more in harmony with the best thought of man than is any other view.

(b) The Scriptural proof is ample and convincing. The divine oneness lies upon the surface and is enwrapped in the very fabric of Scripture. It is

**Scriptural
Testimony.**

impossible to find anything else there. The doctrine receives especial emphasis in such well-known

passages as follows: Deut. 6:4: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God in one Lord," etc.: Isa. 44:6: "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God;" and 45:22: "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else;" John 5:44, where our Lord uses the expression (R. V.), "the only God;" and 17:3, where he says: "That they might know thee, the only true God;" 1 Cor. 8:4-6, where, in speaking of heathen idols, Paul says: "There is none other God but one; for though there be that are called gods * * * * * to us there is but one God;" 1 Tim. 1:7: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen." Surely these declarations are sufficiently explicit; and they do not exhaust the teachings of God's own Word as to the unity of his being.

II. THE DIVINE TRINITY.

Along with the great truth of God's oneness we have the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity. Let us observe that this is distinctly a Christian doctrine. It does not come to us anywhere but in the Bible, and clearly only in the New Testament. Illustrations from nature or from polytheism only confuse and obscure our thoughts. No illustration can explain this mystery, and no language is adequate to its expression, for the reason that within the range of our observation and experience there is nothing like it.

The Divine Trinity.

In the Old Testament certain modes of expression are found which are easily interpreted to accord with, possibly to foreshadow, the doctrine of divine three-ness; but these would not, without the fuller teaching of the New Testament, lead us to formulate the doctrine. What is said concerning the "Angel of the Lord," or, as it may be rendered, the Angel-Jehovah, may suggest the Son; and the frequent mention of the "Spirit of the Lord" more distinctly reveals the Holy Spirit. But after all it is to the teachings of Christ and his Apostles that we mainly look for what we know and may infer upon this great subject.

A New Testament Doctrine.

1. *Statement of the doctrine.* The one and only living and true God exists and reveals himself in the three characters, or persons, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is not tri-theism, but tri-unity—it does not mean three Gods, but one God in

The Doctrine Stated.

three persons. Now this word "person" is apt to mislead us because with us it represents separate being; three persons with us would be three different beings; but it is perhaps as good a word as any, because no word can express exactly what we wish to set forth. For we do wish to assert that there is really distinction between the three; the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Spirit, and yet these three are one God; the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, and there is but one God. God is both one and three; yet not in the same sense, for it would be absurd to say mathematically that one is three, or to say that one God is three Gods; but it is not absurd to say that the One is Three, because the One is not a mere mathematical quantity, but the living being whose mode of existence is beyond our power to conceive or express with exactness.

2. *Proof of the doctrine.* How can a doctrine so strange and seemingly so near to a contradiction in terms be proved true? There is only one

**The Doctrine
Proved.**

way: and that is that God himself should declare it. A man who does not accept the Bible as a true message from God has no reason for believing in the Trinity; but how can a believer in the Bible do otherwise? The Scriptures teach the doctrine in two ways: one is by asserting and implying the personality and godhood of each of the three separately; and the other is by mentioning the three together in such a way as to imply or express their equal divinity.

(a) The Scriptures teach that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each one, is God. There is no

need to prove that the Father is God. That lies on the face of Scripture. The Son is called God in several passages (as John 1:1; Rom. 9:5; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8); and is indicated to be divine in many more. These are more fully set forth in the next chapter. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is recognized as a separate personality, or character, and yet as God, in a number of passages which receive fuller notice in the chapter on the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 5:3, 4; 1 Cor. 3:16; and others conveniently and strikingly grouped in Strong's *Theology*, p. 151).

(b) There are several places in the New Testament where the Divine Three are mentioned together in such a way as to show that each is God and all are the one God. At the baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:13-17. and the parallel accounts in Mark and Luke) the

**And All are
the One God.**

Divine Three are manifested. In the commission (Matt. 28:19) our Lord instructs his followers to baptize converts *into the name* (not names) of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the benediction (2 Cor. 13:14) the blessing of the Three, which is the blessing of the One God, is invoked. Compare with these also Eph. 2:18-22; 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20:21.

3. *Difficulty of the doctrine.* This is confessedly great. We cannot comprehend *how* one God can be three characters, or persons. But there are many facts, real facts, that we cannot understand. The unity of human consciousness, the distinction between body and soul, the separate

**The
Mysteries of
the Doctrine.**

functions of the mind, all these are a mystery just within us—yet we believe them; for they are facts.

4. *Value of the doctrine.* It is a precious truth—valuable for its very wonderfulness; it is no common fact. It has a power for the intellect of

**Value of the
Doctrine.**

man—it puts one to thinking of great things beyond the track of plodding science. It has a comfort for the soul. The great and good God does his work for the soul as the Father who loves, the Son who saves, the Spirit who calls and sanctifies. Blessed be God!

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GOD-MAN, JESUS CHRIST.

The doctrine of Christ is the central point of New Testament teaching. It is the distinctive and inestimable gift of Christianity to the thought and life of man. With the closely related doc-

**The Wonder-
ful Doctrine
of Jesus
Christ.**

trine of the Trinity it constitutes the profoundest mystery of revelation. It unites the mysteries of God and man. For information

on the subject we are to look only to the New Testament Scriptures, gathering what illustrative material we may from the foreshadowings of the Old Testament, the history of the times in which our Lord lived upon earth, and the tracery of his mighty influence upon human life and thought through the centuries following his earthly ministry.

Within the limits proper to a brief treatise it is of course impossible to do more than point out

**What Does
the New Tes-
tament Tell
Us Concern-
ing Him?**

the general outlines of this great and glorious truth, which has been the theme of volumes upon volumes of learned, profound, and reverential study. We can only briefly answer the question: What does the

New Testament tell us of Christ? It tells us that he was man; that he was God; that he was God-man.

I. JESUS CHRIST WAS MAN.

This is where we should begin in our study of the Christ. It is the natural order; it was the way in which his immediate followers learned what they knew of him; it is the way in which he is presented to us in the unfolding teachings of the New Testament; it is the easiest way for us to learn of him, and to ascend as far as we may the heights of truth concerning him. The reality of Christ's manhood must lie at the basis of any true conception of his character and work. It is not now seriously questioned, so far as I know, by any Christian thinker; but it has sometimes been questioned doctrinally, and it has very often been at least obscured in the apprehension of many who would not theoretically disbelieve it. One of the notable contributions of our own century to theological thought is a larger, clearer and stronger conception of the true humanity of our Lord. In some instances this has been won at the cost of a somewhat relaxed belief in the true godhood of Christ; but in the main the fullness of his deity has only been itself enhanced in our thought by a firmer grasp on the sweet verity of his manhood. This truth is so apparent in the New Testament that it hardly needs elaborate proof, and yet it may be emphasized for us in the two statements that our Lord's true humanity appears in his own actions and words, and also in the impression he made on others.

1. *His own actions and words.* The flavor of a distinct, real and charming humanness exhales from our Lord's life and teaching. He ate and drank as others; he mingled freely and familiarly with his fellow-men; he had his experience of bodily ills, as hunger and thirst and weariness

Humanity
of Jesus.

Shown by
His Own
Actions.

and pain; he suffered the pangs of mental distress, as in temptation, in disappointment and righteous anger, in sorrow, in the burden of responsibility, in the combined anguish and joy of self-sacrifice for duty; he enjoyed the sweetness of the spiritual life, as in fellowship with his brethren, in communion with God, in realization of truth, in the felicity of a clear conscience, in the prospect of an accomplished and glorious work, in the joy of present and actual service. The passages which suggest these views are familiar, but a few may be mentioned as reminders and inciters to further search. See John 2:1, 2; Luke 14:1; 15:2; Matt. 4:2; Mark 11:12; John 4:7; 19:28; John 4:6; Mark 4:38; Matt. 4:1; Mark 3:5; John 11:35; 9:4; 12:27, 28; Heb. 12:2; Luke 4:14, 15 (cf. Heb. 2:12); Luke 10:21; John 17, especially verses 1, 4, 5, 22, 24, 25; John 14:6; 18:36, 37; 8:29, 46; 12:27, 28, 32; Heb. 12:2; John 4:32; Mark 10:45; John 15:8-11; 17:13.

Besides all these indications of a genuine humanity we must remember how our Lord spoke as a man, taught in human terms, and loved to call himself the Son of Man.

And by His Words.

2. *The impression he made on others.* It is abundantly clear from the accounts in the Gospels that while Jesus impressed those who came in touch with him as being a very uncommon man, he was always regarded as a real man. There is no trace of unreality, nothing to indicate the lack of a true human touch, in his intercourse with others. He impressed many as being *other* than man. Remember what Nicodemus said (John 3:2); the colloquy between the healed blind man and

Shown by the Impression He Made on Others.

the Pharisees (John 9, especially verses 11, 24, 25, 31, 32, 35); and other passages.

No one can thoughtfully consider these numerous and clear indications and seriously doubt our Lord's humanity, but that is not all.

II. HE WAS GOD.

This is the real difficulty and mystery concerning Christ (1 Tim. 3:16), but it is the greatest truth in human history and thought. If science had perchance

Deity of Jesus.

made a discovery so important, had reasoned out on fair evidence a truth so profound and momentous,

the inherent and accompanying difficulties would have proved no bar to its general acceptance. And so it should be here. The truth is difficult, but the evidence is convincing. (The great classic on this subject in English is Liddon's *Lectures on the Divinity of our Lord*; the evidence is clearly and ably outlined in Strong's *Theology*, pp. 145-150). The merest outline of the argument is all that can be attempted here.

1. *Consider Christ's own claims.* Did he understand himself to be God, and speak out his own consciousness? Read carefully the following passages

Christ's own in their connection: Matt. 11:27,
Claims Attest. compared with John 6:44, 65; Matt. 18:20; 28:18-20; Mark 2:5-11;

John 3:13; 5:18, 23; 8:58; 10:30; 14:9, 10. Here we see that Jesus declares that only he can make known the Father to the spiritual apprehension of men, and only the Father can so touch the inner spirit of men as to lead them to the Son; that he is present, as only the omnipresent and prayer-hearing God can be, wherever two or three worshippers gather in his name;

that all authority in heaven and on earth is given to him, that his "name" is that of the Father and the Holy Spirit as the sphere or object into which the regenerate are to be baptized, and that he will be, as only God could promise to be, with his true believers "all the days." He claims authority to forgive sins, silently accepting the criticism that this is the prerogative of God only. He asserts his presence in heaven while talking with Nicodemus on earth. He places himself, and knew he was clearly understood so to do, on an equality with God. He declares eternal unbroken existence of himself; asserts that he is one with the Father, and that those who had seen him had seen the Father.

Such claims are unique; and no intelligent and devout Israelite, such as Jesus was, could have made them without knowing what they involved. If we ask why

**Unique and
Unanswerable
Claims.**

these claims are not more frequent, why they are cautious and veiled rather than defiant and distinct, why they are suggestive rather than

dogmatic, the answer may be probably found in part in caution, in modesty, in consideration for the hearers, and in a desire to awaken and encourage belief rather than to impose it by authority.

2. *Observe the statements of his followers.* (a)

In the Gospels we find Peter declaring (Matt. 16:16; John 6:68, 69) on behalf of himself and the rest a belief which naturally involves and leads to a recognition of his Master's full deity; John fully asserts the glorious truth (John 1:1), shows how John

**Statements
of His
Followers.
Gospels.**

the Baptist regarded Jesus (1:18), and tells of in-

credulous Thomas as he recognized his Teacher as God (20:28).

(b) In the Epistles we find the writer to the Hebrews (chapters 1, 2, especially 1:8) unfolding in glowing terms this great truth; we have John reiterating the statement of his prologue

Epistles.

to the Gospel (1 John 5:20); and we hear Peter (2 Pet. 1:1) finally and clearly uttering his faith.

(c) In Paul's writings a few momentous statements indicate how profound a hold the true deity of Christ

**Paul's
Letters.**

had taken upon that great apostle's mind. Lack of space forbids discussion—the reader is simply referred to: Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9; Tit. 2:13. These are explicit statements; the truth is implied in much else that Paul writes.

3. *Notice incidental and corroborative proof.*

**Incidental and
Corroborative
Proof.
Scriptural
Harmony.**

(a) The thought of Christ's real godhood harmonizes with the general trend of the Scripture teaching. The denial of his divinity goes hand in hand with rejection of the Bible and of the supernatural. It is only a few logical steps from the lofty Arianism of Channing down to the flat pantheism of Emerson and Parker.

(b) The historic development and expression of this doctrine, as it powerfully and clearly came to be the bed-rock of Christian thought, is no light matter.

**History of
the Doctrine.**

Athanasius was not an accident.

(c) The permanent abiding of this grand conception in the hearts and minds of the

**The Welcome
It has
Received.**

greatest and the lowliest of Christians in all ages is witness to its power and testimony to its truth.

III. HE WAS GOD-MAN.

Never did a hyphen mean so much! It both joins and divides. There is distinction and yet unity.

1. *Both God and man.* The Scriptures teach us that God *became* man in Jesus of Nazareth. Consult again, with this in mind: John 1:1, 14 (compared

**Both God
and Man.**

with 1 John 1:1-3); Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Tit. 2:13, 14; Heb. 1 and 2. The divinity did

not overwhelm and efface the humanity; the humanity did not degrade and nullify the divinity; the humanity and divinity did not fuse together and form a third something which was neither.

2. *Yet one Personality.* Jesus was not a God and a man tied together, he was one Person who was both God and man. In a single consciousness he

**Yet One
Personality.**

possessed a dual nature. It is a wonderful mystery; but our own selves are likewise mysterious; each

one of us is both body and mind; we cannot explain the union, and yet we accept the oneness of our own being.

I have used the past tense, and said that Christ *was* these things. But what he was

**The Christ of
the Present.**

on earth he evermore *is* in heaven—man, God, God-man. Glory to his name!

CHAPTER X.

CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

At the present time the truth concerning the nature and work of the Holy Spirit is receiving great attention among Christian thinkers and workers. This renewed interest and study are valuable, but there are perils. This is one of the easiest subjects on which we may go astray and mislead others. We may only too easily assume to know more than the Scriptures reveal; we may force the teachings of the Bible into harmony with our own views; we may even imagine ourselves to be special favorites and chosen mouthpieces of the Spirit in this generation. These extremes should give us pause and teach us reverently and cautiously to inquire what God reveals to us in his Word as to the nature and work of the Holy Spirit. May himself guide us in our thoughts of him!

**The Question;
Outlook and
Safeguards.**

I. THE PERSONALITY OF THE SPIRIT.

This is a strange question to raise, whether the Holy Spirit is really a personal being or not! And yet the strange thinkings of men force us to ask and answer it. If the Holy Spirit be not a person, what is he? Some say he is not a distinct person, it is only a name for God; others would have us think that this blessed term stands only for the divine in-

**The Person-
ality of the
Spirit.**

fluence put forth by God; others might say, if they told exactly what they think, that the Spirit of God, like the soul or spirit of man, is somehow a part of God, not necessarily the whole of him. Now we are evidently in deep waters when we undertake to discuss the nature of spirit; even our own spiritual life is a baffling mystery to us, and it therefore becomes us to study closely the Word of God and to try to understand as clearly as we can what it teaches on this great and important matter.

The passages especially important here are as follows: John 3:8; 14:25, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7-15; Acts 2:4; 8:29; 13:2; Rom. 8:11, 26, 27; 1 Cor. 2:10, 11; 12:8-11; Eph. 4:30. There are many other pas-

**Scriptural
Teaching.**

sages which deal with the nature and work of the Spirit, but these bear directly upon the question of his personality. Their teachings may be summarized somewhat as follows:

1. *The Holy Spirit is not simply another name for God, or one of the names of God.* It is not merely a synonym, but represents a distinction. In the discussion of the Trinity this was made clear, and it does not require elaborate treatment here. But we must notice that this distinction does not destroy the oneness of God, nor disprove the divinity of the Spirit.

**The Holy
Spirit not
Merely a
Synonym for
God.**

In these ways the Holy Spirit is a synonym for God. But what is here contended for is that the Scriptures noted do not countenance the view that the Holy Spirit is simply a divine title.

2. *Nor is the Holy Spirit merely the divine power or influence.* Some passages might indeed seem at first

sight to teach this view; but it is so manifestly inadequate and inexact as to need no labored refutation. If one should substitute the phrase "divine influence" for "Spirit" in most of the passages adduced, he will see at once how utterly untenable is such an interpretation.

**Not Merely
the Divine
Power.**

3. *The Holy Spirit is a distinct Person or character of the Divine Trinity.* Let us take up the direct argument for his personality, from the Scriptures mentioned.

**But a
Distinct
Character in
the Trinity.
Scriptural
Testimony.**

(a) He is spoken of as a person (John 16:13-14). He is called the Comforter or Advocate, which is a personal name and also indicates a personal service. (b) He is mentioned in connection with other persons, both human and divine, in such a way as to imply his own personality. (Acts 15:28; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). (c) His acts are those of a person. He teaches (Luke 12:12); convicts (John 16:8); gives utterance (Acts 2:4); commands (Acts 8:29); forbids (Acts 16:6, 7); helps (Rom. 8:26); searches (1 Cor. 2:10, 11). (d) He is affected as a person by the acts of others. He is blasphemed against (Matt. 12:31); lied to (Acts 5:3-9); resisted (Acts 7:61); grieved (Eph. 4:30).

II. THE DEITY OF THE SPIRIT.

When we accept the separate personality of the Father, Son and Spirit, and the divinity of the Son, we do not need much evidence to convince us of the godhood of the Holy Spirit. Our minds and hearts are ready for this doctrine to enter in and take possession.

**The Deity of
the Spirit.**

sion. There is, however, sufficient proof in Scripture that the Holy Spirit is God.

1. *Passages where the Spirit alone is mentioned.* These clearly exhibit his divinity. (See Strong's *Theology*, pp. 150, 151). (a) He is called

**Scriptural
Testimony.
Passages
Mentioning
the Spirit
Alone.**

God, as in Acts 5: 4, 8, where Peter asks Ananias why he lied to the Holy Spirit, and then says: "Thou hast not lied to men, but to God." (b) In many places things which are properly said only of God are said of the Spirit. This is true

both in regard to characteristics, or attributes, and to works. That is, the Spirit *is* and *does* what is peculiar to God. As examples of such passages the following may be referred to: Gen. 1:2; Matt. 12:28; John 3:8; 16:13; Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 4:30; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 9:14.

2. *Passages where the three are mentioned together.* These have already been noticed in our study of the Trinity, but they are given again in this

**Passages
Mentioning
the Three
Persons
Together.**

connection. They are a most interesting and instructive set of citations, and when studied in their connection give ample and overwhelming proof of the equal divinity of Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit, and therefore of each considered alone. The passages are: Matt. 3:16, 17; Luke 3:21, 22; Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:3-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Peter 1:1, 2; Jude 20, 21. In the first two of these we have accounts of our Lord's baptism, on which occasion the Divine Three appeared. We do not wonder that one of the old writers said: *I ad Jordanem, Ariane, et videbis*

Trinitatem—"Go to the Jordan, O Arian, and thou wilt see the Trinity."

III. THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

What do the Scriptures teach us of the special, distinctive work of the Holy Spirit? It is true they do not sharply define between the Persons of the

**The Work
of the Spirit:
Distinctive,
not Exclusive**

Trinity in declaring the work of God. For the work of each is the work of God, and the work of one is sometimes ascribed to another.

This is perfectly natural. Yet there is evident distinction made in many things. Neither the Father nor the Spirit became man and did all the Savior's earthly work. The Father was ever with the Son, and yet it is said that he *gave* the Spirit in full abundance to him. Perhaps it may clear the matter a little to say that the work of the Holy Spirit is represented as *distinctive*, but not as *exclusive*. What then are some features of this distinctive work of the Holy Spirit?

1. *How related to the work of the Father and of the Son.* God is the all-inclusive term, describing

**As Related
to the Work
of the
Father.**

any one of the Persons, but most commonly, when used alone, the Father. Thus God, the Father, is said to *send* the other two. (See

John 3:16, 17; 14:26, and similar passages.) And so in some mysterious sense, not in their divinity, but in their personality and service, the Son and Spirit are subordinate to the Father.

In relation to the Son there was a work of the Holy Spirit *upon* and *with* him in his earthly life. See especially Luke 4:1, 14; John 1:32, 33; 3:34. There was

**And of the
Son.**

and is a work of the Holy Spirit *for* and *with* our Lord after his

earthly life. See John 14:16-19, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15. The holy and intimate relation of service between the Son and the Spirit are here most beautifully set forth. Have we not too much neglected this wondrous view of God—how the Spirit came upon the Son, moved and led him; comes in his place to teach, remind and guide his followers?

2. *How related to the universe.* Almost nothing is revealed as to this. In Gen. 1:2 we are told that the Spirit brooded over chaos, and was thus, as it seems, active in creation.

There may also be allusion to the creative agency of the Spirit in Isa. 40:12, 14; but the nature of the Spirit's work in the material universe is confessedly obscure.

3. *How related to man.* Speaking of the Holy Spirit our Lord says (John 15:26): "He shall testify of me"; and again (John 16:8):

**As Related
to Man.**

"And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin,

and of righteousness, and of judgment." These teachings indicate a general work of the Spirit in furtherance of the gospel. But the particular features of that work appear in what is wrought in the souls of individuals. Here we note four parts, or aspects, of the Spirit's activity.

(a) Regeneration. It is the Spirit who renews the soul and brings it again into right relations with God.

**Regeneration,
Sanctification,
Illumination
and
Inspiration.**

(John 3:5; Rom. 8:14). (b) Sanctification. The Holy Spirit influences to holiness the spirits of men. His blessed indwelling is the soul's true life and growth. (Rom. 8:9-13, 26; 1 Peter 1:2). (c) Illu-

mination. The Spirit enlightens the mind of the believer, enabling him to enter into and possess the truth of God. (Luke 12:12; 1 Cor. 2:10, 11. (d) Inspiration. The Holy Spirit exerted that special influence upon the minds of the Scripture writers which enabled them unerringly to perceive and express the truth of God. (John 14:26; 1 Cor. 7:40; 2 Peter 1:21). Question arises as to the distinction between these last two. We may not be able to affirm the manner or extent of the Spirit's guidance, nor to define just where that good help he gives to all the saints passed on into the special grace of infallible inspiration, but we believe there is a difference in favor of apostles and prophets. Let us not claim inspiration for ourselves, lest we be condemned; nor admit the reality in those who make the claim—unless we have beyond peradventure such credentials as Isaiah and Paul, Moses and John were able to give.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF MAN.

A study of this subject naturally follows our consideration of what the Scripture tells us of God. Our own consciousness, and observation, history and science, all help us here. We are not shut up to the Scriptures alone for our knowledge of ourselves. On most points the human sources of knowledge and the Scriptures are entirely in accord. Where there seems to be variance, we may wait for further light without rushing to the conclusion on the one hand that the Scriptures are mistaken, or, on the other, that the investigations of science are wholly without foundation. Again, where either Scripture, or human knowledge, speaks without the other, we may accept what is said and wait. Taking the two together, what do we learn of the origin and nature of man?

**The Question
and the
Method.**

I. THE ORIGIN OF MAN.

The memory of one who lives to mature life cannot recall his birth, or infancy—there is a mist over the early life; but in the observation of every one, fellow-beings younger than himself are constantly appearing on the scene and making a continuous succession of human life passing before his own eyes. And so it is on the broader plane of human

**The Origin of
Man.**

history. The constant birth, life and death of individuals contributes to the rise, growth and decay of nations, races, species. Looking backward, the student of history soon loses certainty of knowledge amid the mists of antiquity. Back of all, we ask, What? and Whence?

1. *The voice of history and tradition.* This is dim, obscure, confused. In human

**Answers:
The Voice of
History and
Tradition.**

tradition outside of the Bible, we have no certain clue to the origin of man. All nations have, or have had, more or less of traditional and

mythical accounts, but these cannot be depended upon very far.

2. *The voice of science.* Where tradition has failed science has investigated, theorized,

**The Voice of
Science.**

and inferred, and has some things to say respecting the origin of human life.

1. We have the *evolutionary theory*; and those who hold it may be divided into two classes. (a) There are those who hold that by the chance aggregation of matter life began, and other forms

**The Theory
of Evolution.
Origin in
Chance
Aggregation
of Matter.**

of life were evolved, until after a long course of ages, and through many species which have perished, largely by chance, but somewhat by law, man was evolved. The trouble with this theory is that its

data are too few. It is a sweeping generalization based upon an unsafe inference. Its advocates have not been free from dogmatism, and many of them fail to recognize that there is quite as much of pure speculation as of demonstrable science in the most that is said on this subject.

(b) There is a modified form of evolutionary theory. There are those who accept the general outlines of this theory as a probable hypothesis explaining the divine method in creation. Those who hold this form of the theory do not deny God or the Bible. They look upon evolution simply as God's way of bringing man into being. They repudiate the doctrine of chance, and do not by law rule the Creator out of his creation. They accept in a general way the account of creation given in Genesis, reconciling it with their views somewhat as in the case of Geology. There are many difficulties in this view also, but it is at least entitled to respectful consideration.

A Modified Form.

2. *Other sciences.* Some light may be thrown upon the origin of man by ethnology and geology, but it must be confessed that the light is faint. The data are all too few. There is much room for speculation and uncertainty. The parallel still holds: as no man remembers his birth or infancy, so the human race without help from divine revelation cannot trace its origin or infancy. As each individual is dependent upon parents and others for knowledge of its earliest being, so are we dependent upon the Word of God for what we know of the beginning of man upon earth.

Other Sciences: Ethnology and Geology.

3. *The voice of Scripture.* This at least is clear and more definite, though not full nor final. The passages specially worthy of study are Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Romans 5:12f; 1 Corinthians 15:24f. (a) Suppose we take the plain, literal meaning of these passages. From them it appears that God made man out of the elements

The Voice of Scripture. Its Plain Teaching.

found in the earth, and imparted to him the spiritual life coming from himself; that he made them first a pair, male and female, and from these two all the human race has descended. This is the plain, unadorned Scripture account. There is inherently no impossibility in it, though as a theory it may present some difficulties; but if it comes to us as the plain teaching of God, if we understand correctly the Bible teaching, there is no good reason why the plain meaning of this account should not be accepted.

(b) This teaching of Scripture may be variously modified by scientific knowledge or speculation. As mentioned above, some may hold to an evolution of man

**Modifications
Discussed.**

from the lower animals, and not to an immediate creation, and interpret Scripture in harmony with this view. Others may hold that there were various pairs of different races, and that the Scripture intends to give account only of the origin of the Adamic race, from whom the chosen people and others descended. We cannot discuss all these varying views, but it is better to accept the plain teaching of Scripture on its face and wait, where there seems to be difficulty, for further light. It would be very unwise, for the sake of any scientific or historic theory, hastily to reject the simple narrative and teaching of the Word of God. We may be sure that if any discovery is made, and *proved*, as to the origin of man, it will be found in perfect accord with the teachings of Scripture, though we may have to modify somewhat our interpretation of the Word. But there is as yet no occasion for so doing.

II. THE NATURE OF MAN.

We shall not fail to agree with the Psalmist when he said: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." The nature of man is a puzzle to himself. Is that

**The Nature
of Man.**

nature simple, two-fold or three-fold? Is man composed of body alone, or of body and soul alone, or of body, soul and spirit? We reject without discussion the theory that man is body only; that mental and spiritual phenomena are only bodily functions. Some thinkers hold the three-fold view, maintaining that the soul is the principle of life and thought, is intermediate between the body and the spirit, which is the highest of all human elements. Others, however, with better reason, maintain that there is no need of distinguishing between the soul and spirit; that the spiritual nature of man is the same as the soul. It is very hard to settle the relation between those various elements of human nature. Passages which bear upon the subject are as follows: Gen. 2:7; 35; 18; Num. 16:22; 1 Kings 17:20-22; Eccl. 12:7; Zech. 12:1; Matt. 10:28; John 12:27; (Comp. with 13:21;) 1 Cor. 5:3, 4; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12; 12:23; Jas. 2:26. A careful survey of these passages will show that they make very plain the distinction between the body and soul, or spirit. A few would seem to imply some distinction between soul and spirit. This is not a necessary distinction, but rather a form of expression. The word "soul" is sometimes about synonymous with life, and does not necessarily always refer to the higher spiritual nature of man, though it sometimes does. Accepting the two-fold constitution of man, we may consider his two elements separately.

1. *Man's body.* See Genesis 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:45f. How strikingly true in human experience are the teachings of these Scriptures! Man is of the earth, earthy, so far as his body is concerned. (a) The chemical elements of man's body are the same as those of the earth beneath his feet, and the air which he breathes. There is nothing in him, bodily speaking, except what is around him; and when the vital spark of life departs, the dust returns to the earth as it was.

**The Body.
Its Oneness
With Earthly
Elements.**

(b) But man is also a living organism. His body is a wonderful machine—delicate, complicated and marvellous, quick to obey the directions of his spirit, a sensitive and beautiful dwelling place for thought, emotion, purpose. His body is not so large and strong as that of many animals, but it is the most perfect animal body on earth. From feet to brain, man, in his physical make-up, is the most perfect work of God. We are told in Genesis that man was made in God's image, and Paul earnestly requests us to believe that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. We have no right to despise or ruin this temple.

**Its Wonder-
ful Organism.**

2. *Man's soul.* Everyone can see that he is more than body, and that in the body, as an inhabitant, is the real man. Some may argue themselves into some other kind of belief than this, but, after all, this is a straight deliverance of the consciousness, and it is abundantly confirmed by the Word of God. See Gen. 2:7, where it is said that after the breathing of God upon him, man became a living soul; and see also the solemn words of our Lord in Matthew 10:28, where he clearly makes a distinction between the body and soul; compare also

His Soul.

some other kind of belief than this, but, after all, this is a straight deliverance of the consciousness, and it is abundantly confirmed by the Word of God. See Gen. 2:7, where it is said that after the breathing of God upon him, man became a living soul; and see also the solemn words of our Lord in Matthew 10:28, where he clearly makes a distinction between the body and soul; compare also

Mark 8:36. Regarding the soul of man some things must be said.

1. *It has a threefold manifestation.* The human soul has intellect, feeling and will. This is the commonly accepted distinction, and there is basis for it—

**Its
Manifestation
Threefold.**

we do consciously think, feel, purpose. There is a materialistic denial of the will. Some modern philosophers hold that we have only intellect and feeling; that the will is determined by environment and motives. Our consciousness rejects this notion. Others manifest an intellectual scorn of feeling, and use the intellect to pour contempt upon the emotions. This also is a very great absurdity. The truth is that all three of these elements of the soul are essential to it. There is no soul without thought, without feeling, without will; yet these are not separable things, or independent of each other. We may, for convenience, think of them separately, but they are constantly acting and interacting.

2. *It has moral freedom and accountability.* Consciousness and Scripture unite to assure us of this great truth. See Rom. 2:14, 15; Matt. 6:22, 23; John 8:31—

**Its Moral
Freedom.**

36; Rom. 6:15-23; 14:7-12. This is no place to enter into the discussion of human freedom. It is denied by the fatalists and by the materialists; but surely, while we recognize the limitations of human freedom, we yet are conscious of power to choose within limits our own way, and conscious, too, of the responsibility of choice. No amount of sophistical reasoning can with most men shake this foundation.

3. *It has immortality.* Does the soul die when the

Is it
Immortal?
Science
does not
Know.

body dies? or, leaving the body, does it live under other conditions?

(a) There is little, if any light from nature in answer to this question. So far as pure science is concerned, we shall have to say that

we do not know. But science is not hostile to the belief in immortality and cannot disprove it.

(b) Human tradition and speculation do give some light. The feeling of man favors his own immortality;

Tradition
and Speculation
infer.

traditional teachings maintain this truth; and there is nothing inherently improbable, and certainly not impossible, in the thought. Many

argue that the very limitations of man are themselves a powerful suggestion of his immortality. Others infer immortality from the yearning of the soul for life. These things have some weight, yet they cannot be called decisive.

(c) But when we leave these uncertainties and come to the Word of God, we find no lack of light, no lack of definite assurance. In 2 Tim. 1:10 we are told that

The Word of
God assures.

life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel; and here we rest. In many ways and by many

earnest sayings the Word of God impresses upon men the glorious truth of the immortality and preciousness of his soul. It is a great and blessed truth, but it involves fearful responsibilities. May God give us the grace to regard our souls in the light of his own Word!

The following passages of Scripture may be studied as bearing upon this great truth: Gen. 2:7; 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11; Ps. 16:9-11; Eccl. 12:7; Matt. 22:31, 32;

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Luke 16:22; 23:43; John 2:19, 21; 5:24; 10:17, 18; 14:3; Acts 23:6; 26:6-8; 1 Cor. 15:52; 2 Cor. 5:1-8; Phil.1:22, 23; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; Heb. 11:13-16; 1 Pet. 3:19; and many well known passages in the book of Revelation.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW MAN CAME TO SIN.

When we consider the moral nature of man, recalling something of his history, and reflecting on our own selves, we know as well as we can know anything that

**The Question
Proposed.**

man is not wholly good. There is bad in him, and this means that there is bad in us all. Nobody is as good as he can be, or as he ought to be. We say then that man is a sinner; that his evil nature and his evil deeds are sin. We shall consider the true meaning and the dreadful reality and effects of sin later. The question proposed in this chapter is as to the origin of sin, how it came about. For the account of the beginning of human sin, we depend on the Scriptures alone. Neither our own consciousness, nor history, helps us to discover the origin of sin; nor does any scientific investigation bring to light a fountain of evil, but the sad story is told for us in the Word of God, and we are to consider here the Scripture doctrine as to the origin of sin.

I. THE SCRIPTURE TEACHING.

The history of man's original state of goodness, and of

**The Scripture
Teaching.**

his fall into sin, is found in the second and third chapters of the book of Genesis. No part of the Scripture story is more familiar, but its main points must here be stated.

1. *Eden and innocence.* (a) The Scripture account is a simple and clear narrative. It tells how man was made in the image of God, created male and female, and placed, one happy pair, in a beautiful garden. Here sin had not yet appeared. Innocence, peace, loveliness were the sweet experience of these two beautiful beings. How long this state of innocence continued, whether for years or centuries, we do not know, but it is the brightest, happiest picture on the page of human story.

**Eden and
Innocence.
The
Narrative.**

(b) Some difficulties necessarily arise in connection with the narrative, and men have tried in various ways to break its force; but it is decidedly best to hold to the literal narrative of Genesis as a true historic account of the original state of man. There is no trace of mere allegory, or poetic fiction in the story itself; and the Scripture writers of later times, as far as they refer to it at all, accept the account as literal history. Certainly, nothing has as yet appeared in science to overthrow this view.

**Its
Authenticity.**

2. *Temptation and fall.* In the first seven verses of the third chapter of Genesis we have the account of the origin of sin. (a) Recall the simple narrative. The subtle serpent tempted the woman to disobey the plain and positive command of God and led her to long for, and then to take, that which had been forbidden and denied; she then tempted her husband, and he likewise disobeyed his Lord, and broke the sweet charm of his innocence.

**Temptation
and Fall.
The
Narrative.**

(b) When we come to explain this simple narrative

we find some difficulties. The serpent was not simply a serpent, but was Satan, the adversary of God and man. (See John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 20:2.) These pas-

**Difficulties
Encountered.**

sages show that in the serpent's form there was the real tempter, the evil spirit known as the devil and Satan. If we ask what was the origin of Satan, and how he came to sin, we have only to say that the Scriptures do not inform us, and it is vain to look elsewhere. He led man into sin, but who led him into sin we shall not be able to find out in this world, if we ever find out at all. The real origin of sin, therefore, lies back of human existence and quite beyond our reach, but the human origin of sin is set before us in the Scripture narrative. Another difficulty arises as to how perfectly innocent beings, such as Adam and Eve, could be tempted; but the answer is that innocence does not include the impossibility of sinning, but only the possibility of not sinning.

3. *Effects of this fall.* These were disastrous in the extreme. It is impossible to exaggerate the sorrow and blight which fell upon that early innocence,

**Effects of the
Fall on
Adam and
Eve.**

upon the hateful intrusion of sin. (a) On Adam and Eve themselves the effects were sorrowful. Read the account of Gen. 3:7f. The direct penalties were banishment and mortality. They were driven from their beautiful home and denied access to the tree of life. As to this tree of life we may understand that upon the condition of their obedience it would have been permitted to them to partake of its fruit, and thus to have perpetuated their bodily existence, but that, being denied the tree of life, the natural tendency to decay in their earthly bodies was allowed to work out unchecked. Some hold

that they were created immortal, but it seems rather better to say that their obedience would have given them immortality.

(b) The effects on their posterity have been unspeakably grievous. The one summary of it all is inherited sinfulness and mortality. As a consequence of the sin of our first parents all their descendants have been born mortal and with a tendency to evil. The

**On their
Posterity.**

Scriptures are very explicit in their teaching. We refer here to Ps. 51:5; 53: 1-3; Rom. 5:12, 21; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22; Eph. 2:3. Theologians and philosophers have differed as to some details in regard to this matter, but we need not follow their arguments, but simply accept the general statement of Scripture that the first sinner, being the father of the race, passed on to his descendants a tendency to evil, which invariably manifests itself as human beings come to consciousness and activity.

Such is the simple Scriptural account of the origin of sin. As was said in the beginning, it is all the account that we have. If we accept

**Credibility
of the
Account.**

the Scriptures as the inspired revelation of God, we must believe this account; yet we know that in some details we may not quite understand it; for in the application of these general statements there may be some room for difference of opinion. If any further light can be given to us from any source it may help to clear up some of these dark places which still remain.

II. THE DOCTRINE WEIGHED AND VALUED.

The Scriptural account of how "sin came into the world and all our woe" has an importance and a value all its own.

**The Doctrine
Weighed and
Valued.**

1. *Philosophically, it has a value.* In the absence of any scientific or historical explanation of human guilt this doctrine comes as a simple and sufficient explanation. Those who hold that man is of beastly origin, and that all his development is upward, may reason themselves out of any need for an explanation of sin; but the darkest and most dreadful thing in human experience, which sin is, seems to most of us to require an explanation, and the Scriptural doctrine makes it plain how man came to sin.

**Its
Philosophical
Value.**

2. *The doctrine has also a practical value.* It covers the case as far as we now need to know it. We can easily see how by the law of heredity all men might have a sinful nature; yet along with that our consciousness of moral freedom and of responsibility is so strong that this doctrine affords us both warning and guidance. If our first parents in their innocence were not proof against temptation, how much more imperiled is their sinful posterity. Our struggles need to be greater in order to resist and overcome temptation. We also learn that the slightest departure from God's commands may be fraught with momentous consequences of evil and sorrow.

**Its Practical
Value.**

3. *The doctrine has also a value from the religious point of view.* It harmonizes with the whole Scripture teaching. From the third chapter of Genesis on, the whole Bible recognizes in man a state of sinfulness. All the subsequent appeals, warnings and teachings of the Divine Word rest upon the assumption of man's sad departure from God.

**Its Religious
Value:
Man a Sinner.**

Further, the doctrine shows the need of salvation.

If man shall be reclaimed from his fallen state, it must be by the strong hand of the Creator, and not by his own vain efforts. We thus see how the doctrine of the fall of man lies at the basis of the whole scheme of redemption as set forth in the Word of God.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PREVALENCE AND POWER OF SIN.

In consequence of the disobedience and fall of the first human pair all their posterity have come into the world with a taint and tendency to sin. Sin is more than a speculation, it is a stubborn and dreadful fact.

Sin a Plain Fact.

It is one of the most noticeable characteristics, and is the saddest experience of mankind. It is a prevalent and powerful evil. What the Scriptures say here is reinforced by consciousness and observation, or, to put it another way, what we know of ourselves and one another in respect of sin the Scriptures mightily confirm.

I. THE VERDICT OF MAN IN HIS OWN CASE.

What does man say of himself in respect of sin?

Man's Testimony.

There are three sources of information: history, observation, and consciousness.

1. *History.* As we look over the record of man's doings and achievements in this world, one prominent characteristic

History. always meets us. The history of every nation and of every age, epoch, century, year and day tells the sad story.

- (a) The worst that history records of man is hideous with its story of crime, debauchery, vice, wickedness and everything that is loathsome and

Its Records of Evil.

unworthy and hateful. No student of history can deny this fearful verdict. What man's own record tells of him is not beautiful to behold.

(b) And then the best that history has to say of man is marred and defaced by imperfection. Alas! the

**Its Records
of Imperfect
Good.**

highest achievements, the noblest deeds, the most enduring and glorious triumphs, are flecked and stained with human sin. Over all

that is fairest in art, sweetest in story and in song, grandest in deed, the dark pall of error and imperfection is found. Truly has it been said: "The trail of the serpent is over it all."

2. *Observation only too sadly confirms the teaching of history.* As we look about us in our own

Observation.

present world, what do we see? Are our own times free from sin? Are our neighbors, our fellow-citizens, our comrades, as good as they might be?

(a) It is true we see differences in them. Some are better than others. It is not necessary to maintain

**Some Better
than Others.**

that there is a dead level of absolute and total wickedness in the world. Noble deeds emerge here

and there to teach us that the divine image, though sadly marred, is not totally effaced; and that humanity, though sinful, is not hopeless. We can see a virtue here and there even amidst the wickedest.

"Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore."

We recognize all around us that there are some differences.

(b) But we also recognize that none are perfect. The best have their faults, and in the best we see tendencies which display themselves in the worst. Our

(b) **But None Perfect.** friend with a bad temper is, on that side of him, painfully like a murderer; and so of a thousand other things. We see all around us tendencies and characteristics, which, with slight provocation and favoring circumstances of evil, might break forth into the worst cases of sin. Napoleon was credited with the saying: "Scratch a Russian, and you'll find a Cossack." In looking on our fellow-men, without any bitterness, but with only too solemn truth we may say: Scratch a man, and you find a beast.

3. *Consciousness.* We cannot put the burden of sin back on past history, nor give it all to our neighbors; for we are the sons of our fathers, and the neighbors of our neighbors; what do our own hearts say?

(a) The general verdict of conscience is "guilty." Men mostly know themselves to be bad. A curious phenomenon of human nature, one which constantly meets us in biographies of the good, is that the better the man grows the more conscious he becomes of his own sinfulness. The real saints of Christian history are those who have made the most ample and humiliating confession of their sin. In fact, we are a little suspicious of a man who does not acknowledge himself a sinner; and do not our own hearts, when we press the question home, always bring back this sad accusation?

(b) We may know some exceptions as to good deeds. We need not say that we are conscious of only evil. We are also conscious of some good feelings, and we have recollection of some good things that we have done. We need not accuse ourselves of being totally and irreme-

The Balance Always on the Wrong Side.

diably bad. We say the very best we can of ourselves, and yet, deep down in our honest souls, when we have said the very best, is there not a balance on the wrong side of the ledger?

(c). There is a curious thing in human nature which goes under the name of self-deception, and a man may sometimes imagine himself to be a great deal better than

Self-deception and Hypocrisy do not Alter Verdict.

he really is. Such things have been heard of; and so the deliverances of consciousness may not in all cases be absolutely trustworthy. There are, also, worse than this, cases now and then of sheer hypo-

crisy. Men may affirm their own goodness, when it is impossible to resist the impression that they know they are lying about it. This is most horrible, and happily such cases are comparatively few. But making all deduction possible for instances of self-deception or fraud, it remains true that the general verdict of the human consciousness upon human nature is "guilty."

II. THE VERDICT OF SCRIPTURE AGAINST MAN.

In the Bible we have the fullest and most emphatic confirmation of all that man can

Scriptural Testimony.

say against himself. Nothing in Scripture is more painfully emphatic

than its condemnation of man. The verdict of Scripture is both historical and doctrinal.

1. *It is historical.* The whole record of Scripture confirms and emphasizes the general statement of man's sinfulness. The account of the sin of Adam and

Historical.

Eve is followed throughout the Scripture story by the painful un-

folding of human sin. From the day that Eden's gate closed upon them and

“They hand in hand with painful steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way,”

on through the history of their descendants, sin breaks out at every turn. The sweet and comforting history of divine grace and help is on its obverse the ugly story of human sin. Recall the chief events of Scripture history to see how true this is: the Flood, the guile of faithful Abraham, the dishonesty of Jacob; the rebellions of Israel; the sin of David; the downfall of Israel and of Judah; the warnings of the prophets, the weakness of the disciples and of the apostles; the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus. What a commentary are these upon human sin!

2. *Doctrinally, also, the Scripture renders its verdict.* (a) There is the doctrine

**Doctrinal:
Original Sin.**

of original sin. This was discussed in the last chapter and needs only

mention here for the sake of completeness.

(b). The doctrine of depravity. Much has been written and said amiss on this subject. The expression “total depravity” has been misinterpreted to mean that

**“Total”
Depravity.**

there was absolutely no good in anybody at all; but this is not what the Scripture means. Human depravity is not “total” in the sense that all men are

wholly and equally wicked, that there is no good in any human being. It means that the total man, the whole sum of human life and being, is perverted; that all the faculties of man are more or less twisted out of shape by sin; that each man, upon the whole, is turned from God rather than toward God; so that the whole nature of man, as it now exists, is warped and twisted by sin.

This is certainly taught in many well-known passages of Scripture. Read the 14th Psalm, where with

mournful plaint the writer says: "They are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Study David's pathetic confession in the 51st Psalm, where, condemning himself, he only too accurately portrays the common experience of the human heart. Remember what Jeremiah tells us (17:9): that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"; compare also the words of our Lord (Matt. 12:33-37), and the striking saying of Paul in Eph. 2:1-3. Here man is described as being "dead in trespasses and in sins", his whole self under the thrall-dom of his guilt.

**Relevant Pas-
sages Cited.**

(c) The Scripture further unfolds the doctrine of the universality of sin. There are no exceptions to its sway; all men are sinners in their age and race. As was said above about our own conscience and observation, there are differences in men; all men are not sinners in exactly the same way, nor to exactly the same extent, but, nevertheless, all are sinners. This, again, is one of the clearest teachings of the Word of God. It does not need to be discussed at length. The following Scriptures are sufficient to set forth this doctrine: 1 Kings 8:46; Ps. 143:2; Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:10 ff; 1 John 1:8.

**The Univer-
sality of Sin.**

What a dreadful thing is sin! How real, widespread and deplorable are its effects! Everywhere we look, its ugly face looks back to us. Within and without us, in all the world, and in all human history, its hideous form appears. But let God be praised that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound!"

**Hideous Sin;
Heavenly
Grace.**

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NATURE OF SIN.

The origin and fact of sin having been considered, we must now study its nature. It might seem best to study the nature first, but the other topics will pre-

What is Sin? pare us the better to understand what sin really is; for, like every other word which describes an experience or a state, sin is difficult to define. In fact, we cannot give a simplifying definition of the term, we can only attempt to set forth what is the nature of the thing. It is very difficult to form a just conception of sin, or to explain in clear language just what it is. We may perhaps be able to form a fairly just view of it by considering first the Scripture teaching, and then discussing some erroneous and inadequate views.

1. THE SCRIPTURAL TEACHING AS TO SIN.

We shall first make a study of some passages of Scripture which bear upon the subject, and then deduce some inferences from these.

1. *Exegetical.* (a) Let us recur to the third chapter of Genesis and ask: What was the sin of our first parents? They were made after the image and likeness of God, that is, endowed with a moral nature and a free will.

Exegetical. (a) **The Temptation in Eden.** It was theirs to choose within limits what they should do. They were

compelled to do neither wrong nor right. They had free opportunity to do either, and without any bias toward wrong. Herein they were better off than any of their unhappy descendants have ever been. In order to test the strength of their moral nature it was not necessary that a grievous or heinous sin should be offered to them. That would have terrified and repelled. The tempter, therefore, did not propose to them a crime, but only the slightest departure from the will of God. He tempted them with advancement toward the divine life and wisdom. He said: "Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil." Here, observe, that the temptation is not to degradation, but distinctly to a higher state of being than they had yet reached. The means he proposed whereby they should attain that high state of being was pleasant and easy—the fruit of the tree was pleasant to the eye and the taste—it was such an easy thing to do, to pluck and eat it. The only difficulty in the way was that such an action was barred by the divine command. God had said they should not, the tempter said they might. He lied. The woman was deceived. Desire to do what God did not want done came into her heart—and that was sin. The desire led to the act, and sin was complete. If we were to judge this first sin in the light of the crimes which have followed it, we should say that, comparatively, it was a small affair. If we judge it in the light of its consequences, as the first step in the downward progress of evil, we can form no light judgment concerning it. If we judge it in the light of the will and nature of the perfect and holy God, we cannot say that it was a slight or little thing to depart one hair's breadth from his absolutely perfect and kind requirement. So, in our study of the origin of sin, we begin to trace somewhat of its na-

ture. It is wilful departure from the holy law of the perfect God.

Let us examine (b) another passage of Scripture, viz., Gen. 6:1-13. In this account of the wickedness of the time preceding the flood we have a description of

**Antediluvian
Wickedness.**

how terribly and in how short a time, comparatively, the germs of sin had worked out. The sons of God, that is, presumably, the religiously-disposed among the men, married the daughters of men, that is, the worldly-minded, and thus the race deteriorated spiritually. So it came to pass that God saw that the "wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." This terrible indictment explains that in the antediluvian days men thought only of evil. Their very plans and purposes were saturated in evil, and God could no longer endure the stench of their wickedness. This passage teaches the great enormity and widespread prevalence of sin. It is the great deep of iniquity which had swollen from the little fountain in Eden.

Coming along (c) to the 51st Psalm, we find David in his sorrowful lament setting forth the nature of sin as it appears after commission to one who truly hates

**David's Con-
fession of Sin
and Prayer
for Succor.**

it, though in his weakness he had been led to commit it. This wail has touched the human heart in all ages, and finds a responsive chord still in every soul that has sinned and sorrowed. Hear him: "Against thee, and thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." Now, he had sinned against himself, against Uriah, against Bathsheba, against his family, against his people, against posterity and all the world; but he loses sight

of that and concentrates his thoughts in unspeakable penitence on the one tremendous thing, that he had done what a holy God hates. "Against thee and thee only" are his words. God's hatred of sin finds frequent expression in the Scriptures. One of the most striking of all these passages is found in Jer. 44:4, where, pleading with Israel through the prophet, God says to his people with unspeakable yearning: "Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate."

Coming (d) to the New Testament, we shall notice two sayings of our Lord, though there are a number of others which may well be studied. One is in John

**Two sayings
of Jesus.**

8:34, where he says: "Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin."

The true freedom of humanity is not found in doing evil, or in being evil, because the habitual wrong-doer is in the worst kind of servitude. The other passage is the well-known one in John 16: 8, 9, where, in speaking of the coming of the Holy Spirit, he says: "He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin because they believe not on me." Here sin is identified with unbelief, and the rejection of God's method of salvation through Christ is described as the crown of human sinning.

(e) In the Epistle to the Romans we find many allusions and discussions respecting sin, especially in the third and fifth chapters. In chapter 5:13 we are

**Passages in
the Epistles.**

told that "sin is not imputed where there is no law": and again in 7:7:

"I had not known sin but by the law." These show us that sin is an infraction of the holy law of God. In Heb. 3:13 mention is made of the "deceitfulness of sin." In all human history nothing is more painfully noticeable than this. In James

1:15 we have the genealogy of sin: "Then lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death." And finally in 1 John 1:8 we have the very frank and unavoidable statement that "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us," and in the third chapter and fourth verse we are told that "sin is lawlessness."

Citations like these might be multiplied at considerable length; for the nature and effects of sin are abundantly portrayed in the Word of God. A concord-

ance or reference Bible will bring to mind many passages which may be wisely and profitably studied. Let us now, however, pass on to draw some conclusions.

Conclusions.

2. *Inferential.* What doctrinal deductions shall be made from the Scriptural statement regarding sin?

Inferential. It may be convenient to say, mainly, that there are three, viz., that sin is a character, an act (or acts), and a state.

(a) Sin is a character. It is unholiness, uncleanness, impurity, defilement. All these terms are used, or implied in the Scripture. There

Sin is a Character. is something ugly, hateful, horrible, abominable in sin. Its characteristics are the opposite of all that is pure and holy.

(b) Sin is also represented as an act, or a number of acts. In this view it is disobedience to the will of God. The will of God as expressed finds utterance in

his law, or in his pleadings. These **Sin is an Act, or Acts.** represent the divine abhorrence of sin. Sin is doing what God dislikes

and forbids. Paul tells us that the law of God is "holy, and just and good." To break his law, therefore, is to act contrary to holiness, justice and goodness.

(c) Sin is also represented as a state, that is, it is a condition in which man is placed by his evil doing. This is a state of guiltiness before God. Man stands in the sight of the holy God as one condemned. He is a culprit. He deserves punishment.

Sin is a State.

These inferential statements make clear to us, as far as possible, the true nature of sin. Let us repeat, then, sin is to be unholy, unclean in character; disobedient and hostile to the mind and law of God in act; and condemned before God in our state or condition in his sight. This seems to be, in outline at least, the Scriptural representation of sin. In the main the conscience of man agrees with this Scriptural representation, but not in all cases, as we shall now see.

Summary.

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II. ERRONEOUS AND INADEQUATE VIEWS.

Over against the Scriptural doctrine of sin, we may

Erroneous and Inadequate Views.

place some wrong human notions, and these may serve to make clearer to us the true nature of sin.

I. *There is what we may call the theory of materialism, or of materialism and evolution combined.*

This theory would have us believe that the evil character and deeds of men are only

Materialism (and Evolution).

the natural development of man in his ascent from the beasts; that as his brain and conscience are developed man realizes or feels that certain things which are painful and injurious ought not to be done, and so he begins to criticize some of his own natural tendencies. Therefore, according to this theory, sin has

no particular moral guilt, it is simply what man comes to feel ought not to be done; and so if man's development had been along a different line, stealing might have been all right, and lying might have been a virtue. It is all according to how he felt. There is no such thing as inherent evil. It is simply a question of mechanical physical evolution. To any enlightened mind and conscience this theory speaks its own condemnation. It would scarcely be held by any were it not necessary as a part of a great system of philosophy.

2. *We have what might be called the "disease" theory.* This view of the matter says that sin is a misfortune, a hereditary taint, like some diseases;

The "Disease" Theory.

that it is in the blood and, therefore, there is no particular fault about it. The man has it in him and it will break out. In this view repentance is but weakness and remorse utter folly. Conscience has taken a narcotic and gone to sleep. This will never do.

3. *We have what may be called the free and easy view of sin.* This is utter flippancy. It refuses to take sin seriously. It laughs at sin. It makes fun of evil. It forgets the wise words

The Flippant View.

of Scripture: "Fools make a mock at sin," and go on their flippant way loudly proclaiming their own condemnation. Sin is too dreadful and painful a fact to be treated in this way.

All these wrong views of sin, by their emptiness and untruth, serve to set in clearer light the strong presentment which the Scriptures make of the true nature of human sin.

The Truth Emphasized.

III. PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS.

Considering the true nature of sin, and eschewing the wrong views above set forth, we shall find it very important to face the dreadful fact and profit by what we may learn of its true nature.

**Practical
Conclusions.**

1. *Right conceptions of sin are the basis of right conduct.* We cannot make any resistance against sin without understanding it; nor can we make a real escape from sin in the mercy and redemption of Christ unless we understand enough of its dreadful character to convince us of the need of a Savior and impel us to seek his help; nor can we otherwise wage any effective warfare against our enemy.

**Right Concep-
tions of Sin
Condition
Right
Conduct.**

2. *For practical guidance in the details of conduct we need to have right views of sin.* There are thousands of cases where we ought to have in mind the general nature of sin in order to escape some particular wrong. Questions of casuistry, that is, what might be right or wrong in some particular difficult case, are best met by good general principles. The very first sin shows us this. The story is repeated over and over in almost every life. How many of us painfully remember the first step in some career of sin. If only at the beginning we had understood the thing, we would not have begun at all. It is the first step that counts. Knowing that sin is departure from God, let us watch that we depart not, even in the slightest matter. There is a homely story, often repeated, but none too often, for it is a good illustration—of a teamster who gained

**Right Views
Necessary
for Practical
Guidance.**

his place by saying that he always drove as far from the precipice as possible, and had no ambition to show his skill by driving close to it. If we have any conception of the true nature of sin, the best way to do is to keep as far from it as we possibly can.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SEPARATION BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.

Because of sin there is a great and painful distance between God and man. We must distinguish this from other differences, such as exist between God's greatness and our littleness, God's wisdom

**Man Separated
from God
by Sin.**

and our shortsightedness, God's power and our weakness, and the like. Again, we must observe, what we shall have occasion to notice more fully hereafter, that this separation does not mean indifference on God's part; nor does it mean the utter destruction of the divine likeness in man. It is hard for us to get an exact way of expressing the whole truth on subjects like these. We must give due attention to the related truths, else we shall make many mistakes. The separation between God and man which we are now considering is only that caused and maintained by man's own sinning. Our view is confined strictly to that.

I. THE FACT OF THIS SEPARATION.

Is there a real separation between God and man? and if so, what is its extent? are the questions which face us here. 1. *There is a real separation.* On this

**The fact of
Separation.
Its reality.
Old
Testament
Testimony.**

point our appeal is entirely to Scripture. We find this painful doctrine laid down with marked clearness in both the Old and New Testament. In Genesis 6:5, 6, we have the statement that God was so impressed with the wickedness of man

that "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." Of course this is said in human language, suited to the understanding of man in the childhood of the race, but it does not fail to tell the truth. In Isaiah 59:1, 2, we have the striking language addressed to Israel: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." There could be nothing more painfully emphatic than this language; and though applied to Israel in particular, it yet sets forth the fact that sin does separate between God and man.

In the New Testament our Lord declares in John 3:3 that "except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The necessity for a complete

**New
Testament
Testimony.**

and radical change in man's relations to God is here unequivocally set forth, whatever theories we may have as to the exact meaning of the

terms. If any more explicit language were needed we should find it in Romans 8:5-8, where Paul tells us: "For they that are after the flesh do mind (or think) the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For the mind (or thought) of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace: Because the mind of the flesh

is enmity (not *at* enmity, as it is often erroneously quoted) *against* God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: and they that are in the flesh cannot please God." The reader is also referred, in addition to these Scriptures, to the following, where the thoughts here set forth are confirmed: Deut. 31:17, 18; 32:15ff, especially 19, 20; Isa. 50:1; 63:10; Rom. 1:28; I Cor. 2:14; Jas. 4:4.

2. *Let us notice the extent of this separation.*

The Scriptures cited indicate that on account of sin God and man are very far apart. Many figures and expressive phrases are employed to

Its Extent.

impress this thought upon us. We find in Ephesians 2:1f a very striking statement of the real situation. Here man in his natural state is considered to be dead through his trespasses and sins. He is looked upon as one who is living according to the lower desires of his earthly nature, and thus as being the child of wrath, separated from God. In the same chapter, the Gentile readers are reminded that before their conversion they were "separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." This is one of the most terrible descriptions of unregenerate humanity in all the Word of God. It is often quoted, but too little pondered. In the First Epistle of John we have a good many passages which indicate the extent of this separation between God and man. It is often contrasted with the fellowship which we have with God through Christ, and the extent of the distance is thus magnified by the glory of the union with God in Christ. Thus in the first chapter, fifth and sixth verses, we read: "And this is the message which we have heard from him, and announce unto you, that God is light, and

in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Farther on, in the second chapter, fifteenth and sixteenth verses, we have the words: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vain-glory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." In James 4:4 we are told that the "friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever, therefore, would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God." Thus we see that this distance between God and sinful man is no figment of the imagination, no phantom of a sick conscience; but the stern, searching and positive declaration of divine truth. It is well for us to remember that we cannot bridge the separation by refusing to believe it. There is a way to bridge it, but not by unbelief.

II. THE NATURE AND EFFECTS OF THIS SEPARATION ON MAN'S PART.

Already in discussing the nature and the prevalence of sin, we have noticed some points of this subject, but it is well to bring them out again in this connection. That man should be separate from God, his Creator and spiritual Father, is a fearful thing, and that in the darkness and misery of his sin there should be the added condition of distance from holiness and from God, is dreadful to contemplate.

The Nature and Effects of Separation, as Regards Man.

1. As we saw before, in considering the matter of total depravity, *this alienation from God affects*

the whole man. In mind and heart, in purpose and in deed, man is apart from God, lost and straying. Pathetic, indeed, is that Scripture which tells us (Rom. 3:23): "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God!" Man's whole life is darkened and hurt by his absence from God. His sin breaks out in his irreligion, his preference for evil rather than good, his dislike of spiritual things, his alienation from holiness, his preference for what is ungodly, and sometimes, alas! even in his expressed and avowed atheism and hatred of religion and of God. These extremes only remind us of the extent of the ruin involved in man's absence from his Lord. These are the outward and physical effects.

2. *Let us notice the effect in man's own consciousness.* (a) How far is man conscious of his separation from God? Of course, this depends on many things, on his knowledge of God and of things divine, and on the vividness of his realization of his actual state. Again, it differs in different individuals. Some men feel their distance from God more than others, and sometimes those who are actually farthest feel it less keenly than those who are in fact near God, but are so yearning to be nearer that they feel farther off than they really are. The actual state of man's consciousness in this respect is in Scripture compared to the searing of a hot iron: there is no feeling. And in another place it is said that men may be even "past feeling." It is forcibly expressed in the old hymn:

**His Whole
Being
Affected.**

**The Effect in
Human
Consciousness.
Outlook
Varies
with the
Individual.**

"We live afar, estranged from God,
And love the distance well."

(b) Sometimes this lack of consciousness degenerates into positive indifference. Men are so far estranged from God, and so frozen in their polar night of absence

**Positive
Indifference.**

that they have ceased to care, and, as before remarked, this state of mind may further settle down into positive atheism. There is a practical atheism which refuses to recognize God as the Commander and Lord of the soul, which takes no account of him as a directive force in thought and life. There is a speculative atheism which denies God and tries to cheat the intellect into believing there is none. But these are extremes. All men do not reach this low and dreadful depth of darkness and despair.

(c) Yet there is a realization in man of his absence from God. The stings of remorse, even the dark fears of savage races, indicate some consciousness of absence

**Absence from
God Realized.**

from the great spiritual source of life. The religions and superstitions of men, their sacrifices and forms of worship, indicate a more or less well-defined consciousness of a guilty distance from God. Among the people where there is any correct teaching concerning God, this dim consciousness becomes more definite and pronounced, and often leads to genuine and sincere repentance of sin and a yearning unspeakable for the forgiveness and love of the Great Ruler of the universe. It answers back as the Psalmist: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Sometimes it breaks out in the intense yearnings expressed by Job (23:3): "Oh, that I knew where I might find him, That I might come even to his seat!" Sometimes in a perplexity, almost bitter, it dares even to complain and say: "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself." Sometimes, in

dim, uncertain stretchings—forth of the hand it finds its language with Paul on Mars' Hill: "If haply they might feel after him and find him." These yearnings, both intellectual and spiritual, are among the most expressive and persistent experiences of the human mind. They clearly emphasize what the Scriptures teach us of the actual distance between us and God.

III. GOD'S VIEW OF SIN.

Here we have only the Scriptures to guide us, and we must use them with caution, but also with candor.

**God's
Attitude
Towards Sin.**

We must remember what was said in the introduction to this chapter, and not think that we have all the truth concerning God's relation to man when we consider his view of man's sin. There are other views of the divine character in its outreach toward man which we have a right to hold. But, on the other hand, these must not blind our perceptions to the way in which God looks upon human sin. There are three things in God's relation to man's guilt and sin which we must take into account, viz., that God realizes, hates, and punishes sin.

1. *God's realization of sin.* "Realization" may not be the suitable word to employ; and yet, as is so often pointed out, it is very hard for us to find suitable

**God Realizes
Sin.**

words to express even what we dimly know of God. But I use the word rather than "knowledge," because it seems to me to express the thought a little more clearly. It is an awful thought that infinite holiness and perfect knowledge should realize the sin of man. God knows exactly what sin is in man. He knows this better than man knows it. He has a more per-

fect knowledge of its nature, a more distinct perception of its utter abominableness. How earnestly the Apostle warns us: "Be not deceived: God is not mocked!" and elsewhere we are warned against deceiving ourselves in sin, or rather put on our guard against "the deceitfulness of sin." There is no deceiving God. There are no veils between him and our sinfulness. Even in that far-off description in Genesis, already so often quoted, it is said that "the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually." In the 139th Psalm, with wondrous poetic power, the sweet singer, with faultless melody and perfect truth, declared: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising. Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou searchest out my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." Many indications are given us in the Gospels concerning the wonderful insight which the Son of Man had into the motives and conduct of men. It is one of the "griefs" with which he was "acquainted" that he knew what was in man and lived his thirty-three pure years amid scenes of human depravity and guilt, which were a constant offense to his sensitive holiness. What sin looks like in the eyes of a God whose nature is perfect holiness and whose mind is perfect knowledge, no human thought can ever grasp or word ever utter.

2. *God's hatred of sin.* Here, again, we fall upon the imperfections of human speech, but the Scrip-

tures use this expression in order to make clear and impressive to us the divine feeling toward sin. God hates it. He calls it "that abominable thing which I hate." His hatred of sin is the unutterable recoil of perfect holiness from its opposite. In most poetic and striking phrase Habakkuk tells us (1:13): "Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that cannot look on perverseness." Again and again in the Scriptures is God represented as angry with sin and sinners. It is the anger of a loving Father, but also of a just and perfect God.

3. *God's punishment of sin.* Painful as this truth is, and too often forgotten in our modern ways of thinking, it is set forth in the Scriptures with absolute clearness and beyond contradiction. The divine warning came to man in his early innocence, when God said to him concerning the tree of knowledge: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and long centuries afterwards Paul adds the "amen" when he says: "And death by sin." The oldest of the Psalms voices the lament of sinning and chastised humanity: "For we are consumed in thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath." John the Baptist (John 3:36), in speaking of the Christ, said: "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Our Lord himself makes this momentous truth very plain when he tells us (Matt. 25:46) with a solemn and painful cadence that sweeps over the heart like a perfect threnody: "And these shall go away into

everlasting punishment." It is not necessary to give other Scriptures to confirm this doctrine, it runs all through and through the Word. How strange it is that men allow themselves to forget it when all around and within us are confirmations of this mournful declaration of "inspired wisdom, that God doth surely punish sin." But in our next few chapters we shall see how a loving God, though hating sin and punishing it, can reach over it to the sinner a hand of pitying help.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LOVE OF GOD TOWARD MAN.

The holiness of God in abhorring sin, and his justice in punishing it, do not restrain his love from going out toward sinful man. This blessed truth is fully

declared in the Bible, and surely no doctrine in the Word is more likely to awaken our interest, more sure to reward our study. We must, however, guard against using the doctrine in such a way as to think it means or implies that God either in any way approves evil, or will fail to punish sinners. A good mother loves her wayward boy, though with all her pure soul she hates his evil ways; and a just judge must condemn a convicted criminal, even though he weeps with pity while he passes sentence. Such illustrations are inadequate, but they help us to understand in a measure how the perfectly holy and just God may have and declare a wonderful love toward mankind. There are two ways of looking at this love: from the points of view of the lover and the loved; that is, from God's side and from man's.

God Loves Man.

I. LOVE VIEWED FROM GOD'S SIDE.

This is, and of right should be, the first consideration, when we think the great thought: God loves man.

God is the great source of love. It finds its perfect realization in him. As we see it shown in its various human forms, it is marred with various human imperfections. Yet, notwithstanding these, we may see a vision, an ideal, of love's true nature. We cannot define love, because it is the simplest name we have for a common human experience. But we know, and ought more and more to know, what it is. So, when we think of God as loving, we think of love as divine and therefore perfect. In setting before us the love of God the Scriptures make plain that it rests in the very nature of God, it flows out in his relations to the universe, and finds expression in his deeds for man.

**Divine Love
Viewed from
God's Side.**

1. *Love is in the nature of God.* The great saying of divine truth on this subject is in the simple words of John (1 John 4:8, 16): GOD IS LOVE. How great a thought is put in these three short words! There could not be a stronger or clearer statement of the fact we are considering, that love is included in the very nature and being of God. If love were not in God, there would be no God.

**Love is in
the Nature
of God.**

In other passages also the loving nature of God is shown forth in clear and unmistakable language. In the Old Testament this is brought out more especially in the declarations of God's love toward his chosen people; as in Deut. 4:37; 7:7, 8; and most beautifully in Jeremiah 31:3, where God says to Israel: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Such a love as this is rooted in the nature of God. But in the New Testament the fullest revelation of God's loving nature is found. The many places in which the

**Scriptural
Testimony.**

divine love is declared point back to the character of God as its source. Thus, in most of the statements in the fourth chapter of First John, the great central truth is also implied, as where he says: "He that abideth in love abideth in God," and, "We love because he first loved us."

2. *God's love is manifested in his relations to his creation.* This thought was more fully brought out in the chapter on God's Care of his Creation, and does not need repetition here. But

**God's Love
Manifest in
His Care of
His Creation.**

the care of which we then thought finds its source and foundation in the love of God's nature. "The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Psalm 145:9). Of course this includes what follows.

3. *God's love is expressed in his deeds toward man.* Love is not only feeling, it is outreaching action. It gives itself, it does for its object. The most

**God's Love
Manifest in
His Deeds
Toward Man.
Salvation
from Sin.**

familiar truths of God's Word teach us this. (a) The great deed of salvation from sin. Our Master told the timid Jewish inquirer the whole great gospel in a few words (John 3:16): "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son;" and when we hear him say that whoever has seen him has seen God (John 14:9), we must not forget another saying of his concerning himself: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Thus the Father's gift of the Son was God's gift of himself. Similarly, John tells us (1 John 4:9, 10): "Herein was the love of God manifested to us, that God hath sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not

that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And Paul's gospel (Rom. 5:8) was the same: "God commendeth his own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

(b) Many other love deeds. God shows his love in many other gracious acts, as well as in the great grace of salvation. In his providential care (Matt. 6:25-34); in the gift of the Holy

**Other Deeds
of Love.**

Spirit (Luke 11:13); in his own abiding presence (John 14:23);

in the supports of his grace (Rom. 5:3-5); in the protection of his sovereign choice (Rom. 8:28-39); and in the chastenings of his Fatherly hand (Heb. 12:5-13), we have great assurances of the mighty love of God.

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving kindness, Oh, how good!"

II. GOD'S LOVE VIEWED FROM MAN'S SIDE.

Well may we wonderingly ask with the Psalmist (Psalm 8:4): "What is man that thou art mindful of

**Divine Love
Viewed from
Man's Side.**

him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" What is there in man to stir the great deep of infinite love? to attract love's care amid

the mighty concerns of a universe? to call for such momentous expression as divine love's self-giving? We may not fully understand the greatness of this mystery, only praying with Paul (Eph. 3:17-19) that we "being rooted and grounded in love may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the

love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Yet we may, under the guidance of God's own Word, venture to set forth some of the things which he sees in sinful man to awaken and call out his wonderful love.

1. *Man, though fallen, bears the likeness of God.* Of earthly creatures man alone (Gen. 1:26, 27) was made in the likeness of God. He fell; but did he ut-

**Man's Like-
ness to God.**

terly lose the traces of his divine origin? Is the likeness erased or only marred? Is there not yet some kinship between God and man? Yes; for even after ages of sinning (Gen. 9:6) man is still spoken of as bearing the divine likeness. In his great speech on Areopagus Paul declares (Acts 17:26-29) that there is yet a relationship between God and mankind; in 1 Cor. 11:7, and in James 3:4, the image of God in man is mentioned as a fact; and in Col. 3:10, the new creation of man in the likeness of God is mentioned as though it were the re-making of what had not been utterly destroyed. We must not, however, infer *too much* from these passages, as that all men are naturally the children of God. No, for we are distinctly told (John 3:3, 5) that man must be born again, that to those who receive Christ (John 1:12) the right to be sons of God was given, that even the Jews (John 8:42, 44) were not children of God, but of the devil, and that by nature (Eph. 2:3) men are children of wrath. We may only go so far as to say that in man, ruined as he is, the good God still recognizes traces of himself and yearns with love toward his own.

2. *Man needs the help of God because lost.* The three parables in the fifteenth chapter of Luke—

**Man's Need
of God's
Help.**

the Lost Coin, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Son—all reveal the outgoing tenderness of God toward lost and sinful man. His need makes ap-

peal which divine compassion cannot refuse. In Rom. 5:6-9 Paul in masterly language expresses the same general truth.

3. *Man is capable of a heavenly destiny, though human.* God sees what man may be saved to become. He loves the possibilities of redeemed humanity.

**Heavenly
Possibilities
in Man.**

He sees a possible freeman of God in this poor slave of sin, he sees a future saint in this lost and undone sinner; therefore he loved him.

and in order to bring many sons unto glory he made a perfect Savior by the discipline of human suffering (Heb. 2:10). For Scriptures favoring this view see the following: Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10, 11; 1 John 3:1, 2. Let us quote the last: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God; and such we are. Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him."

What heights of love we have scaled, and yet how far short of the highest we fall! May this glorious doctrine encourage within us no presumptuous confidence, but gratitude, hope, penitence, and answering love!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FEELING OF MAN AFTER GOD.

We have seen how the love of God reaches out toward man; now we are to inquire whether there is anything in man which answers back to this movement of God in his direction. Does

Man's Inclination Godward.

man want God? Does he look for him and try to find him? If he gets a glimpse of God, does he wish for more light? If he draws near to God, does he long to be nearer still? If he feels his sin to be an obstacle, does he grieve over it and wish it removed? If these questions cannot be answered with a universal affirmative, neither can they be denied with a universal negative. In seeking the right answer we must not overlook the appalling fact of man's sin, as that has already been outlined in former chapters nor must we fail to take account of that sad contradiction in human nature by which it is partly drawn to God and partly driven from him. (See McCosh's *Divine Government*, p. 44 ff). Alas! man often turns away, in fear or rebellion, or both, from the very thought of God. Another thing; whatever feeling after God we may find in human nature, it is evident that the depth and intensity of this feeling will differ in different ages, peoples, individuals, and even in the same person at different times! Now, bearing in mind all these various qualifications we may in a general way affirm

that there is in man an inclination of heart and mind toward God, and that this inclination sometimes becomes one of the deepest yearnings of the soul. In support of this view we shall look first of all to the Word of God, and then gather what corroboration we may from the field of human experience.

I. TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE.

It is to be expected that in the Bible (so complete are all its revelations of human nature) we should find traces of man's outreach and aspiration toward God. And so we do.

1. *In the way of experience.*

**Scripture
Testimony.
Experience;
Personal
Instances.**

The descriptions and narratives of how men and women felt and acted toward God show forth this human trait. (a) There are many personal instances. Before the Flood good "Enoch walked with God," leaving this record for his lasting epitaph. The patriarchs communed with God—faithful Abraham, "God's friend," and meditative Isaac, and even weak and sinful Jacob. Women, like Ruth, and prayerful Hannah, and possibly the inquisitive Queen of Sheba, were seekers for the true God. Even the mysterious Balaam in his better mood shows evidence of yearning for God. Many others along the course of Israel's history exhibit in one way or another this feeling of man after God. In the New Testament also we have the cases of Nicodemus, the woman of Samaria, the Greeks who desired to see Jesus, Cornelius, and others.

(b) We have also numerous expressions of the yearning of the heart for God. This is of course more

definite and intense in proportion to the faith and knowledge of the speaker or writer.

**Expressions
of Desire
Towards
God.**

In the Psalms more especially do we find these utterances of deep desire toward God. Some are most happily familiar, voicing the needs and feelings of all time: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple;" "As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." (Psl. 27:4; 42:1, 2. See also Psl. 61:1, 2; 63:1; 84:1, ff.) Such longings as these, while especially true of the real children of God, must have their sources deep down in the very nature of man.

2. *In the way of doctrine.* In other ways also the Scriptures teach the reality of man's outlook and approach to God. Our Lord recognizes this feeling

Doctrine.

when he says (Matt. 5:6): "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled;" for he does not mean a righteousness apart from God. In his tactful conversation with the woman at the well (John 4) he awakens this feeling and satisfies it. He appeals to it in his sweet invitations to the weary and the thirsty, recorded in Matt. 11:28; John 7:37.

The invitations to man in both the Old and New Testaments presuppose something in him which looks to God for help and satisfaction. How tenderly God

**Isaiah and
Revelation.**

through Isaiah calls: "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" and, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." (Isa. 55:1; 45:22.) So those of our Lord, already mentioned, and the

loving call on the last page of God's book; "Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17).

But perhaps the most direct doctrinal presentation of the fact we are considering is found in Paul's remarkable address at Athens (Acts 17:22-31). The language of verses 27 and 28 is especially to be noted: "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live and move, and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." This implies and skilfully touches, even in that light and curious audience, a recognized human trait.

**Paul's
Address at
Athens.**

language of verses 27 and 28 is especially to be noted: "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him,

Ah! truthfully has the great Augustine said: "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart is restless till it rest in thee." And with a greater than Augustine may we learn to say: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

II. HUMAN CORROBORATION.

Outside of the Bible also we have evidence of the fact that the human soul instinctively and yearningly turns toward God. As already remarked, this feeling may not be universal, and is cer-

**Human Cor-
roboration.**

tainly not universally manifest and strong, but that it is both widely prevalent and powerfully real no thoughtful student of mankind can doubt. Man is a being of wants. He has bodily appetites, intellectual cravings, moral aspirations, religious yearnings. Are these last any less real, less worthy of consideration, than the other three?

Scientists who ignore or undervalue them are singularly unscientific, to say the least of it. Let us notice briefly some of the ways in which this feeling after God shows itself among men.

1. *History.* Looking back over the past we see in much of the literature and art of bygone times the traces of man's heart-hunger for God. Also, in

History. the lives and teachings of representative men of the ages we discover the same marks. It is true that these indications are clearer and more intelligent among Christians, but they are not wholly wanting among pagans. Such men as Socrates, Cicero, Epictetus, and the sad Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, give expression to sentiments which others must have shared.

2. *Observed Facts.* But we need not confine our view to the past to find what we seek, we have only to look about us. We have no desire to overlook the awful

Observation. fact that we see much of godlessness, forgetfulness of God, and even atheism in our times. But this is not all we see. Of many of our fellow-men it is as true as it ever has been of mankind, that one of their most persistent longings is for God. The discontent and despair among us sometimes cry aloud for God. The disappointment with human science as a solution of life and destiny is reflected in much of the literature and talk of our times. There are tokens of reaction against the materialism that has marred so much of the thought of our age. Man's spiritual instincts cry aloud for the living God. Tennyson half-despairingly sings of "stretching lame hands of faith", and of "crying for the light", like an infant awakening in darkness; but Browning strikes a saner, hopefuller note when he says:

“Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear;
Each sufferer has his say, his scheme of the weal and
woe;

But God has a few of us whom he whispers in the
ear;

The rest may reason and welcome, 'tis we musicians
know.”

And not only the poets, but other writers, novelists, es-
sayists, philosophers, show forth in one way or another
the craving of the soul for its God.

3. *Consciousness.* May I venture to appeal to
this? How is it with the reader of this article? If not

Conscious- ness.	a Christian, is there within you sometimes a longing deeper than words for the true and living God?
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If a Christian, is there not a yearning for fuller knowl-
edge, more perfect trust? Sometimes with honest if
blundering Philip we pray: “Lord, show us the Father,
and it sufficeth us.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MEDIATION OF THE GOD-MAN.

We come now in our studies to the very heart of the gospel—the work of Jesus Christ in bringing God and man together. The Old Testament prepares for this

**The Bible
Alone Sets
Forth the
Demand for
and Reality
and Principle
of Mediation.**

work and foreshadows it; the New Testament declares and sets forth the fulfilment of it. Nature does not reveal this truth, nor does the searching of man's science find it, nor his poor fancy guess it. Only in God's own Word is it brought to us. And in that Word we find a *demand* for mediation, because of man's sinful estrangement from God; the *reality* of mediation, in the life and character of Jesus; and the method or *principle* of mediation by the self-sacrifice of the God-Man. We look to the Bible for the truth on these matters; we make no appeal to philosophy. Let us take up the branches of the great subject in the order mentioned.

I. THE DEMAND FOR MEDIATION.

Is there any reason why a holy God and sinful men should be brought together? And in their approach to each other is there any call for a mediator, that is for one who shall come between those who are apart and help them come together? Could they not be recon-

**The Demand
for Mediation.**

ciled without this mediation? Our studies in the last three articles have shown us why there is a demand for just this work.

1. *The human demand.* As we have seen, the Scriptures make it very plain that man is a sinner, and therefore is not and cannot be on just the right terms with the good God. On the contrary, he deserves the wrath and punishment of the Almighty. This

The Human Demand.

thought runs all through the Bible; it is one of the most certain and fundamental teachings of that wonderful book; and it finds more or less of confirmation in the self-knowledge and conscience of man himself. What, then, can man do to set himself right with God? Of himself, nothing; and that is *his* need of mediation.

2. *The divine demand.* Is there anything on God's part which calls for the services of a mediator between him and sinful man? We must answer this question in the affirmative or else deny or explain away the teaching of the Bible. For the Scriptures

The Divine Demand.

teach that on the one hand God's holy justice demands the punishment of sin, and that on the other his holy love demands the restoration of the sinner, and that a way is found for both of these essential parts of the divine nature to be satisfied without injury to either. (For Scriptures presenting this view see the following: Exod. 34:7; Isa. 45:21; Ezek. 18:20; Matt. 25:41-46; John 3:36; Rom. 2:2-12; comparing with them: 1 John 4:8; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Psa. 51:1; Rom. 12:1; these last two showing how divine mercy is basis both for prayer to God and appeal to man). Justice and mercy are equally characteristic of God, and their united demand is for a mediator.

II. THE REALITY OF MEDIATION IN CHRIST.

The Scriptures show that our Lord Jesus Christ is a true bond of reconciliation and

**The Reality
of Christ's
Mediation.**

union between God and men. This is his unique mission, his distinguishing character, his glorious achievement.

1. *The fact of the mediation.* This is brought out in many statements concerning our Lord. The one emphatic and comprehensive one is in 1 Tim. 2:5:

**The Fact of
the Mediation.**

“For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” The services of

Christ in this great office are exhibited in various ways:

(a). In his dual nature as God-Man. (See the chapter on that subject); (b). In his revelation of God to man. (Matt. 11:27; John 1:18; 14:6-9; 17:3); (c). In his removal of the obstacle of sin. (John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Col. 2:13, 14; Heb. 1:3; and many like these); (d). In his representation of us before God. (John 17:9; Heb. 4:14-16; 9:24, and many others; 1 John 2:1, 2.)

2. *The fitness of the Mediator.* This emphasizes the reality of Christ's work on both the divine and human sides of it. (a). As

**Christ's Fit-
ness for the
Work; His
Divine In-
sight.**

God, the Son of God, Jesus perfectly comprehends the nature and strength of the divine claims against sinful man. As the Judge into whose hands the cause of di-

vine holiness and justice is committed (John 5:19-32; 9:39; Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10), he will see that the case is not compromised (Matt. 5:17, 18; Rom. 3:19-21, 31; 8:3, 4), but that the utmost penalty is paid, even

at his own cost (Matt. 26:39, 42; Rom. 3:25; 2 Cor. 5:31).

(b). As man, the Son of Man, Christ perfectly enters into human nature and sympathizes with it. In John 5:27 we are told that God committed judgment into his hands for the very reason that he was the Son of Man; and throughout the great Epistle to the Hebrews the perfection of his priesthood is shown in his thorough sympathy with man. See the second chapter of Hebrews, verses 10 to 18, and particularly verse 17: "Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

His Human Sympathy.

III. THE PRINCIPLE OF CHRIST'S MEDIATION.

It is the central truth of Scripture, the distinctive feature of Christianity, the essence of a right Christian faith, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of men from sin, and that thus by removing the cause of separation between them he brings God and man together. For Scriptures see the following: Isa. 53:11; Matt. 1:21; John 1:29; Matt. 20:28; Acts 4:12; Rom. 5:11; Heb. 9:28; 1 Peter 1:19; 1 John 2:2; Rev. 5:9. There are many other passages like these, but a careful reading of these is more than sufficient to establish the general truth laid down. But we ask: *How* does Christ remove sin as an obstacle between God and man? By what method or principle does he accomplish his saving and reconciling work? The answer is: By the sacrifice of himself, and especially as that sacrifice is completed and exemplified in his death on

The Principle of Christ's Mediation.

the cross. But still the question presses: *How* did the self-sacrificing death of Christ get sin out of the way and bring man back to God? In order to answer this question correctly, and thus get at the essential principle of Christ's mediation, we must first notice some erroneous and inadequate views, and then show what the Scriptures really teach.

I. *Erroneous views.* There are three of these.

(a) One holds that Christ's sufferings and death were only those of a martyr to truth and duty, and that we are saved by following his exam-

Three Erroneous Views.

ple, not necessarily in literal detail, but in the spirit of it. (b)

Another is that Christ, the Son of God, in becoming man and dying, so completely identified himself with man as to take the penalty of sin; and thus he exhibits the fearful nature of sin and leads or influences man to hate it, turn from it, and come back to God. In either of these cases there is no real sacrifice for sin, and both views fail to explain the Scriptures, as we shall see. (c) There was a strange idea in the early ages that, in dying, Christ paid a ransom price for man to the devil and thus delivered him from his captor and tyrant and restored him to his rightful owner, God. This is a wrong inference from Heb. 2: 14, 15, and some other passages, and is utterly out of keeping with the true Scriptural view.

2. *Inadequate views.* Of these there are two, both being partly true, but neither one nor both together expressing the whole truth. (a) One is that

Two Inadequate Views.

Christ's death for sin was a satisfaction to God's moral government.

It would be against good government for God to pass over sin without punishment, but that Christ's death sufficiently shows how God hates

sin, since he punished his own Son for it; and now he can pardon a penitent sinner without injury to his government. (b) The other is that sin is a debt owed to God, and that by his death our Savior paid the debt for all who accept his services, and so God releases them from the obligation. All that is true in these views is contained in the real doctrine of Scripture. Both contain elements of truth, but not all the truth.

3. *The Scriptural view.* This is that Christ voluntarily took the nature of man and with it the place of man as a sinner before God, though without personal sin; that so in man's

**The Scrip-
tural View.**

stead he suffered the penalty of sin in his cruel death on the cross;

that being God he could by becoming man offer himself as a sufficient and suitable substitute for man; and being man his death was a real human death, a penalty for sin; and further, being God-Man, the dignity and value of his person makes his penalty sufficient for all the race, though actually efficient only in the case of those who by faith accept him as their substitute.

Space does not permit a study of the passages which unfold this view; the student is referred to some of the more important ones: Isa. 53:5, 6; Matt. 20:28; John

3:16; Rom. 5:8; 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21;

**Scriptural
Testament.**

Tit. 2:14; Heb. 7:26, 28; 9:13, 14;

10: 4-12; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; 1 John

4:9. Here we see how man in Christ really suffers the penalty of his sin, and God in Christ is satisfied with it. Love satisfies holiness. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Psa. 85:10). "That he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26.)

CHAPTER XIX.

GOD'S WORK IN SAVING MAN.

On the basis of the mediation of the God-Man is God himself further active in saving the souls of men from their sins? And if God does work for and in the souls

**Is God Active
in Seeking
Man's Salva-
tion?**

of individual human beings for their salvation, how does he accomplish this work? These surely are questions of the utmost concern to us, and the answers to them must be sought in the Word of God, and there alone. Except as he has himself revealed it we have no knowledge of the fact or the method of the divine work of delivering man from the power and the results of his sin. But in the light of God's own truth, as told us in the Bible, we have good and certain knowledge on both these points, and from this knowledge we infer some other truths, which must be considered.

I. REALITY OF THE DIVINE WORK.

Nothing is clearer in the Scriptures than the gracious and positive declaration that God does actually save men from their sins. This precious truth runs like a

**Reality of
the Divine
Work.**

golden thread through the whole fabric of the inspired Word. From Genesis to Revelation, from the sweet, sad picture of Eden to the glorious vision of the New Jerusalem, we see the strong,

loving hand of God stretched out to deliver man from sin. If God does not save there is no salvation.

1. *Old Testament representations.* In the Old Testament one of the best known and most frequently recurring descriptions of God is that of a mighty De-

**Old Testa-
ment Testi-
mony.**

liverer and Savior of his people. It is true that the deliverance is often from temporal troubles, from calamities, dangers, sorrows and

death; but the spiritual deliverance from sin is frequently expressed and oftener implied. For example, let us remember how in the fifty-first Psalm David prays to God to forgive and cleanse him, as if such power rested with God alone: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. * * * * Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. * * * * Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Again, let us recall how God declares by the prophet (Isa. 44:22): "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." Hear also the worldwide proclamation of God (Isa. 45:22): "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." (See further: Gen. 49:18; Psa. 6:4; 27:1, 9; 62:1, 2, 5, 6, 7; 80:3; Isa. 12:2; 43:3; 45:15, 17, 21, 22; 59:1; 63:1; Jer. 3:22, 23; 17:14. Though in some of these the reference is rather to temporal than spiritual deliverance.)

2. *New Testament teaching.* Many well-known passages of the New Testament occur to the mind as we think of the saving grace and power of God.

**The New
Testament
Testimony.**

These clearly teach that God does the work when men are saved from their sins, and that unless he does it it is not done. Yet, of course,

as we shall more fully see in our next chapter this does not leave man out of the account, or treat him as a mere machine to be operated by a force outside of itself. We may put the case thus: If God does not save there is no salvation at all; if man is not active in his own salvation, then there is none *for him*; if he is concerned in his own deliverance he must be actively concerned, because this is not a case where he can be inactive and still be himself. We are now concerned with the former part of this statement: It is God who saves. Read the following familiar passages: Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:47, 69; 19:10; Acts 2:21; 4:12; Rom. 1:16; 5:6-11; 1 Cor. 1:21; Eph. 2:5, 8; 1 Tim. 1:1, 15; 2 Tim. 1:9; Tit. 1:3; 3:5; Heb. 2:10; 7:25; Jude 25. Others will occur to the student, but let him not omit to study well Phil. 2:12, 13. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.*" This does not mean that we must or can save ourselves, as of ourselves, but that on the basis of God's *working in* we are to *work out* our salvation.

II. THE METHOD OF THE DIVINE WORKING.

We must now ask: How does God work in accomplishing the salvation of men? Our most general answer must be that the Scriptures teach that he works in perfect accordance with his own nature, and also with that of man. He does no violence to either. Oh! wonderful gospel of grace, how it unites seeming opposites, rebuking alike the fatalist, who leaves man out, and the skeptic who leaves God out. The gospel takes in both, *that is* God's way. On the Divine side, then, we find the Bible teaching that God

The Method of the Divine Working.

acts as God in saving men, and so we naturally look for rich displays of divine sovereignty, power, wisdom, righteousness, love. Now as love is the crowning attribute (1 John 4:8) the Scripture lays special emphasis upon it, and as sovereignty is essential to God's perfection (Rom. 11:33-36) it is not left out in his work. So we find one great word which includes both these ideas: *grace*. This is a favorite word with Paul, and means sovereign love and loving sovereignty. "By grace ye are saved." (Eph. 2:5, but read the whole context, verses 4-10.) Now "the grace of God that bringeth salvation" (Tit. 2:11) works in two ways, for which the Scripture has two words: election and regeneration.

1. *Election*. This simply means choice. It is divine sovereignty in saving. God's plan of work for the universe takes in the saving of men. If he plan to save, he chooses those who shall be saved. He wills to save those who will be saved. (a) When does God make his choice? After the man has settled it by choosing God? This makes man superior. Along with the man's decision? This makes God dependent. No; God chooses beforehand, "before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:4.)

**Election;
When God
Chooses.**

(b) Are there any conditions to God's choice? Does he choose because he foresees that a man will repent, or on the condition of faith? No;

**God's Choice
Free.**

in choosing to save men God is God, sovereign, free, untrammled, gracious, acting on his own initiative. For proof of the doctrine see the following Scriptures: Matt. 24:22; 25:34; Luke 18:7; John 6:37, 44; 17:2, 6; Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:27-30; 9:11-16; Eph. 1:5-8; Col. 3:12; 2 Thess. 2:13. 1 Peter 1:12.

2. *Regeneration.* In carrying out his gracious purpose how does God act on the souls that he has chosen to save? The Bible teaches that it is by making a complete change in them, by making them over again. This is expressed principally by the word regeneration, which means being born again. Of course this and other terms employed are figurative language used to state in the most emphatic way the thoroughness of the change which God works in the soul. This work is usually ascribed to the Holy Spirit, who comes into the soul and changes its very life and being so that what it once loved it now hates, and what it once hated it now loves. This does not mean that the soul is made perfect in holiness at once, but as some one quaintly expressed it: "The unconverted sinner is a sinner running into sin, and the converted sinner is a sinner running away from sin." The soul is born anew, but is yet a babe, and grows ever through life toward maturity. The new life is not finished, *but it is begun.*

There are intimations of this doctrine in the Old Testament. See especially Psalm 51:10; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 11:19, 20. But in the New Testament it is taught with a fullness and emphasis which should leave no shadow of doubt in our minds. Some of the more explicit passages are the following: John 1:13; 3:3, 5; 5:21; Eph. 2:1-5; 4:23, 24; Col. 3:10; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3, 23; 1 John 3:1, 9.

III. INFERENCES FROM THE DOCTRINE

If the salvation of man is really God's work and is wrought out by the divine choice and the direct agency of the Spirit then some inferences follow which we must candidly meet.

**Inferences
from the
Doctrine.**

1. *Difficulties.* It is never fair to evade or misrepresent these; and it must be confessed that we meet with two very rare problems in accepting the doctrines unfolded in the preceding discussion.

**Difficulties;
Human
Freedom.**

(a) There is the old trouble about human freedom. What has man to do if God does it all? We

shall see in the next chapter that man must and can do his part, and the Scriptures and his own consciousness alike insist that he too must choose and act in his own behalf. Both sides are true. God is too great to contradict man, as though they were equals, he simply includes man's choice in his choosing, man's work in his working. Whatever contradiction there is is not between equal forces, but between the great and the little. Man can be very comfortably free *within* the overwhelming purpose and operation of God.

(b) There is the greater difficulty of seeing how to harmonize these doctrines with the justice and mercy of God. If he chooses some, regenerates them, and actually saves them, what shall we say

**Harmonizing
Apparently
Contradictory
Doctrines.**

as to those who are left out of these operations? We can only answer, with all reverence, that this is God's affair, and he will see to it.

We are not his guardians. He is sovereign and does what he will with his own; he is just and will always do right; he is holy and cannot do wrong; he is love and will not be cruel. For our part we can wait. God will take care of himself, and of us. (See Rom. 9: 19-21.)

2. *Consolation.* In the reality and the method of God's salvation of men there lie precious consolations. If God saves, he *saves* (John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:31-39; Phil. 1:6; 2:12, 13; Heb. 6:17-20; 1 Peter 1:3, 5). But for

Consolation.

God's work there would be no salvation for any; but for the way he works there could be no assurance of salvation even for a penitent sinner. But as it is, "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19.)

CHAPTER XX.

MAN'S PART IN BEING SAVED.

As was intimated in our last chapter, man also has a most important part to perform in the work of his salvation. He cannot be saved apart from his own activity. Now, as we have proved from Scripture that God's work is indispensable, we may leave that out of view for the present, and for the sake of clearness confine our thought exclusively to man's own activity in the matter of salvation.

I. THE NECESSITY OF MAN'S PART.

It does not put the matter too strongly to say that man's part is necessary. If man is saved he must have a hand in the work. This necessity lies in the very nature of man as a moral agent, and is clearly assumed and acted on in the Scriptures.

**Man's Part
Necessary.
Since he
is a Moral
Agent.**

1. *The very nature of man as a moral agent requires his co-operation.* In saving man, God works with material that he himself has made and made to be such as it is. An artist called upon to make a statue may make it of either bronze or marble. He may have the same form and features to represent, but surely he will work differently according as his material differs. Marble is not bronze—the one requires a chisel, the

other a casting mold. When God works on man he does not work in either marble or bronze, but he works on man, that is, he works on a being made in his own likeness, a being endowed with moral freedom, with conscience, with intellect, feeling and will. In the very nature of the case, therefore, even the divine work in and with man assumes the reality of man's intellect, feeling and will. God's work is great enough to take in these things, as we have seen before, without doing any violence to them whatever.

2. *Man's co-operation is assumed and acted on in the Scriptures.* What we should thus infer from the moral constitution of man is clearly shown in the Scriptures.

**The Scrip-
tural As-
sumption;
In General.**

Man must be active in his own salvation. Everywhere, both in the Old and New Testament, this is plain. (a) On the face of Scripture it lies clear to the view of even the superficial student. The general tone of Scriptural thought implies man's consciousness of freedom, of intellect, of emotion, of purpose, of ability to move himself.

(b) More particularly does this come to view in the appeals addressed to man in regard to his salvation. In those addressed to rebellious Israel by the prophets

**In Specific
Appeals.**

we find men appealed to as capable of acting in their own behalf. (Prov. 1:23ff; Isa. 1:18; 31:6; 55:1-3, 6, 7; Ezek. 33:11, and many others). Again, we find in the New Testament most tender appeals to men to turn from their sins and live. Beautiful are the invitations of our Lord. In Matt. 11:28; John 7:47, we find earnest invitations which recognize the freeness of man's own choice; and there are other well-known passages which may occur to the reader. In other portions of

the New Testament also we find the same kind of appeal. In Eph. 5:14: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee"; and then on the last page of the inspired book we have the invitation of the "Spirit and the bride" and the free offer to every one that is athirst. (Rev. 22:17.) It is not necessary to quote or refer to all the passages, because this is so very clear in the Scriptures.

II. THE METHOD OF MAN'S WORK IN HIS SALVATION.

Taking as proved that man must be active in the matter of his own salvation, it is natural and proper that we should raise and try to answer the question: How does he

The Method of Man's Work in His Salvation.

act? What is it that he must do to be saved? There are three things taught in the Scripture as

to what is necessary on man's part. Sometimes one is put for all, or one for another, or two for all, and the acts are so closely related that they naturally pass into one another, but still we may think of them separately, as the Scriptures often so represent them. These three acts are named *repentance*, *faith* and *perseverance*. Let us notice them in this order.

1. *In order to be saved the first step which man must take is that which the Scriptures call repentance.* This doctrine is so well understood that it is scarcely

Repentance.

necessary to prove it at length. We need only remember that this was the burden of the prophet's message to Israel. This was the opening word of the Forerunner: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1, 2); and our Lord took up the same message (Matt. 4:17). Peter re-echoed the same call in his great pentecostal sermon (Acts 2:38), and likewise Paul in his preaching, as we see from Acts 17:30.

It is not difficult to explain the action herein enjoined upon man as necessary to his salvation. In the Scriptural representation of it, repentance involves two things: the realization of sin and

Its Necessity; the voluntary turning from sin. The **Realizing Sin.** first without the second is incom-

plete, and the second without the first is impossible. A man repents when he realizes that he is a sinner, and when with all earnestness he turns away from his sins. (a) Realization of sin consists in knowing and feeling that one is a sinner in the sight of God. It is not enough to know it, that is, to admit it as a fact. If we really have any suitable conception of what sin is we must naturally feel an abhorrence and sorrow for it.

(b) But this sorrow is not all of repentance, as is too often thought. Paul tells us that "godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret" (2 Cor. 7:10).

Turning from Sin. And this knowledge of and sorrow for sin must find their natural out-

come in the determination to quit it; this is the main thing in repentance. It is the will to cease from sin, not as a distant and future act; but the purpose here and now to turn; and so this brings us to the second element of man's work.

2. *Faith.* Vainly does man strive to abandon his sinfulness. However strong the will, the power is incomplete, if not wholly wanting, and where shall he turn to find help? We are told that

Faith. "God hath laid help upon one that is mighty," and so the turning of the heart from sin finds its completion in the turning of the heart to God through Christ. This is faith. Faith is a great word in Scripture. It takes up the work just where repentance brings it. Out of the realization and hatred of

sin, faith is taking hold of Christ as the sinner's friend and Savior. In no one passage of Scripture is this thought more beautifully expressed than in 1 Tim. 1: 17: "Faithful is the saying and worthy of every acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Notice, not "all acceptance", as our common version has it, but "all" or "every acceptance", that is, of every kind of acceptance that our yearning hearts and minds can give it. No Bible reader needs to be told how often faith in Christ is laid down as the condition of salvation. We remember the trembling jailer at Philippi (Acts 16:31), and the answer which Paul promptly gave: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." We remember the great saying of our Savior in John 3:16, 18: "Whosoever believeth." The true nature of faith as set forth in the Scriptures is often confused by unnecessary attempts to explain it. We do not need any other words to describe the well-known experience of believing—the well-understood act of faith. We cannot find any simpler words than these to describe that of which we are conscious when these words are uttered in our hearing. Therefore, all we have to do is to describe in other words what faith is and does.

(a) It is intellectual acceptance of the truth that Jesus is the Savior. This is fundamental, necessary; but yet it is incomplete, it is not all of faith. It is possible, indeed, for some to stop at this half-way house and rest as if it were the journey's end. But, no; in order to exercise real faith we must go farther.

(b) It is voluntary confiding or trusting in Christ as the Savior. It is thus more than to accept the truth about him. It is to accept him as the soul's de-

liverer and Lord. We believe a truth, and we confide in a person, and this is faith in Christ—the essential and indispensable condition of human salvation. Jesus pleads (John 14: 1): “Believe in God, believe also in me,” and adds (verse 6): “No man cometh unto the Father but by me”; and Peter proclaims (Acts 4:12): “Neither is there salvation in any other”; while the great burden of Paul’s teaching in Romans and other of his writings is that we are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus only. We come then to consider the remaining action on man’s part.

**Personal
Trust in
Christ.**

3. *Perseverance.* Men sometimes make the mistake of stopping with repentance and faith, as if that completed all that man had to do in order to be saved; and in a sense this is true, provided that faith and repentance be continued, but the Scriptures show that there must be this continuance, and this is what we call perseverance. Our Lord tells us: “He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.” (Matt. 10:22). In relation to God’s preservation of his people this doctrine has precisely the same difficulty as those of voluntary faith and repentance toward the doctrines of election and regeneration. Holding out unto the end is simply the human side of God’s keeping us, and thus Peter tells us (1 Pet. 1:5) that “we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” On the human side perseverance is simply continued repentance and faith, that is, the continual recognition of our sinful weakness, and the continual holding to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Such are the human conditions which lie between us

and our salvation. All the work is God's and his be all the praise; but all the responsibility is ours, and may we make daily, constant and willing effort to turn from sin and hold fast by a clinging faith to the Lord and only Savior!

CHAPTER XXI.

THE NEW RELATION BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.

In one of our former chapters we took notice of the great barrier which sin has erected between God and man. In others we noted how God's love and man's yearning reach over this hindrance.

**Broken
Barriers and
New Blessings.**

In others still we saw how gracious provisions of God have been made that this barrier should be removed and that man through God's grace and his own free act should come to God in Christ Jesus, the God-man. We have now the delightful task of considering together the new relation between God and man growing out of man's acceptance by faith of God's salvation in Christ. When sinful man takes hold of the sinner's Savior his relations to offended holiness are readjusted, and a new life is his. Years ago I used to hear an honored minister say: "Where a willing Savior and a willing sinner meet there is salvation." The Scriptures represent the relation of this new life of the believer in four different ways—justification, adoption, sanctification, and the Christian life.

One term does not express the completeness of the new relation of the soul to God; for this relation is

large and manifold, like the relation of the bodily life of man to the external world—it is a relation of complete dependence and has many points of contact. The four vital organs, brain, lungs, heart and stomach, have different and yet necessary functions. No one of these can exist without the other three, nor any three without the other one; yet, we never think of confusing them in thought as if one were the other. So in the matter of the spiritual life the soul's connection with God is at several different points and is expressed in various terms.

**Completeness
Requires the
Use of Sev-
eral Terms.**

I. JUSTIFICATION.

This is the judicial act of God whereby the sinner who repents of his sins and believes in Christ is declared free from the penalty of that divine law which he has broken. It is God's verdict

Acquittal.

of acquittal in the case of a penitent believer. The nature of this great act is clearly set forth in the striking language of Paul (Rom. 8:33, 34): "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea, rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." It is important to observe that justification, in the sense here employed, is always exclusively the act of God and never in any way the act of man. When a man is said to justify himself, it simply means that he puts up an excuse for himself. The justification we are speaking of is solely the act of God (Cf. Rom. 3:30; Gal. 3:8; Rom. 8:33). Now, furthermore, justification on God's part is not an act of power or of love, but of

justice. Regeneration is an act of power, and forgiveness is an act of love. We may perhaps get a clearer view by saying that it is the opposite of condemnation (Cf. Matt. 12:37; Rom. 5:18; 8:33). Yet it is not a declaration that one is at the same time a sinner and not a sinner, but that the penitent sinner believing in Christ is no longer a condemned sinner. He is treated as innocent for Christ's sake (Cf. Acts 13:38, 39; Rom. 3:24-26). We thus see that justification is not the act of making righteous, but simply the judicial act of God declaring the sinner released from penalty for Christ's sake (Cf. Rom. 4:5; Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9).

II. ADOPTION.

The new relation between God and the believer is further described in the Scriptures by the word adoption, or as the Greek word literally means, son-making, that is, putting the believer in the place of a son. Now, while justification is exclusively a divine act, and is in no sense a human act, we begin in adoption to see the beginnings of a human experience. The believer is not conscious of the justification, but he is made conscious of his adoption. He begins to participate in the divine nature and to enjoy the privilege of sonship. The action of God in making him a son is not simply the determining his status before the law, but the bringing him into a tender relation in grace.

1. *The true doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood.* Here we have the proper Scriptural view of God as a

Father to mankind. In one of our former chapters it was mentioned that in a general sense as Creator God may be conceived of vaguely as the Father of all men, but in the adoption of the believer that vague conception becomes a positive and precious truth. Of course the language is figurative, but it expresses a real relation of the converted soul to God. Only the believer has a right to claim this sonship. This our Lord himself makes very plain in John 1:12, where it is said concerning our Lord that "as many as received him to them gave he the right to become the sons of God." The beautiful passage in Rom. 8:14-17 sets forth the matter in exquisite terms: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God * * * * but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father * * * and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." Read also Gal. 4:5 and Eph. 1:5.

2. *This sonship is based on regeneration and involves discipline.* Peter (1 Pet. 1:3) tells us that God has "begotten us again unto a living hope", and goes on in glowing language to speak of our inheritance "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." In a most comforting and helpful passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews (12: 8-10) the beautiful relation of God to believers as his children, even when he sends chastening afflictions upon them, is set forth for our comfort and edification: "God dealth with you as with sons."

**The True
Doctrine of
Divine
Fatherhood.**

**Our Sonship
Based on
Regeneration.**

III. SANCTIFICATION.

By a sort of progress of the thought we take in more and more of the human element in salvation. In justification God acts alone. In adoption God is still the actor and man the conscious recipi-

Sanctification. ent. Now in sanctification, or making holy, God still is the actor, but man co-operates with God. Sanctification is more than an experience; for though a divine work it is still a human effort, and, on the basis of divine work, even a human achievement. We do not make ourselves sons, but by God's help we can and do make ourselves holy.

1. *Note the divine and human elements, how they co-operate.* Paul says (1 Thess. 5:3): "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly", but Peter tells us (2 Pet. 3:18): "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Our Lord prays for us in John 17:17: "Sanctify them in thy truth; thy word

**The Divine
and the
Human Ele-
ments.**

is truth"; yet he tells us in Matt. 5:48: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect", and Peter (1 Pet. 1:14-16) exhorts us that as obedient children we should not conform ourselves to our former lusts, but should be holy, even as God who has called us is holy; and Paul (Phil. 2:12, 13) puts them both together and tells us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in us.

2. Justification and adoption are actions which God completes at the time they are taken, but *sanctification is not only a result, but also a process.* Justification and adoption are done and

**Sanctification
a Process.**

done with; sanctification is done and is always doing. It is an unfolding—a growth. Some serious mistakes are made by neglecting this truth. Some people have been led to think that sanctification is like the other actions, completed in an instant. The Scriptures already quoted, however, make this progressive work plain. We may also refer to Phil. 1:6 where Paul expresses his confidence that he which hath “begun a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ;” and to Col. 3:9, 10, where, after speaking of putting off the old man with his deeds, he describes the Christian as having put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge, after the image of him that created him. In 2 Pet. 1:3-7 we are reminded that the divine power has given us things which pertain to life and godliness; that we have “exceeding great and precious promises” and by these are made “partakers of the divine nature;” and having laid this glorious foundation he goes on to say: “And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue”, and the rest of that beautiful climax. No doctrine of Scripture is so full of comfort to the struggling sinner as the divine help given by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the putting off of his old nature, the subduing of his sins, and growth in grace until he attains unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

IV. CHRISTIAN LIFE.

And now pursuing our line of progress we reach the final element in the new relation between God and man, and we find this to be wholly human. We began with

**The Chris-
tian Life.**

justification, which was wholly divine, and we reach the Christian life, which, though caused by God's grace and sustained by his presence, is still in the aspect of it which is here presented, a wholly human experience and effort. The Christian life growing out of these gracious relations to God is a life of love and gratitude. Daily should we strive to enter into and make our own that blessed experience of the Apostle to the Gentiles (2 Cor. 5:14, 15): "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again." This Christian life of love and gratitude has its two sides, the contemplative and the active, the life of prayer and the life of work.

1. *The contemplative side.* How precious are the example and teachings of Jesus! Often we read of him that he went off to pray. Whether it was in the pure joy of perfect communion with his God, or in the appeal of human wisdom for divine guidance, as when he spent the night in prayer before he chose the twelve; or the groaning outcry of suffering humanity, as when he pleaded under Gethsemane's shadows, he teaches us how to pray. Likewise in direct teaching he bids us to pray to the Father who seeth in secret (Matt. 5:6), and kindly encourages us (Luke 18:1ff), "That men should always pray and not faint." Nor is

**Contempla-
tion.**

it prayer alone, but consecration of ourselves to God, communion with God, the lifting of the soul toward him and the receiving of the Spirit within us as sons of God. These are our highest privileges. Would that they were more our daily exercises! In this connection study the following passages: Rom. 12:1, 2, 12; Eph. 3:14-19; 6:18; Phil 4:6; Col. 2:6, 7; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:8; and observe the example of the earliest Christian disciples as given in Acts 1:14; 2:42.

2. *The active side.* This expresses itself in obedience and work. Nothing is clearer in the Scripture than the necessity of good character and good

works as the fruit of divine regeneration and human faith, and as the evidence of that growth in holiness which is divinely originated and sustained, but humanly conducted and achieved. But it is scarcely necessary to quote many passages on this point, and we may as well confine our view to a comparison of the teachings of Paul and James on the relation between faith and works. In the sixth chapter of Romans Paul indignantly repels the idea that the believer may continue in sin, and declares on the contrary that he who is united with Christ by a living faith is really dead to sin, and as one who is alive from the dead, should offer himself unto God for the exclusive work of righteousness. Moreover, he declares that such union with Christ as the believer has in faith is really a new creation, a new life, a new motive and help to righteousness. (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:14-17; Gal. 6:15; Col. 3:3-11; Titus 2:11-14, and many others.) In all his epistles he enjoins a noble morality and a warm-hearted benevolence as the outcome of the faith which unites us with the pure and loving Jesus. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his", is the emphatic saying of

Rom. 8:9. It is as certain as anything can be that in teaching justification by faith Paul does not mean an empty thing called faith which leaves the heart destitute of holiness, the life barren of good deeds.

And this is exactly what James teaches us in regard to the relation between faith and works in the familiar passage of James 2:14-26. Here we are strikingly

**James'
Teaching
the Comple-
ment to
Paul's.**

taught that it does not profit a man to say he has faith when he has no works, and though Abraham was justified by faith, yet his faith was made perfect, that is, perfectly exemplified in his works. James concludes by telling us that as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Thus when we follow Paul we shall not dare to trust our poor works as a ground of merit before God, and when we follow James we shall not dare to call that faith which does not show itself in works, and thus they teach the same thing from different points of view, and we are only safe when we follow both, when by faith we trust in Christ wholly for salvation, and when by works we show that such faith is real.

Thus do we see how the new relation between God and man wrought by the mediatorial work of Christ founds itself upon the bed-rock of God's own work in the soul, and yet it is daily built

**Insight and
Prospect.**

by the active efforts of the redeemed spirit working its way upwards to God, until the fair edifice shall be crowned with its heavenly glory in the perfect presence of our God, and in the fellowship of those redeemed ones of whom it is said that "they do rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13.)

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIANS—THE CHURCH.

The new relation to God makes a new relation between men—the children of God are brothers. Common beliefs and feelings draw men together into societies, or organized bodies. Our

The Origin and Functions of the Church.

Lord recognized this human tendency and founded his church, the organic expression of Christian fellowship. Twice he is recorded as speaking of the church (Matt. 16:18; 18:17); among the unrecorded sayings (John 21:25; Acts 1:3) it is reasonable to suppose were many that related to his church; and the charges he gave to the apostles, with the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19; John 16:12, 13; Acts 1:4-6), doubtless authorized them to provide for the gathering of his people into some kind of permanent body or bodies. Accordingly, we find very early mention of the church and churches. What we find it is the purpose of this chapter briefly to indicate. We shall also take some account of modern ideas and usages regarding the church.

1. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.

The Greek word *ecclesia*, meaning a gathering or assembly of people, occurs in the New Testament about

one hundred and fifteen times. In five of these passages

**The New
Testament
Church.**

(Acts 7:38; 19:32, 39, 41; Heb. 2:12) the word does not mean church. So there are about a hundred and ten places where the word

is properly translated church, and is used to describe a body or gathering of Christ's people. Here we come upon a very important distinction.

1. *The church general.* In a few but very interesting places we find the word church used to set forth a more or less general conception of the people of God.

**The Church,
Collective or
General.**

(See the following: 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Cor. 12:28; and compare Matt. 18:17; Jas. 5:14. See also Acts 9:31; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 10:32;

comparing Matt. 16:18, and Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:22; 2:10; 5:23-32; Col. 1:18, 24; Heb. 12:28). A careful reading of these Scriptures will bring to view some gradation in the meaning, from a less to a more general sense. Thus, in describing the church as "the pillar and ground of the truth"; the apostle clearly has not in mind any one particular church, and yet the idea of a local assembly as standing for a class seems to be his meaning. We are familiar with such modes of expression, as when we say: "The school is the hope of the country", or some such phrase. A more general use of the term appears in Acts 9:31, where it is said: "So the church throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria had peace." Here the meaning seems to be the Christians living in those regions, without reference to any organized body, either local or general. Also, where Paul speaks of "persecuting the church," he most probably does not

intend the church at Jerusalem or any other particular church, but simply believers in Christ wherever he found them. Thus we are led up to that largest of all conceptions of the church which we find in several of the passages cited, the whole number of the Lord's true people in all times and places. To describe this the phrase "church universal" has been invented, but the expression is not found in Scripture. We may use the phrase for convenience, but we should always remember that there is no mention or even suggestion of a great organized body in any passage of Scripture which speaks of the church.

2. *The church local.* By far the larger number of passages in which the word church is used describe the local church, that is, a particular assembly or society of baptized believers in

**The Church
Local, or
Particular.**

Christ, meeting commonly in one place for worship, for mutual instruction, for observing the Christian

rites, for work in the name of the Lord, and generally, for Christian service. These passages are too numerous for citation here, but a few of various sorts may be given as examples: (a) Cases where some particular church is mentioned: Acts 5:11; 8:1; 13:1; 20:17; Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; Rev. 2:1, etc. There are also passages which mention particular churches in the plural, as: Acts 15:41; 1 Cor. 16:1; Gal. 1:2, 22; Rev. 1:11; 2:7, etc. Reference to these passages and many similar ones will show that a special society or body is named or distinctly intended, as the church at Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, or the churches of Judea, Galatia, Asia.

(b) Cases where no particular church is named or

meant, but where the local sense is clear. In Matt. 18:17, our Lord, in speaking of offenses between brethren, says: "Tell it to the church." Here no one church is named, but the one to which the offenders belong is evidently meant. In Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas are said to have appointed elders "in every church." We find the plural used in some cases, as Acts 16:5, where it is said that the "churches were strengthened in faith." (See also Rom. 16:4; 1 Cor. 11:16.)

**Existence
of a Local
Church is
Implied.**

We are now prepared to consider some matters connected with *the organization of the local church*. (1) *The formation of churches*. We have no account of how

**Organization
of the Local
Church.
The Forma-
tion of
Churches.**

the apostles established any particular church, nor any directions how to proceed in the organization of a church; but this does not mean that we are utterly at a loss as to the character of a New Testament church. We know that it was composed of those who had made actual confession of Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, upon repentance and faith. (See Acts 2:41-47; Rom. 6:1-4; 10:9). There is every reason to believe that the church itself passed upon applicants for membership, determining who should make up its members. This is involved in the very nature of a society and must be taken for granted, and it is also included in the right to exclude from the church. An interesting event in this connection is the effort of Saul of Tarsus to join the church at Jerusalem, and the unwillingness of the brethren to receive him till Barnabas took up his case. (See Acts 9:26.)

(2) *The officers of the churches*. In two important passages (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11) something like a

list of officers is given, and there are many other places where one or another officer is

**The Officers
of the
Churches.
Apostles.
Prophets.**

mentioned. The subject is too large for adequate treatment here. We must content ourselves with noticing very briefly only the more important matters. (a) In regard

to the apostles it is to be observed that they were not called to office by the churches, but by direct divine appointment. The election of Matthias (Acts 1:21-26) is not an exception, as will be seen on careful study. The duties of an apostle were not especially to any one church, but to all the churches; and there is no evidence that the office was to be permanent. (b) Much the same thing may be said in regard to the prophets, and others.

(c) The regular and permanent officers of a New Testament church were elders and deacons. The elders are also called bishops (overseers) and pastors. See

**Regular Offi-
cers Were
Elders.**

the following passages: Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2; 20:17, 28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1, 2; 5:17, 19; Tit. 1:5, 7; Jas. 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:1. The only

place where the word pastor is used is in Eph. 4:11. But there is reference to the work of a pastor in other places. A very interesting passage is Acts 20:17, 28. Here the apostle is said to have sent for the "elders", and then he speaks of them as "bishops" (overseers), and exhorts them to watch over the "flock" as pastors. We thus see that the three terms meant the same thing. (Compare also Tit. 1:5-7; 1 Pet. 5:1, 2.) The duties of an elder or bishop are laid down in various places, most notably in 1 Tim. 3:1-7.

In regard to the deacons not much is said, but they are clearly recognized as officers of the churches, in

several well-known places. See Acts 6:1-4; Phil. 1:1;

1 Tim. 3:8-13. The word "deacon" simply means servant, and the lack of any detailed instructions in regard to the office gives us to understand that they might be charged with any duties at the pleasure of the church. The origin of the office (Acts 6:1ff) suggests that they should care for the poor of the church and attend to the finances, but these duties are nowhere specifically charged to them. The qualifications of the office as laid down in 1 Tim. 3:8-13, suggest a more enlarged range of service. Early in the history of the churches, as Justin Martyr informs us, the deacons distributed the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper, and this custom may have come down from apostolic times.

(3) *The government of the churches.* From all that appears the New Testament churches regulated their own affairs. They had no governing board or ruler

**Government
of the
Churches.**

within themselves, nor any earthly lord or governor outside of themselves. They were responsible to Christ as their great Head, but they had no earthly sovereign even to represent him. There are many indications of this self-government, too many to discuss here, but let it suffice to say that the way in which the apostles wrote to the churches shows that the seat of authority lay within the church itself. Nor did any church claim or exercise any rule over another, as the relations between the churches at Antioch and Jerusalem (Acts 15) plainly show. Yet the same occurrence, and some others, indicate that the churches had many common interests and were united by many ties of fellowship and by some of co-operation.

How far we are bound to follow the model set be-

fore us in the New Testament as to the form and order of the churches is a question which the Baptists delight to answer in only one way, namely, *just as far as possible*. Hence our churches try to reproduce the principles, and, as much as may be, even the details of the apostolic churches. Would that our practice were as good as our theory on this point.

Adherence to the New Testament Plan.

II. THE MODERN CHURCHES.

Only a very brief statement of the main things connected with modern church life is here called for.

1. *Uses of the word.* At least five distinct uses of the word church are current among us:

Modern Uses of the Word Church.

(1) A local society of Christian people worshiping and working together. (2) The whole body of Christ's redeemed everywhere. (These correspond to the two uses of the word in Scripture.) (3) A building where the local assembly meets for worship. (4) A sect or denomination of Christians holding the same doctrines and practices. (Observe that it is not proper to use the word in this way of Baptists and some others, because they do not recognize any higher organization than the local church.) Thus we speak of the Presbyterian church, etc. (5) There is also another use of the word which is not so easy to define as the others. This refers to the general body of professed and more or less organized Christians in the world, or that part of the world which is in the mind at the time. Thus we speak of "church and state," "the church and the world," "the history of the church," and the like. Other variations of usage may be referred to one or another of these.

2. *Forms of government.* Three principal forms of church polity are found in modern times, besides numerous minor variations. (1) The prelatial, where the whole body is governed by bishops or other officers set over the people. (2) The presbyterial, where the local congregations are governed by elders of their own choosing, and the general body by representatives. (3) The congregational, where each local church governs itself and the general bodies are only for purposes of co-operation, not at all for government. It is needless to say that this is the form of polity which the Baptists hold, and that they hold it because they believe it is the one which the Lord gave to his people and meant that they should keep throughout all time.

**Forms of
Government.**

If we are members of the church let us remember that an inspired apostle said that it is "the pillar and ground of the truth," and let us appreciate both our privileges and our duties.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS—WORSHIP AND ORDINANCES

The elements of church life, and the duties of Christian believers as members of the churches embrace the observance of certain rites and customs. These are worship and the ordinances.

Ecclesiastical Observances.

I. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

The English word "worship" is simply a contraction for "worthship," and denotes the giving of suitable honor to whom it is due. It properly translates several different Hebrew and Greek words, and thus in the Bible sets forth the act of rendering to God reverential service. Both the ideas of reverence and of service are necessary in true worship. It is a real service done to and for God, and it must be done in a way suitable to his dignity and acceptable to him.

Christian Worship.

Its True Scriptural Meaning.

1. *Its true Scriptural meaning.* We can here only briefly indicate what the Old and New Testaments teach us concerning worship.

(a) Old Testament teachings. The first worship mentioned in the Bible is Abel's sacrifice, which was ac-

ceptable to God, while Cain's was not. (Gen. 4:3-5; Heb. 11:4.) But the mention implies the previous practice of worship, which doubtless originated in Eden. Later there was decline and renewal of the practice (Gen. 4:26). We trace the observance through Noah (Gen. 8:20), Abraham (Gen. 12:7, 8, and many others), Jacob (Gen. 28:10-22; 35:1-8), to the elaborate ceremonies of the Tabernacle under Moses and under David, and the established order of the Temple under Solomon and his successors. The prophets speak much of worship, both in its reality and in its sad abuses. In fact the Old Testament is full of worship, as the act of obedient and reverential approach to God. It means the recognition of three corresponding pairs of truths: God's power, man's dependence; God's holiness, man's sin; God's grace, man's gratitude.

(b) New Testament teachings. The temple and the synagogues prepared the way for the worship of Christian churches. There was no sudden break in coming to the new dispensation. The meaning and many of the forms of worship were passed on by the devout Israelite to his Christian successor in keeping the oracles of God.

The example of our Lord is full of interest and instruction. At twelve years of age he went with his parents to Jerusalem to the Passover (Luke 2:41-49):

Christ's Example. at the beginning of his ministry in Galilee he went into the synagogue, "as his custom was", to take part in the worship (Luke 4:16); he cleansed the temple of traffickers (John 2:13-17), and taught the woman of Samaria what was true worship (John 4:19-24). Likewise, the apostles

and early Christians observed as an established and customary thing the acts of a true worship. (See Acts 1:12-14; 2:42, 46; 16:13; 17:1, 2; 20:7. and many others.) In all this we see the thought of worship as a proper reverential service rendered to God.

2. *Its observance as enjoined in Scripture.* Does the Bible then tell us *how* to worship? What may we learn as to its forms and elements? The ways in which it finds expression? (a) As

**Its Observance
as Enjoined
in Scripture.
Forms not
Prescribed.**

to forms, none are prescribed. The elaborate liturgy of the temple with its sacrifices and offerings, passed away. But these were grand occasions. In the families,

in localities, in the schools of the prophets, in the synagogues, there was other and simpler worship. The synagogue, which is not mentioned in the Old Testament, but doubtless originated in the later history of Judah, was a sort of transition stage from Old to New Testament worship, and the ritual of the synagogue was simple. So we find in the New Testament no prescribed forms of worship. It is to be simple and spiritual, not formal and elaborate.

(b) As to the elements of worship. In the Old Testament we find sacrifices and offerings; but these passed away with the fall of Jerusalem, and were never used by the Gentile Christians. In

**Elements of
Worship.**

the New Testament we have the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's

Supper, but these did not take the place of the sacrifices under the law. We do not know what or how much worship was connected with baptism, if there was any at all. But in the case of the Lord's Supper there was worship. (See Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:18-20. The

rebuke in the last passage indicates that in a rightful observance of the Supper worship should be real.)

The principal, regular and permanent elements of Christian worship are four: (1) Prayer (Matt. 18:19, 20; Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:31, and others). (2) Praise

Prayer,
Praise,
Scripture
Reading, and
Exhortation.

(besides the Psalms, and other Old Testament Scriptures, the following: Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Eph. 5:19, 20; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15). (3) Reading of the Scriptures (Neh. 8; Luke 4:16; 1 Tim.

4:13). (4) Exhortation or teaching (preaching). (The same passages, and Acts 13:15, 16). A study of these passages will show how old and venerable are these parts of worship. Let it be ours to keep them ever fresh and mighty!

3. *Its value as a Christian institution.* Deplorable is the modern neglect of worship! May our

Its Value as
a Christian
Institution.

young people work a change! For worship is an essential. (a) It is a plain requirement of God. (b) It is high spiritual exercise, the height of religious activity and feeling. (c) The most powerful means of developing the Christian life.

II. THE ORDINANCES.

Certain rites and ceremonies, commanded by the Lord and distinctive of the Christian religion, and called "ordinances," that is, actions prescribed by the authority of Christ.

The
Ordinances.

They are also sometimes called "sacraments"; but neither word is Biblical. The Scripture has no collective name for them. These ordinances are two, and only two: Bap-

tism and the Lord's Supper. They are symbols of Christian doctrines, that is, they set forth some of the main truths of our religion in an external and picturesque way. They are also marks of Christ's people, being properly observed only by those who are true believers.

1. *Baptism.* In regard to Baptism there are five points upon which professed Chris-

Baptism.

tians have differed, and still differ; and the true Scriptural doctrines may be exhibited by briefly considering these.

(a) The obligation to observe baptism. Some have denied this—the Quakers and

Our

**Obligation to
Observe it.**

others. But the command of the Lord (Matt. 28:19); the exhortation of Peter (Acts 2:38); and the

apparently invariable practice and teaching of the Apostles, seem to leave no room for question on this point.

(b) The act of baptism—what is it? It is immersion—the dipping of a person into water, of course raising him out again. (When you “dip” your hand in the ewer, you don't leave it there!)

**The Act of
Baptism.**

Various attempts have been made, in the interest of established cus-

tom and accepted theory, to show that the act of baptism is simply the use of water in any way, and not necessarily an immersion, or putting under. These attempts are notable failures. The meaning of the word, the descriptions of the act (Mark 1:9; John 3:23; Acts 8:38, 39; Rom. 6:1-4), and the history of the subject, all place the matter beyond any reasonable dispute.

(c) The subjects of baptism—who should be baptized? Those who by repentance and faith have ac-

cepted Jesus as their Savior, *and those only*. The addition is the significant point.

The Subjects of Baptism.

Granting that professing believers should be baptized, why should the act be confined to these? The cases of baptism mentioned in the New Testament invariably imply belief, or personal acceptance of Christ, or repentance, or some such experience as indicates conversion and profession of faith. The following are not all, but they will serve as examples: Mark 1:4, 5; John 4:1, 2; Acts 2:41; 16:14, 15, 33, 34. And the great command of our Lord (Matt. 28:19, 20) shows that "making disciples" should go before "baptizing them".

(d) The administrator—who should baptize? Nothing very definite is said as to this, but the implication is that it was done by authority of Christ and the apostles, and by those and those

The Baptizer.

only who had themselves believed and been baptized. Whether elders, or other officers, alone were authorized to perform baptism we cannot say; but it would seem to be a natural inference. As to the *present* authority there is difference of opinion among Baptists. Some hold that the performer is little to be considered, if only the act be sincere on the part of the one baptized. Others hold that the only proper person to baptize others is one who has been himself baptized and is acting by authority of a church. (The writer holds this view.)

(e) The design, or meaning, of baptism—what is it for? Some teach that baptism is a means whereby one is "regenerated" (John 3:3, 5); others that it is a necessary condition of the "remission of sins" (Acts 2:38): but most interpreters do not so understand these Scriptures. The plain teaching of other passages

The Meaning of Baptism.

is that baptism is commanded as a picture or symbol (Rom. 6:1-4) of the new life, and as a declaration or profession of faith in Christ (Matt. 28:19). As an act of obedience it must be done, and as a sign and expression of belief it is most significant.

2. *The Lord's Supper.* This solemn and beautiful rite was instituted and enjoined by our Lord (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25;

**The Lord's
Supper.**

Luke 22:17-30; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

See also: Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:17-34). A study of the Scriptures given will enable us to come at the truth in regard to this holy observance, and to test the various views that have been and are held regarding it.

(a) *Meaning of the Supper.* Four different views prevail as to this: (1) The Roman Catholic teaching, that the whole Christ ("body and blood, soul and divinity") is in the consecrated

**Its Meaning.
Roman Cath-
olic, Luther-
an, Calvinian
and Zwing-
lian Views.**

wafer. The bread is actually made into Christ. It is useless to say that there is no Scripture for this absurd and monstrous doctrine.

(2) The Lutheran view, that there is a "real presence" of Christ "in, with and under" the form of bread and wine. They are not changed into him, but he is in some actual way really mingled with them. There is no Scripture for this either, and it is needlessly vague and mysterious. (3) The Calvinian theory, that Christ is "dynamically" present with the sacred elements, not his actual body, but his spiritual power and presence, and that in such a way as to confer special grace upon the participants. This also lacks Scripture support, and rational clearness. (4) The Zwinglian doctrine, that the bread and wine are only symbols, or tokens, of the body and blood

of Christ; and that the partaking of them is a memorial observance, done in obedience to the Lord, and bringing grace only as true worship and obedience bring it, not by any special virtue in the elements. This is considered to be the true Scripture teaching.

(b) *Keeping of the Supper.* The Scriptures given above teach and imply that the rite was to be observed only by Christians (baptized believers), in the assemblies, and as an act of holy worship. It

**Observance
of the
Supper.**

was not to be a social meal, nor a superstitious charm ("extreme unction"), nor a special privilege of priesthood, nor a test of Christian fellowship. It was to be observed through all time by the true people of Christ gathered in worshipful assembly. Thus it becomes the churches to guard the ordinance by restricting it to those who have been baptized unto Christ, and to keep it solemnly and with reverence and fear as unto the Lord, and not unto men.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHRISTIAN ACTIVITIES—THE WORK OF A CHURCH.

Christian work may be looked at from at least three general points of view: (1) The religious work of the individual believer; (2) the combined work of Christians as represented in a local church; (3) the general work of churches and individuals as carried on by co-operation. The second of these is here assumed, because as a middle ground it lies between the other two, and touches and somewhat includes both. The churches were not only formed for fellowship and for worship, but being composed of working Christians they must be working bodies as well as worshipping assemblies. So Paul, addressing a church (1 Cor. 15:58), exhorts its members as individuals that they should be "always abounding in the work of the Lord." Work is one of the marks of a true Christian; and one of the sure tokens of a rightly constituted church of Jesus Christ. We may for convenience study the subject under two separate topics, though as a matter of fact we cannot so divide the work itself. The work of a church is partly within and partly without itself, but these parts are mutually necessary.

Aspects of Christian Work.

I. THE CHURCH'S WORK WITHIN ITSELF.

The church must within its own range and sphere work for itself. This is not necessarily selfish, for this

kind of work is at its best only when it most fully recognizes and supports that which reaches beyond. But in order to do full and fruitful service beyond itself the church must develop its own health and strength.

**The Church's
Work Within
Itself.**

1. *It must grow.* Conditions inside and around a church may sometimes hinder, retard, or even arrest its growth. But ordinarily the first duty of a church to itself is to be a growing body.

**The Church
Must Grow;**

It must be constantly gathering new members within its fold. There is constant loss; there should be greater gain in order to avoid standstill and decay. This law is so plain that it only needs statement; but the following Scriptures will enforce the demand for increase: Acts 2:47; 5:14; 11:21, 24; Eph. 2:21; 4:16; 5:16; Col. 4:5.

2. *It must edify itself.* A church should not only grow bigger, but better also. It should train, as well as draw in, members. Adding names to the roll of the membership without developing the new material may be a curse instead of a blessing. There is too much of this church-stuffing going on. Let us see what the Scriptures say on the subject of a church's building up itself in the Christian life.

**Must Edify
Itself**

(a) *Worship.* This was urged in the former chapter, but it is necessary to call attention to it again in this connection as an essential factor in the spiritual nurture of a church.

By Worship,

A spiritually dead, or at best dwarfed and fruitless, membership is the sad product of neglect of worship. No church can or deserves to thrive which neglects the glad worship of its God and King.

(b) Teaching. The worship may do this, especially the reading of Scripture and preaching, but there is special insistence in the Bible upon the duty of teaching within the church. Consult the

Teaching, following passages: Acts 13:1; Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; Col. 3:16. Our Lord was the great Teacher; he directs (Matt. 28:19, 20) that his gathered disciples should be taught; the Apostles likewise were teachers as well as heralds of the truth; and there were certain "teachers" among the officers of the early churches. Moreover, the brethren are exhorted to "teach and admonish one another." Instruction in doctrine, in righteousness, in good and intelligent service to God and man is the bounden duty of a church to itself.

(c) Discipline. In a broad sense this includes what goes before, but it is here meant to express the admonition, correction and punishment of unworthy members

**And
Discipline;** of the church. Ample provision is made for discipline in the precepts of the Word, as the following Scriptures will show: Matt. 18:15-18; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. chap. 5; 2 Cor. 2:5-10; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; and many of the addresses to the Seven Churches in Rev. 2 and 3. Now, discipline does not simply mean exclusion from the church. That is its final stage, the last resort when all else has failed to reclaim and restore the erring brother. There is crying need of a wholesome Scriptural discipline among our Baptist churches.

3. *It must maintain itself.* The church must attend to its business, as any other society, and keep

its affairs in proper order. (1 Cor. 14:40). A church should be in its community an inspiring example of integrity, diligence, justice and scrupulous fidelity in the conduct of its business. The

**And Must
Maintain
Itself.**

churches of the New Testament had their business side. (a) Care of the poor—benevolence was a part of it. (Acts 6:1 ff; Rom. 15:25-27; 1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 8, 9; Gal. 2:10; 1 Tim. 5:16). (b) The support of the ministry and of missionaries came in for its share of attention. (1 Cor. 9:1-14; Gal. 6:6; Phil. 4:10-18; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18). Besides, "Our Sister Phœbe" (Rom. 16:1, 2) seems to have had some "business" on hand for the good of mankind, and was therefore "commended" to the churches. (c) In addition we may infer that there was business in connection with the keeping of places of worship, for though church-buildings were of later date it is not unreasonable to suppose that the expenses of hiring, lighting and keeping places of worship must have been borne not by the owners alone, but by the brethren. (Acts 1:13; 18:7-11; 19:8, 9; 20:7, 8; 28:30, 31).

Now, all this and more besides devolves on our churches in the pressing demands of our modern life, and a church should be ready to meet these business calls in the spirit and the character of Christ's own people.

**The Right
Attitude.**

II. THE CHURCH'S WORK OUTSIDE OF ITSELF.

Of course the activity of a true church of Jesus cannot be confined to its own immediate life and concerns. The very nature of things makes this outside work necessary; and the example and teachings both of our

Lord and of his apostles put upon it an emphasis simply tremendous. The dry rot of selfishness is the last affliction which should befall a church of Jesus Christ. The personal efforts of individual members are here included in the work of the church. The sphere, character and method of that work are to be briefly indicated.

**The Church's
Work Out-
side of Itself.**

1. *The sphere.* "The field is the world." (Matt.

**The Sphere of
Work.
The
Neighborhood.**

13:38). But the world is both nigh and far off, it is neighborhood and beyond. (a) Neighborhood. The church is to be a leaven, a salt, a light, a help, in its immediate surroundings. (Matt. 5:13-16; Phil. 2:15, 16, and others like them.)

(b) Beyond. Here resounds the final command of Jesus: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." (Matt. 28:19). Here reëcho many and great

Beyond.

words of Paul the apostle to the Gentiles and here shines out his illustrious example as a herald of the gospel and representative of his brethren in many a land and clime. He was sent out from the church at Antioch (Acts 13:1), he came back and reported to it (Acts 14:26-28), the success of his mission. Glorious Antioch! Phillippi (Phil. 4:10-16) "sent once and again" to help support him while he toiled in other places. And the beloved John (3 John 8) congratulates and exhorts Gaius on the subject of work by messengers among the heathen, that so we may be "fellow-helpers to the truth."

2. *The character.* What kind of work must a church do in the world? This is a most important

question and needs wise answering. (a) First of all and chiefly, an *evangelical* work. By this is meant a gospel-giving work for sinning and lost souls. Never should a church fail to recognize this as its most imperative mission. There is danger of slighting, crowding out, depressing this primary and indispensable duty of the churches. The Scriptures already adduced in this discussion lay this duty heavily on the churches.

**The
Character
of its Work.
Evangelical.**

(b) But there is also a *benevolent* work—a work of help to the poor, the needy, the sick, the sad. Jesus did this kind of work; so did the apostles and early believers; and James tells us that it is pure and undefiled religion to “visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction” (James 1:27). Christian churches have always recognized this duty, and right nobly have they discharged it.

Benevolent.

(c) Our modern churches do a good amount of *educational* work. There is no Scripture command or precedent for exactly this kind of work. But it grew out of the need of an educated ministry and gradually assumed its present beneficent proportions. The training of youth under Christian auspices is a work of excellent design, and surely not contrary to any Christian principle or precept.

Educational.

Also and finally our churches help on certain *reformatory* work in the world. There are all sorts of reform movements on foot. There are many ways in which a church can help in a good cause, but it should always remember that it is not a reform club, and beware of being diverted from its true gospel mission.

Reformatory.

3. *The method.* (a) As indicated above a church works *directly* on its immediate surroundings, and may also work in this way in all the lines of effort pointed out in the preceding discussion.

**Its Methods
of Work.
Direct.**

(b) But usually and more effectively in remoter and larger places of influence the churches work by *co-operation*. The churches by their representatives

Co-operation. from societies, conventions, committees, boards and their like, gather funds, manage affairs, and in general direct the larger work in which many churches join. Some Scriptural intimations of co-operative work may be found in Rom. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8:1, 2; Phil. 4:15 (by implication), 3 John 8. The co-operative work is justified by its naturalness, usefulness, efficiency; and is not contrary to any soundly inferred Scriptural principle. Great is the work of a church! High the privilege of a church member!

CHAPTER XXV.

LIFE AND IMMORTALITY.

We live, and we die—is that all? Certainly there are other *spheres* than this world; is there any *life* beyond this? To put the question more plainly, does man's

**Is this Life
All?**

soul enter any other mode or sphere of existence after death? We have before, but only briefly in Chapter XI, considered this question. We must now take it up again and discuss it more fully, though not even now completely. Is this life all, or is it the beginning of immortality? In all ages this has been for man a momentous question; it is no less so today than in the past. We shall see what can be said upon it apart from Scripture, and also in the light of Scripture.

I. THE QUESTION APART FROM SCRIPTURE.

1. *The traditional foundation.* We have inherited a belief in the life after death, or the immortality of the soul, not only from our fathers, but

**The Question
Apart from
Scripture.
The
Traditional
Foundation.**

from our fathers' fathers and from the general body of mankind in all ages. This is one of the most generally diffused and persistent beliefs of which history makes record. Whence came it? and why so persistent? We may not be able fully to explain; but

the following suggestions may help to account for the fact: (a) The attractiveness of the doctrine, and the love of life no doubt strengthen the belief, but they could scarcely have originated it. (b) There is something of an intuitive belief in the life of the soul apart from the body. (c) There may have been even among heathen peoples some dim traditional recollection of paradise, of God's promise to men. But however all this may be, the fact is clear that the belief in immortality is one of mankind's most cherished traditions. May it ever be so!

2. *The philosophic speculation.* Of course men would argue and speculate on a question so important, finding reasons to confirm or justify so pleasing a tradition. (a) The distinction between mind and matter, soul and

**The
Philosophic
Speculation.**

body, though denied by some, shows that we cannot infer the death of the soul from that of the body. On the contrary, we would rather infer the escape of the soul and its continued life. (b) The analogy of the indestructibility of matter helps. If matter cannot be annihilated, but only changes its form; and force is never spent, but only transferred; why should not spirit be released from body and live on? (c) The incompleteness of life, the yearning for "more life and fuller," calls aloud for immortality. This view takes strong hold of some; it was mighty with Socrates, and had weight even with Mill.

But after all, these philosophic arguments are very debatable; they are helpful, but not convincing. So we have

3. *The agnostic interrogation.* Disbelieving divine revelation, discarding tradition, questioning philosophy, the agnostic says: "Who knows?" and answers his question himself: "Nobody!" Arguments cannot demonstrate, experience cannot verify; therefore, he argues, we cannot know; and since we cannot know we cannot affirm, and since we cannot affirm we may as well deny! Sad logic, and a sadder conclusion.

4. *The materialistic negation.* Here we touch the bottom of doubt, and reach flat denial. According to this view there is no soul, only body. When the body succumbs to death its chemical elements pass into other forms of matter, its forces are dissipated. That ends all. The utter impossibility of *proving* this repulsive doctrine by either analogy or experience makes no difference. Your average materialist is a dogmatist of high degree.

Let us reverse our steps. From flat denial we reach confessed ignorance, from this we rise to a philosophic "perhaps," and then we grasp and hold an age-long and persistent tradition; and now we are ready to take a stand on the Rock of Ages.

II. THE TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE. Accepting the Bible as the true Word we have no further uncertainty, for it teaches the reality of a life beyond the grave with a force and clearness which leave no room for question.

1. *The Old Testament foreshadowing.* Here a

sober study avoids extremes. We cannot force New Testament ideas back into the Old Testament and claim that the doctrine is fully and clearly revealed in the ancient Scriptures, nor can we go so far as to say that before the coming of Christ God's people had no knowledge of this great truth.

The Old Testament Fore-shadowing.

Testament and claim that the doctrine is fully and clearly revealed in the ancient Scriptures, nor can

(a) The distinction between body and soul is taught in such a way as to imply the continual life of the soul after the death of the body. See

The Continued Existence of the Soul Implied.

Gen. 2:7; 1 Sam. 28:1-14; Eccl. 12:7. The last is very clear on the point: "The dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

The calling back of Samuel by the witch of Endor, if we take the passage literally, as it is best to do, is mysterious indeed; but it at least teaches the point under consideration.

(b) The existence of a realm, or place, or state of being, after death is frequently mentioned or alluded to. (1 Sam. 28:1-14; Psl. 16:10; Prov. 9:18; Isa. 14:9 ff). This is not very clear,

Allusions to a State After Death.

but it has force.

(c) Some expressions in regard to the death or departure of individuals indicate existence beyond the grave. Of Enoch it is said that he "was not, for God took him." (Gen. 5:24); of Abraham and Isaac it is said that they

References to the Death of Specific Persons.

"were gathered to their fathers," or "people," in such manner as to show that more than being buried

is meant (Gen. 25:8; 35:29). The death of Moses (Deut. 34:5, 6). and the ascension of Elijah (2 Kings

2:2, 11) point in the same direction, and when we remember their appearance at the Transfiguration (Matt. 17:3) the fact is beyond dispute.

(d) Besides, there are a few special passages which seem clearly and beyond question to teach immortality. Lack of space forbids discussion, but the reader is urged to study for himself. See Job. 19:25; 2 Sam. 12:23; Psa. 16:10, 11; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2, 3, 13; Hos. 13:14.

**The
Immortality
of the Soul
Asserted.**

2. *The New Testament teaching.* The Old Testament prepared the way for the New, both by what it taught and by what it left for fuller teaching. It leads us to Christ, "who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Tim. 1:10).

**The New
Testament
Teaching.**

(a) Clear and confident are the teachings of Christ himself. In Matt. 10:28 he declares that though men may kill the body *they cannot kill the soul*. In Luke 16:19 ff. he gives us the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, teaching in a figure, but no less really for that, the conscious after-life in heaven and in hell. The evangel of John 3:16 asserts that the believer shall "not perish but have everlasting life;" and this assertion is repeated in various ways and with emphasis in John 5:24; 8:51; 11:25, 26; 12:24-26; 14:1-6 and others.

**Christ's
Statements.**

(b) The words of Paul are unmistakably direct and firm. In the glorious eighth chapter of Romans the doctrine of the future life is woven in all the fabric; but finds its most thrilling assertion in the rapturous persuasion that *neither death nor anything else*

**Paul's
Testimony.**

can separate us from the love of God. The victorious pæan in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, while especially teaching the resurrection of the body, involves necessarily the immortality of the soul; and so of 2 Cor. 5:1-10; 1 Thess. 4:13 ff. In Phil. 1:23 the apostle expresses his personal preference for "departing" that he might "be with Christ," and a similar sentiment is found in 2 Cor. 5:8.

(c) Other New Testament writers teach the same great doctrine of immortality, as Peter (1 Pet. 1:3-6, 23), who tells of our fadeless inheritance in heaven,

**The Words
of Peter,
John, Jude
and Others.**

John (1 John 2:17, 24, 25), who speaks of "abiding forever" with God; Jude (20, 21), who writes of the same "eternal life" as the others; and the book of Revelation in its

wondrous visions fully proclaims the great truth. Notable here is the vision (Rev. 6:9) of "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God." Their bodies had been martyred, but their souls were safe under God's altar.

(d) Apart from these particular passages (and many others not mentioned) we may argue immortality from

**The Pervad-
ing Idea of
the New
Testament.**

the general trend and basis of New Testament thought. You cannot imagine the doctrine of immortality left out of the New Testament without virtually destroying the book.

It is in the very fabric of the thought.

To sum up: The doctrine of immortality is not a figment of fancy. Notwithstanding skeptical denials or questionings it abides a persistent and cherished belief among men, supported by

Summary.

some reasonings, but clearly assert-

ed and forever assured in the enduring testimony of the Word of God. There let us rest our vexed understandings and tired hearts "until the day break, and the shadows flee away."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

The Scriptures teach the immortality of the soul, as we have seen; they also teach the resurrection of the body, as we shall see; but what do they teach concerning the abode and condition of

**What Can
We Know
About It?**

the soul between death and the resurrection? We are wholly dependent upon Scripture for information

on this matter; if the Bible has no message for us we are totally in the dark. It is a matter of interpretation and inference. But the difficulties of interpretation, and the natural tendency of the mind to speculate where things are not perfectly clear, have led to the formation and advocacy of some erroneous views. It will be well to clear the ground by considering these before we proceed to unfold the teachings of the Bible in regard to this "intermediate state."

I. ERRONEOUS VIEWS CONSIDERED.

These wrong notions may be conveniently classified

**Erroneous
Views.**

as the theory of *denial*, the theory of *unconsciousness*, and the theory of *purgatory*.

1. *The theory of denial.* Some deny that there

is any "intermediate state" at all. According to this view the souls of the dead pass immediately to their final destiny of suffering or bliss. But we must distinguish between two phases of this theory.

**The Theory
of Denial.**

(a) The extreme view, which takes the resurrection and judgment to be spiritual and figurative, and as occurring for each individual at his death rather than for all at once in the future. According to this fanciful notion, for the believer death and the resur-

**The Extreme
View.**

rection are simultaneous, if not identical. He rises as soon as he dies; this corruptible puts on incorruption by escaping forever from the old body and taking on just then a totally distinct spiritual body! This view not only crosses the plain meaning of Scripture concerning the resurrection, as we shall see in unfolding that meaning, but also requires a corresponding change of view in regard to the Second Coming of Christ and the Judgment. This view virtually denies the reality of all these events as future occurrences and makes them only continuous processes, or events only to each individual at his death.

(b) Some modification of this view is conceivable, though not perhaps formulated as a theory, by which one should hold that the common views of the Resurrection and Judgment are sound,

**A Modified
View.**

but that those great events will make no *real difference* in the state of souls after death. The destiny of each is determined at death, and the subsequent great events will in no wise alter the situation. As to this, our study of the Scriptural doctrine will show that there must of necessity be *some difference* between these states, though we may not be able clearly to explain just what it will

be. Belief in a real resurrection and judgment logically requires belief in some kind of "intermediate state."

2. *The theory of unconsciousness.* This somewhat attractive and plausible view is that at the death of the body the soul passes into absolute and total

The Theory of Unconsciousness.

unconsciousness, a deep sleep, dreamless and dark; that from this it will be wakened at the resurrection, come to judgment, and receive

its final award of punishment or glory. Thus the believer, knowing nothing of the interval, will to all intents and purposes enter at once upon his eternal blessedness.

The objections to this view are: (a) That it is evidently made to order so as to avoid some difficulties in the other view, but it makes more than it solves.

Objections to the Theory.

(b) It is so clearly opposed to the general teaching of Scripture, and to the plain meaning of a few well-known passages, as to be untenable.

These passages will be discussed later; it is sufficient here to refer to them: Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:5-9; Phil. 1:23. How any one can read these Scriptures and hold this theory is a mystery to this writer.

3. *The theory of purgatory.* This is the Roman Catholic doctrine. Full discussion here is of course impossible. In brief, this theory is that all believers,

The Theory of Purgatory.

except some martyrs and other highly favored individuals, do not enter at once into heaven, but pass into a place of purifying (hence

purgatory) where, by various disciplines, they are prepared for ultimate admission into heaven. This notion grew out of the opinion of some early Christians, who held that the common believer went to a state of being

but little better than this earthly life, to wait for the resurrection. To this was added the belief that these must somehow be prepared for heaven while they waited, and so all the elaborate doctrines connected with purgatory came to be held by the Romanists. Historically, the doctrine grew out of an early error; it has no rational support, and is utterly without foundation in Scripture. It is thus pure speculation, and can have no force except with those who believe that the Roman church has authority to *make* doctrines for Christians to believe!

II. THE SCRIPTURE TEACHING.

On some points the teaching of the Bible is not clear—God has not seen best to reveal all the truth as yet—and as to these we are shut up to reverent inference and waiting. But on two essential things, contrary to the errors just mentioned, the language of Scripture in a few decisive passages is plain and ought to be final. These two points are that the souls of departed believers are still conscious, and that they enter the presence of Jesus. What more than this we may infer we should hold with caution. Let us first consider the meaning of several passages of Scripture, and then infer as we may.

1. *Study of Scripture passages.* The appearance of Moses and Elijah at our Lord's transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8) makes the impression of their coming from a sphere of conscious life and glory to converse with and cheer the Son of Man in regard to his near decease (Luke 9:31), and not that they were awakened out of

**Study of
Specific Pas-
sages. The
Transfig-
uration.**

any dreamless sleep, or called from a sphere no better than this earth. In Luke 16:19-31, Jesus gave the

**Lazarus and
the Rich
Man.**

parable of the rich man and Lazarus, indicating consciousness in both the wicked and the righteous. Lazarus is happy in Abraham's company; the rich man is suffering in hell; the bodies of both have been left behind. Lest this should be considered as merely figurative teaching and corresponding to no exact reality, we have other and unfigurative language. In Luke 23:43 our Lord says to

**Other
Instances.**

the penitent robber: "Verily I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in paradise." Now the body of Jesus was to be in Joseph's tomb, that of the poor robber to be in the potter's field, but yet *he* was to be with Jesus in Paradise. (As to paradise see 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7). This promise certainly conveys the assurance of conscious personal life in company with Jesus in another and better sphere. It is perverting plain language to twist any other meaning out of it. Now notice that in Luke 23:46 our dying Redeemer said, when about to expire: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," as if he expected to be with his Father when released from his suffering body. The first recorded Christian death illustrates this same expectation. For when Stephen (Acts 7:59) was dying under the bruises of the cruel stones he called upon his Savior and said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," using almost the same language as his Master before him.

That this expectation of being conscious and in the Master's presence was the hope of Paul is apparent from two of his most striking sayings: (2 Cor. 5:5-9;

Paul's Hope. Phil. 1:23). In the first of these he speaks with cheerful confidence

of "being absent from the body and present with the Lord," and in the other he expresses his "desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." If we wanted clearer speech than this we could not reasonably expect human language to make it so.

In Hebrew 12:23 we read of "the spirits of just men made perfect," and in Rev. 14:13, we have the comforting promise: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord *from henceforth*: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow with them," where the natural force of the language is that their blessedness immediately follows their death.

Hebrews and
Revelation
Quoted.

who die in the Lord *from henceforth*: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors,

Now these passages sufficiently prove the two main points involved, namely, that the existence of the disembodied saints is a state of conscious personality, and that it is enjoyed in the presence of God. As to the state of the wicked before the Judgment the only hint conveyed in these Scriptures is in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, and as that is a parable we

Deduction:
The Soul
Conscious
and with
God.

should be cautious in pressing literally all its language. But it intimates that the souls of the wicked are apart from the good, away from God, suffering and wretched.

2. *Some inferences.* We must recognize these as inferences only, but they may be valid none the less. (a) The statements concerning the Second Coming of Christ, Resurrection and Judgment which we shall study hereafter, show that the state of the soul immediately after death is not its final state, though exactly the nature of the difference is not clear. (b) The teachings about heaven, though chiefly applying to

Some
Inferences.

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the final state of believers, may yet in a measure be true of their condition just following death, for the very reason that the distinction is not clearly drawn.

(c) Consciousness and company imply mutual recognition among the saints, and this is confirmed by the blessed thought of being with the Lord. In his presence we shall know him, and each other.

Let us be prepared with martyred Stephen to say: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

The subject of our study in this article is a grand and glorious one, but it is of vast breadth and of no little difficulty. Earnest and studious men, as well as those who are visionary, have thought and written much upon it. We shall find it impossible to solve all the difficulties or to answer all the questions that arise in connection with this matter. It is equally impossible to present any adequate discussion of so momentous a theme within the brief limits here required. But we may obtain some suggestive hints by considering what the Scriptures teach us as to the fact, the time, the purpose and the manner of our Lord's return to earth.

**Importance
of the
Subject.**

those who are visionary, have thought and written much upon it. We shall find it impossible to solve all the difficulties or to answer all

I. THE FACT.

That Christ will come a second time to this earth in personal presence, is definitely and repeatedly declared in the New Testament Scriptures.

The Fact.

It is asserted by Christ himself. In Matthew 16:27, 28, he declares that the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels. He goes on to refer to the rewards which he will then give his servants. The parables of Matthew 25, concerning

**Christ
Asserted it.**

the Virgins and the Talents, together with that of the Pounds in Luke 19:12 ff. declare that he will come again. Besides these, there are numerous other allusions to the coming as a real event. In Matthew 24 and 25, however, Christ discusses his coming at considerable length, telling what he desires us to know about that great event and using it as a warning to all. Thus all that is said in this chapter and in the 12th of Luke, beginning at the 31st verse, rests on the assumption of the second coming as a fact distinctly recognized by himself. Again, in Matthew 26:64, in response to the solemn adjuration of the High Priest, our Lord declared to the assembled Sanhedrin that he would surely come again. In the precious promise of John 14:3-28, he asserts that he will come again to receive his own to himself.

2. *It is taught by the Apostles.* In Acts 1:10, 11, we have the interesting record that when the apostles stood upon Olivet, there appeared to them two heavenly messengers, who mildly rebuked their standing and gazing into heaven, assuring them that their departing Lord would come again. It is evident that they accepted this assurance as the truth, and it entered into their minds and lives as a powerful force. In 1 Peter 1:6, 7, that apostle speaks of the "appearing of Jesus Christ;" James, in 5:7, urges his brethren to "be patient unto the coming of the Lord;" and John in his first epistle, 2:28, urges believers to abide in him that they may be ready to meet him with joy and not with shame at his coming. And in Revelation 1:7, before the visions begin, John declares: "Behold he cometh with clouds." Many passages of Paul's writings occur to the memory, in which he speaks with the certainty of definite conviction as to the return of the

Lord. See especially 1 Corinthians 1:7; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13. Also the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 9:28, plainly declares that "unto them that look for him shall he appear a second time without sin unto salvation."

3. *Some distinctions to be observed.* The coming of Christ as a personal appearing to end the present state of things must be distinguished from other comings of his of which we have some hint in Scripture. The great events of history, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, are in some sense the comings of Christ. So also, the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Pentecost and into the lives of Christ's people are considered to be the coming of Christ. Also death may be conceived as the coming of Christ—our Lord's taking to himself his people. This may be referred to in John 14:2, 3 and in other places, and by some these comings may not be very clearly distinguished from the one great event so clearly predicted. But this uncertainty should not obscure in our minds the positiveness of the passages considered above. They certainly indicate a second personal visible return of our Lord to the earth.

**Certain
Distinctions
Noted.**

II. THE TIME.

Here we fall upon other difficulties. Much speculation has been made as to the time of our Lord's return. The exact time is nowhere revealed. Like death, the second coming is a certain event with an uncertain time. Some things regarding this we must carefully observe.

1. *Christ declined to fix any definite time.* See Matthew 24:36-44 and 25:13, as well as Luke 12:40,

and similar passages which may be found by consulting a reference Bible. Add to these that our Lord in Acts 1:7, in answer to an earnest question from his disciples, gently rebuked their inquisitiveness, telling them that it was not for them to know times and seasons which the Father had established by his own authority. But the most remarkable declaration is in Mark 13:32, where our Lord says that even he did not know the hour and the day of his coming. Surely in the face of such statements it is idle for man to fix a day for the coming of the Lord. Some try to escape this conclusion by emphasizing the words "day and hour," saying that we may set in a general way the time, but must not be too definite. This, however, is rather a quibble than sound reasoning.

2. *The expectation of the apostolic age.* It is evident from the writings of the Apostles that though they did not know the exact time, they expected the great event to occur in their own generation. There are a number of indications of this. See 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:15, 17; James 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:7; 5:1, 4; 1 John 2:18. Yet along with this expectation there are assertions of uncertainty regarding the exact time. Paul in 2 Thess. 2:1, 3, warns that church against pressing too literally his former statements, and Peter in his second epistle, 3:10, takes up the Lord's word that the coming would be like that of a thief in the night. The explanation of this seeming contradiction is, however, simple. The Apostles did not know the exact time, but they lived in constant expectation of the second coming, and that is what they meant that Christians should always do. So far as our attitude

**Not Defi-
nitely fixed
by Christ.**

**The Expec-
tation of the
Apostolic
Age.**

is concerned, we should regard the coming of the Lord as imminent.

3. *Relation to the Millennium.* In a wonderful passage (Rev. 20:4, 10) there is a prophecy concerning a period of a thousand years, commonly known as the Millennium, during which there should be rapid progress of the Redeemer's Kingdom, owing to the confinement and restraint of Satan.

**Relation
to the
Millennium.**

Supposing that while not a literal thousand years, but an indefinitely long period may be here meant, and that a real epoch in future history is intended, Christians are divided in sentiment as to whether the second coming will be at the beginning of this period or at its close. The passage itself seems to indicate that the Millennium will follow the arrival of our Lord, and that at the close of that period will be the Judgment Day. But there are other passages of Scripture which seem to indicate the immediate resurrection of all, both righteous and wicked, and their judgment upon the coming of Christ. (See Matt. 16:27; 25:31-33; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:6-10). In a matter so obscure it becomes us to be cautious. Perhaps the larger number of Bible students and theologians consider that the second coming will be at the close of the Millennium period, and that the highly figurative language of the passage in Revelation is to be interpreted in concord with the other Scriptures which seem to teach this view.

III. THE PURPOSE.

We need only briefly indicate the objects of the second coming of Christ, as this is taught in the Scripture. Those purposes are as follows: 1. *To summon the dead to life.* John 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:15, 16.

**The Purpose
To Summon
the Dead
to Life.**

2. *To set up the final judgment.* Matt. 16:27.

**The Final
Judgment.**

28; 25:31, ff.; John 5:27, 29; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; Heb. 9:27, 28.

3. *To end the present dispensation and inaugurate the final state of the Kingdom.* Few if any details of this glorious consummation are given to us,

**To Inau-
gurate the
Kingdom.**

but the event itself is sufficiently indicated in the following Scriptures: Matt. 24:31; 25 (entire); 1 Cor. 15:23-28; 2 Pet. 3:10-13;

and the 21st and 22d chapters of Revelation, with many other passages in that wonderful book.

IV. THE MANNER.

This may also be briefly discussed. Of course all the details and accompaniments of

The Manner.

Christ's second coming are not made known, but some striking traits are

given, as will be seen.

1. *None will be looking for it.* The world will

Unexpected.

be taken by a surprise terrible to the wicked and glorious to the saints. Matt. 24:36-51; 1 Thess. 5:1-3.

2. *It will be unmistakable.* There will be no

**Unmistak-
able.**

need to ask: What is this? We cannot tell when it will come, but when it does, there will be no error as to the event itself. Luke 17:24; Matt. 24:27.

**World-
Known.**

3. *It will be public—world-known.* See Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7.

4. *It will be unspeakably glorious.* Such a

pageant mortal eyes have never seen. Various figures are employed to arouse our imagination and kindle our hopes respecting this grand event, but still the blessed reality will transeend all that we can think. See Matt. 16:27; 25:31; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:10; Rev. 1:7.

Thus the fact we know, the time we know not; the purpose is made known; the manner is somewhat revealed. And from it all we learn two very important lessons. One is that we should not be prying into what God has kept hidden, nor be positively asserting where Apostles were in doubt. The other is that we should be always ready, for in such an hour as we think not the Son of Man cometh.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

We take up now one of the great distinctive doctrines of Christianity. Jesus said to Martha (John 11:25, R. V.): "I am the resurrection and the life; he that

**The Doctrine
Stated.**

believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live." This we may take to mean not that the soul will always live, apart from the body, but that the *man* will again live, soul and body. For though we hold that for awhile after death, that is, until Christ comes the second time, souls live on out of bodies, yet this "intermediate state" will be ended at our Lord's appearing, and then there will be a restoration of the complete personality in body and soul reunited. We shall not be able to explain clearly just what will be the nature of the new body, nor its exact connection with the old one, but our study of Scripture will show that in some sense the raised body will be the one that died and yet most gloriously changed. This, of course, is to be true of the righteous; in regard to the wicked the resurrection will be to a worse state. So much for what the doctrine is; we shall consider the proof of it, and then some matters connected with it.

I. PROOF OF THE DOCTRINE.

Mankind has almost universally believed in the immortality of the soul, but we look in vain for any wide-

spread belief, if there be any at all, in the resurrection and glorification of the body. What-ever hints and suggestions there may be in thought not influenced by the Bible are too dim and uncertain to concern us here; our appeal is to the Word of God.

**Proof of the
Doctrine.**

1. *Traces of the doctrine in the Old Testament.* The Jews, Sadducees excepted, generally believed in this doctrine in our Lord's time, and he endorsed their

**Old
Testament
Testimony.**

belief and expounded Scripture in harmony with it (Matt. 22:29-33). In Job 19:25-27, and in Psalm 16:9-11, there may be some suggestion of the truth, though we should not press these passages too hard. But in three remarkable passages in the Prophets (Isa. 26:19, 20; Ezek. 37:1-14; Dan. 12:2) the doctrine begins to assume distinct shape. I know no better statement in regard to these than that of Knobel on the passage in Isaiah: "The whole passage is rather an earnest wish than a firm hope; yet in it lies already the glimmering notion of that Resurrection which in Ezek. 37 comes forward more distinctly, in Dan. 12:2 ff. appears as a definite expectation, and in the New Testament is taught as a doctrine."

2. *The teaching of Christ himself.* (a) We find that our Lord accepted and endorsed the belief current in his time; but with important explanations.

**Christ's
Teaching.
His Endorse-
ment of the
Current
Belief.**

In Luke 14:14 he refers to the doctrine as though commonly believed, and as accepted by himself. In John 11:23-25 he accepts Martha's view, but adds a remarkable statement as to the relation of the doctrine to himself. In Matt. 22:23-

33 he answers the catch question of the Sadducees and condemns their unbelief, at the same time making certain explanations in regard to the doctrine.

(b) We find further that our Lord declared his own vital connection with the fact of the resurrection. In John 5:21-29 he asserts that he will himself call the

**His Personal
Relation to
it.**

dead to life, including both the wicked and the righteous. In John 6:39, 40 he distinctly promises to raise up at the last day those who believe in him. In John 11:25, already twice noted, he declares that he *is* the resurrection and the life. Surely, in the light of these great and positive sayings of Jesus, we have the strongest assurance of the truth of the resurrection of the dead.

3. *The doctrine of the Apostles.* In this connection it is important to bear in mind several particulars: (a) The resurrection was one of the main

**The Apostle's
Doctrine.
The
Resurrection
a Chief Topic
of Their
Preaching.**

topics of Apostolic preaching. See Heb. 6:1, 2, where it is mentioned as one of the "first principles;" Acts 4:2, where it is said that the "Apostles preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead;" Acts 17:18, 31, 32, where it is proclaimed by Paul at Athens; and Acts 23:6; 24:15; 26:8, where Paul asserts his own belief in the doctrine, and asks for the sympathy and belief of others.

(b) There is also much incidental mention and allusion, which show how large a place this great truth held in the thought of the authorized teachers of the churches. I forbear to discuss these

**Corroborative
Allusions.**

passages, though they would repay an earnest examination. See Rom. 4:17; 8:11, 23; 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor.

1:9; 4:14; Phil. 3:20, 21; 2 Tim. 2:18; Rev. 20:6, 13.

(e) Definite statement and argument abound. There are three immortal passages in Paul's writings where the doctrine is made the subject of special treatment.

**Definite
Statements
of Belief.**

Of these let us first notice 2 Cor. 5:1-5. The contrast here presented is between the "earthly house," the decaying tent of the soul, and the "house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens," the raised and glorified spiritual and immortal body. In 1 Thess. 4:13-18 the certain fact of the resurrection of the dead, even though many shall be alive at the Lord's coming, is urged as a consolation to the bereaved in the loss of friends. The living at the coming of the Lord will have no advantage of the dead, for these shall be raised to glory. The other passage is the magnificent paean of praise in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. It is a pity that our associations with that glorious outburst of inspired eloquence are so largely, if not exclusively, those of funerals and grief. Its keynote is one of triumphant joy, not of heart-breaking sorrow. Read in this spirit, its argumentative unfolding of the doctrine of the resurrection becomes a condensed epic, or a stirring triumphal ode. And yet the logical character of the passage remains prominent, and its teachings are the most definite that we have on the great doctrine in hand. Full exposition is here impossible, but three salient points must be emphasized: (1) That Christ's resurrection is the guarantee, and in some sense the example, or norm, of that of his people (verses 12-20, 45-49). (2) That the raised body will be to some extent and in some recognizable way the same as that which died and was buried (verses 35-38, 42-44, 52, 53). (3) That on the other hand there will be a radical,

complete and glorious change, so that the raised body will be "spiritual" (that is, perfectly adapted to the life of the spirit), immortal, incorruptible, beautiful (verses 35-54).

We may now consider briefly,

II. SOME MATTERS CONNECTED WITH THE DOCTRINE.

Matters Related to the Doctrine.

There are some difficulties and some great and blessed consolations growing out of this doctrine, which we should not omit to notice.

1. *Difficulties.* Every great subject has its difficulties of thought. Every star shines in the dark void of space, and its rays taper out into obscurity.

Its Difficulties. Physical.

We can't know everything about anything; let us be glad to know something. Here are great difficulties in connection with the resurrection of the dead: (a) The physical difficulty. If the body decays and its chemical elements pass into other substances, perhaps into other human bodies, how can that same body be raised? Our answer is, we are not required to believe that every particle of matter that ever helped to form a body shall be restored to it at the resurrection. The material of the body is constantly changing through life; an old person has successively combined enough material to make many bodies, and yet in some sense his body remains the same through all changes.

(b) The philosophical difficulty. How can it be called *the same body*, in view both of the chemical dissolution of its materials and the radical changes to be made at the resurrection itself?

Philosophical. Here we can only say that the question of personal identity from

birth to old age is a necessary difficulty of thought, and yet we recognize the same person, body and soul, throughout life. Also, the raised body of our Lord was the same and yet changed, as all the accounts of him after his resurrection show. We simply cannot solve the problem, some mystery must remain. All that we can say is that in some sense the raised body will be the same, in others widely and gloriously different. God will take care of all that.

(c) The theological difficulty. Are we sure there is to be a real resurrection? May not the language of the Scriptures be figurative and teach only that the soul is its own body, or that a

Theological. "spiritual body" is provided for it directly it escapes from the "natural body"? This matter was considered in a former chapter, and it is only necessary here to say, that if the passages of Scripture we have studied do not teach a real raising up of the bodies of the dead we can have little or no assurance that language can teach us anything concerning the future life. In fine, recognizing problems and mysteries as yet beyond our reach, we should leave these to God and wait. (See Acts 26:8.)

2. *Consolations.* Leaving these difficulties, and accepting the plain meaning of the Scripture as far as it is plain, we come upon blessed consolations in connection with this doctrine. (a) After the disruption of death there will be the restoration of the whole personality in body and soul, and the immortal life of both.

**Consolations.
Restoration
of Person-
ality.**

- (b) The raised body will be free from all the ills to which this "earthly tent-house" is painfully subject; it will be glorified and ennobled, perfectly fitted to the eternal spiritual life.
- The Resurrection Body.**
- (c) "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."
- Sin and Death Vanquished.**

CHAPTER XXIX.

JUDGMENT AND PUNISHMENT.

Following upon the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, come the last judgment and the final awards to the righteous and to the wicked.

**The Bible
and the Last
Things.**

Here, as in all these doctrines of the future life, we must continually bear in mind that the Bible gives us only outlines, glimpses, some details; but not anywhere an elaborate discussion or a finished picture. Nevertheless the essential things concerning the solemn and awful doctrines of this chapter are told us with meaning so distinct and emphasis so fearful that we can only escape these truths either by perverting Scripture or repudiating it. There is no other alternative. Let us make our solemn choice before we go a step further. Shall we take the Bible as our guide and accept its plain teachings? Or shall we either discard the Bible or twist its language to suit our views and feelings? Following the Bible what do we find?

I. JUDGMENT.

In various ways the Scriptures clearly teach that God judges men for their character and acts. These Divine judgments sometimes come upon men in this life,

Judgment.

and sometimes death may be regarded as a judgment. These are

not here in consideration. What we are seeking to know is the truth of God concerning judgment in the future life. Is there really to be a final judgment? Who will be the judge? And on what grounds will judgment proceed?

1. *The fact of judgment.* One of the most explicit declarations as to the fact is that found in Paul's sermon at Athens (Acts 17:31): "He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained." And when Paul stood before Felix to speak "concerning the faith in Christ Jesus" (Acts 24:24, 25), he "discoursed of righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come." In Paul's letters we find the fact asserted in unmistakable terms, as in Rom. 2:3, 5, 16; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10, and others. Peter also in teaching Cornelius and his family (Acts 10:42) distinctly affirms the coming judgment, and in his epistles (1 Pet. 4:5; 2 Pet. 2:9) repeats with emphasis the teaching. John also alludes to the judgment in his first epistle (1 John 2:28), and in the Revelation in many places shows forth the truth. (See especially Rev. 6:17; 20:12). Jude, too, teaches it (Jude 6, 14, 15), and there seems to be allusion to the future judgment in James 2:12, 13; 4:12. See also Heb. 9:27; 10:27. Thus the Apostles distinctly set forth the fact; and their teachings are based on those of our Lord himself, as may be readily seen by a study of Christ's own words in Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:27-29. See also Matt. 11:22, and like passages, and the parables of the Tares, the Net, the Virgins, the Talents, where the fact of a future judgment is clearly indicated.

From these passages we learn some important details connected with the fact of judgment: (α) That

it will come after death and the resurrection, in connection with the second coming of Christ; and (b) that it will be universal; all men will be judged, and perhaps even the fallen angels; and (c) that it will be a definite event (called a "day") and not a continuous and endless process. What a fearful and solemn truth!

**Some
Details.**

2. *The Judge.* God is to be the judge, but it is taught that he will act in the person of the Son, not in that of the Father, or the Holy Spirit. (See again Matt. 25: 31-34; John 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10.) It is a blessed consolation in view of that dreadful day that our Savior will be our judge.

The Judge.

3. *The grounds of judgment.* These are clearly indicated. We need not err on this point: (a) Character, Rom. 2:16; (b) Works, Matt. 25:34 ff; 2 Cor. 5:10; (c) Relation to Christ, John 3:18, 19. The last is the decisive test, and for two reasons: first, be-

**The Grounds
of Judgment.**

cause rejection of Christ is a wicked act toward God, and a revelation of character; and second, because rejection of Christ is refusal to accept the only means whereby sinful character may be purged and wicked actions may be pardoned. All men, as sinners, are under condemnation; God has provided a way of escape, so that he may be just and yet the justifier of him who hath faith in Jesus; if any refuse the offer of God's mercy, they justly remain under his condemnation, with the sin of rejection added. And so we are led to the second topic of this chapter.

II. PUNISHMENT.

Here we shall find it proper to discuss the fact, the nature, the place, and the duration

Punishment. of the punishment of those who shall be condemned at the judgment.

1. *The fact of punishment.* The doom pronounced by the holy and just God at the judgment is to be not a mere formality, a sentence of words only; but a real and

The Fact of Punishment. terrible punishment is to follow it.

As the passages of Scripture which teach the fact are the same as those from which we derive our views on the other points just mentioned, it will be convenient to give the proof-texts here and not repeat them under each following topic.

(a) In the Old Testament, in addition to the numerous passages which speak of the judgments and punishments of God on sinners in this life, there are some which more or less clearly point to the punishment of the future state.

Old Testament Testimony.

Notable here is the closing word of Isaiah (Isa. 66:24), which our Lord more than once seems to have had in mind when he spoke of this matter. Also in Dan. 12:2 we see unmistakable reference to the punishment of the wicked in the "shame and everlasting contempt" to which some shall rise.

John the Baptist's Warnings.

(b) Two passages in which John the Baptist speaks of the final results of refusing Christ teach a fearful lesson. See Matt. 3:12 and John 3:36.

(c) It is remarkable that by far the fullest and

clearest teachings on this painful subject should be found in the sayings of Jesus himself. Perfect love gives earnest warning. In numer-

**Christ's Ex-
plicit Words.**

ous sayings, some only suggestive, some parabolic and figurative, and some terribly explicit, our Lord sets forth the certain and awful punishment of the wicked. In Matt. 7:13 he warns as to the broad way that leads to destruction, and in verse 23 already foreshadows the doom of false professors. See further Matt. 10:28; 13:40-42, 47-50; 16:26; 18:7-9; 18:34, 35; 22:11-14; 24:48, 51. In the 25th chapter of Matthew the teaching is very clear. We have first the parable of the Virgins, showing the rejection of the unprepared (verses 10-12); then the parable of the Talents, with the casting out of the unprofitable servant (verse 30); and then the vivid and impressive description of the last judgment, (verses 31-46), with the dismissal and punishment of the wicked. In Mark 9:42-48 there is emphatic repetition of the teaching in regard to the punishment of offenses and an allusion to Isa. 66:24. Important passages are also found in Luke's Gospel. See Luke 12:45-48; 13:23-28; 16:23-37. And in John 5:22-27 we have the teaching about the resurrection and judgment.

(d) Other passages are found in the apostolic writings. See Rom. 2:5-9 (especially verse 8); 2 Thess.

**Apostolic
References.**

1:9, "Punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." There are several pas-

sages bearing on the subject in the book of Revelation, of which that in chapter 14:9-11 will serve as a fearful example. Do all these terrible words mean nothing?

2. *The nature of punishment.* From the Scrip-

**The
Nature of
Punishment.
Deprivation.**

tures given we infer several important things regarding the kind of punishment which the wicked will receive. (a) It will be deprivation. They will be "cast out" from God, from the angels, from the good; separated from the righteous; the "talent" will be taken from "the unprofitable servant."

(b) There will be the *natural consequences* of sin. Sin itself will continue (Mark 3:29); the society of the devil, his angels, and of wicked souls only, will foster it. He that is "unjust" and "filthy" (Rev. 22: 11) will be left to his chosen character. Can anything be worse?

**Environment
of Evil.**

(c) There will also be positive *infliction of suffering*. Many of the passages show this very clearly, and it is necessarily involved in the word "punishment". It is no doubt true that figurative language is employed, as to "fire", "brimstone," the "worm that dieth not," and the like; but these expressions *certainly mean suffering*, dreadful suffering!

Suffering.

(d) But we have reason to believe the punishment will be *graded* or *proportionate* to the offence. We may infer this in general from the justice of God, and besides from the teaching that "according to their deeds accordingly he will repay", and more definitely still from what our Lord says (Luke 12:47, 48) in regard to those who shall be beaten "with many" and "with few" stripes. But here is a momentous lesson for us: The greater privileges abused the greater punishment received.

**Proportion-
ate.**

3. *The place of punishment.* The idea of

locality in connection with the punishment of those against whom judgment is pronounced is involved in

The Place of Punishment.

the nature of the things. If souls live on, they must live *somewhere*; if they suffer punishment it must *be somewhere*. The place is not definitely located for us in the Bible representations, but it is named. It is somewhere, and it is named hell. The one English word translates two different New Testament terms. One, "hades", is the general word for the place of the departed, the realm beyond death. It may include the place of punishment (as in Luke 16:23), but does not refer specifically and exclusively to that. But the other word, "gehenna", does describe the place of suffering. The word is of Hebrew origin, and at first meant the Valley of Hinnom, the place of carcasses and fires outside Jerusalem, but was given as a name to the fearful abode of the lost after death. The word occurs with this meaning in Matt. 5:22, 29; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; Jas. 3:6.

4. *The duration of punishment.* Our Lord's declaration as to this is explicit and unequivocal. He says of the condemned (Matt. 25:46): "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." With these words

The Duration of Punishment.

agree the other passages mentioned. Thus, the plain teaching of God's Word is that the state of punishment for sin is endless. The same word "everlasting" is used in the Greek to describe the happy state of the righteous and the wretched state of the wicked. If one is eternal, so, also, is the other. Because the doctrine is so dreadful, and our natural feelings revolt against it, men have tried in various ways to break the force of the Scripture teaching, and explain it away, either altogether, or in part. The

limits of this chapter do not admit of a statement and refutation in detail of these various theories. The one comprehensive and sufficient answer to them all is a clear and candid exposition of the Scriptures which bear on the subject.

It is better to accept the teaching of Christ and act upon it. Our refusal to believe it does not make the doctrine untrue. For ourselves, and for our fellow-men, the evident duty is to put trust in the Savior.

**The Right
Attitude.**

In view of judgment and punishment, the certain consequences of sin, let us lay hold of the helping hand, which grace extends to save us, and lovingly, faithfully, warn, exhort and influence our fellow-sinners to do likewise.

CHAPTER XXX.

HEAVEN AND ETERNAL LIFE.

After the resurrection and the judgment what will be the life of the saints? Is heaven only a state of being without reference to locality, or is it both place and condition? The Scriptures fully teach that the future blessed life of the saved is to be considered both with regard to its sphere, and its nature. Thus let us study it.

**The Future
Life of the
Saints.**

I. THE SPHERE, OR PLACE, HEAVEN.

Of course, much that the Bible tells us in regard to heaven is to be understood figuratively, and it may be quite difficult in some cases to draw the dividing line between the figurative and the literal; but certainly the figures *mean something*, and we must not be too easily led to explain them away. Trying to be suitably cautious in both directions, let us notice what is said as to the locality and character of heaven.

**The Place,
Heaven.**

1. *Locality.* In thinking of heaven as a place we need not imagine it a small or separate place. It may be the universe in its sweep, or the particular abode of the saint at any moment of his blessed life. We may conceive it as centered where the personal, visible presence

of God is manifest; or as extended wherever the spiritual presence of God is distinctly recognized and felt. Jesus says (John 14:2): "In my Father's house are many mansions", and this language gives us both the ideas of locality and of extent. More particularly the Scriptures variously represent heaven under the human conceptions of a country, a city, a home.

(a) Heaven is a country. In one place it is called a "heavenly" country, which those who believe in God seek after and hope to reach (Heb. 11:14-16). In an-

A "Country." other place (Phil. 3:20) Paul says: "Our citizenship is in heaven." And in many places it is called a "kingdom," giving us an idea of vast extent, great riches and glory, and mighty power. (See Matt. 13:41; 25:34; 1 Cor. 15:24; Heb. 12:28; 2 Peter 1:11; Rev. 1:6 R. V.)

(b) Heaven is a city. We find this conception especially brought out in the Epistle to the Hebrews (11: 10, 16; 12: 22; 13:14), and in the

A "City." Book of Revelation, particularly chapter 21. Perhaps it may not be too literal a way of thinking of it if we conceive the heavenly Jerusalem to be somewhat like the capital of a country. It is the center of divine authority, the seat of the throne of God.

(c) Heaven is a home. In John 14:2, 3, Jesus speaks of the "mansions," and of "going to prepare a place", as though there would be something corre-

A "Home." sponding to our ideas of a home-place for each and all. The words of Paul about the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1) seem to refer to the raised body, in distinction from the earthly one described as a "tent", but they strongly suggest the idea

of a home. Again, there is a suggestion to this effect in Eph. 3:15, where he speaks of "every family in heaven and on earth." And once again the glowing language of Peter (1 Pet. 1:4) about the heavenly inheritance leans in the same way.

2. *Character.* Here again we must neither be too literal nor too free in our interpretations of Scripture language. In that heavenly kingdom nothing that causes sin will be found (Matt. 13:41); that blessed land will be free from darkness (Rev.

22:5); the holy city will be pure (Rev. 21:27) and splendid (Rev. 21 throughout); the home will be an "abode" (John 14:2) "an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 1:4). Figures, you say? Yes; but since human forms of speech, totally inadequate to convey all the truth; and yet because human forms of speech, the fitting ones to make those glories real and definite to our imagination. Let us bless God for speaking to us in terms we can grasp, even though they may somewhat crudely fail to reveal the glories they suggest; let us bless God that terms partial and suggestive only will leave us an eternal much to learn!

II. THE STATE, ETERNAL LIFE.

What shall be the manner of life of those who are brought to heaven? Here, too, we have glorious suggestions, not full details. In a general way we may

The State, Heaven. say that the Bible leads us to believe that all the ills and evils of our earthly life will be done away, some of the best goods of our present experiences will be continued and perfected, and that many glorious

things of which we now can have no thought will be given to us by him who "doeth exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think." But for the sake of being somewhat definite we may take account of the following elements of the blessed and glorious state of the redeemed:

1. *Perfection of the individual life.* Paul tells us that "we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51); we shall not be just what we have been on earth. (a) In body. It shall be "spiritual" (1 Cor. 15:44); like Christ's glorified body (1 Cor. 15:49; Phil. 4:21; 1 John 3:2); no more subject to sickness, decay, hunger, pain, weariness, nor death! (1 Cor. 15:53; 2 Cor. 5:1-4; Rev. 7:16; 21:4). It is hard to imagine so much!

(b) In mind. We shall be able to think better, our thoughts will be more pure and clear. Our knowledge will be far greater in sum and more accurate in quality (1 Cor.

13:12); and perhaps this means that we shall know things without so much effort to learn. We may be able to take in things at a glance, by quick intuition, without process of painful reasoning and labored recollection. And we shall have all eternity to keep on knowing!

(c) In character. This is the crown and sum of it all. We shall be good! (1 Cor. 13:10; 15:50-54; Col. 3:1-4; Heb. 12:23; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 7:9). Ah! how it thrills the soul to think what these promises mean! We, even we, shall be pure and good. We

shall never want what we ought not to have, nor do what we ought not to do, nor say what we ought not to

say, nor think what we ought not to think! How good it will be just to be good! (Matt. 5:6).

2. *The company of the redeemed.* In that heavenly country all will be good; in the innumerable throng no evil person will be found. No quarrels, disagreements, wars or tumults will be there. They who love God will come from all lands and times and be together (Matt. 8:11; Rev. 7:9); their employments of praise and service will be in common (Rev. 7:9-17; 22:3, 4); each shall have his full portion of joy and all shall rejoice together with the Lord (Matt. 25: 21, 23).

**The Company
of the
Redeemed.**

Besides this general social life there is no reason to doubt that we shall know particular persons there. We shall meet with the good and great of all times (Matt. 8:11; 17:3); and with many precious characters we have never known before (Heb. 12:23); and all this suggests and implies (as do other Scriptures), as a thing to be taken for granted without explicit statement, that "we shall know each other there", that we shall renew and perpetuate our friendships and loves, without any drawbacks, faults, or sorrows.

**We Shall
Know One
Another.**

3. *The presence of the Lord.* Old writers speak of this as the "beatific vision"—the happy-making sight. It is a good phrase. Shall we see God? We may not know all it means, but the glorious fact is surely made known. (Matt. 5:8; John 14:3; 17:24; 1 Thess. 4:17; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 7:15-17; 21:3; 22:4). How beautiful God must be! and we shall "behold the beauty of the Lord." And

**The Presence
of the
Lord.**

because he shall have made us fit, his presence will not terrify, but win. His presence will be our perfect joy.

“Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice opprest.
I know not, oh! I know not,
What social joys are there,
What radiance of glory,
What light beyond compare.”

And now the writer takes the privilege of saying a personal word to those who under

A Parting his poor guidance have been trying
Word. through these studies to think

God's thoughts after him. God bless and lead you, every one, and bring you safe home at last, where

“We shall see him face to face,
And tell the story, **SAVED BY GRACE!**”

ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly finished unto all good works.—2 Tim. 3:16-17.

Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.—1 Tim. 4:12-16.

Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.—Matt. 28:19-20.

An Appendix.

*WHAT WE BELIEVE ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.

F. H. KERFOOT, D.D.

It is enjoined upon Christ's people that they be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason concerning the hope that is in them. (1 Pet. 3:15.) And Paul enjoins upon Timothy, not only that he take heed unto himself, but also unto his doctrines. (1 Tim. 4:16.) We herewith append the leading tenets which we hold, in common with all evangelical denominations, and also those which constitute our distinctive principles as Baptists. It is for the sake of the last, that we are cons^trained to exist as a separate denomination.

DOCTRINES WHICH WE HOLD IN COMMON WITH OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

We believe, in common with all evangelical Christians:

*The late Rev. F. H. Kerfoot, D. D. LL. D., while serving as pastor of the Eutaw Place Baptist Church, Baltimore, Md., prepared this Confession of Faith for that church as an expression of what is believed by them according to the Scriptures. It has also been adopted by many other churches and is offered in this permanent form by the publishers with permission of the author, as being helpful in a comparative and discriminating study.

In one God, Maker and Ruler of heaven and earth, revealed as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection. Read 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Matt. 28:19; Jude 20:21.

In the Holy Scriptures as His infallible word, which are able to make us wise unto salvation. Read 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

In the fall of man and his condemnation as a sinner, and God's sovereign grace and love in his redemption.

In salvation in the name of Jesus Christ, who was the "word made flesh," God-man, who obeyed the law, suffered and died for the sins of men, is risen and exalted a Priest and King. Read Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; Acts 5:31.

In the free offer of eternal life in the Gospel to all, and the aggravated guilt of those who reject it. Read Rom. 10:11-13; Heb. 2:3.

In the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and of repentance toward God, and faith in Christ. Read John 3:5; Acts 20:21.

In the justification and adoption of the believer, through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Read Rom. 3:23-26.

In the sacred observance of the Lord's Day for His worship and His work. Read John 5:17; Rev. 1:10; Acts 20:7.

In the present life as man's only day of grace, and that, when this present life ends, man enters at once into conscious blessedness or woe. Read 2 Cor. 6:2; Luke 16:19-31.

In the resurrection of the body; the righteous, to eternal life; the wicked, to judgment and eternal punishment. Read John 5:28, 29; Matt. 25:46.

And, in common with a large body of evangelical Christians, nearly all Baptists believe what are usually

termed the "doctrines of grace," the absolute sovereignty and foreknowledge of God; his eternal and unchangeable purposes or decrees; that salvation in its beginning, continuance and completion, is God's free gift; that, in Christ, we are elected or chosen, personally or individually, from eternity, saved and called out from the world, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; that we are kept by His power from falling away, and will be presented faultless before the presence of His glory. Read Rom. 8, 9, 10, 11; Acts 13:48; Eph. 1:4, 5; Eph. 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:2-5; Jude 24; Tim. 1:9; Tit. 3:5.

DISTINCTIVE DOCTRINES OF BAPTISTS.

I. The Bible is an all-sufficient guide in faith and practice and nothing should be taught for doctrine which cannot be found therein. Read 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Matt. 15:9; 1 John 2:20, 21, 27.

II. The Bible makes every religious observance a matter of voluntariness, and hence, of individual responsibility or privilege. And while we recognize the right of churches to exercise Scriptural discipline, and the right of governments to impose civil obligations, yet we hold that no church nor government, nor any power on earth, has the right to bind any man's conscience. This principle of voluntariness and individual responsibility also excludes every idea that religious duty can be done by proxy. Hence, we reject the doctrines of infant baptism and sponsorship, and all efforts whatsoever to perform duties for others. Read John 18:36, 37; Rom. 14:12.

III. The first religious duty or act which the Bible requires of every person is repentance toward God and

faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, we reject the doctrine of infant baptism, and every doctrine whatsoever which recognizes persons as in any way members of a church of Christ before they have given evidence of personal repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Read Acts 2:37, 38; Acts 5:31; Acts 20:21.

IV. The Bible requires that every person who has exercised repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, shall be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Matt. 28:19.) And the Bible teaches concerning baptism:

1. As to the act, it is immersion in water. Read Acts 8:38, 39.

2. As to the design:

(1.) It is a confession of Jesus Christ as our Savior and of our allegiance to the triune God. Read Gal. 3:27.

(2.) It is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Read 1 Pet. 3:21.

(3.) It is the symbol by the washing of water, of inward cleansing. Read Tit. 3:5.

(4.) It is the symbol of our having been buried to a life of willful sinfulness, and of our having been raised again to walk in newness of life on earth. Read Rom. 6:3-5.

(5.) It is the symbol of our having died with Jesus Christ, and of our having been raised with Him into a life of acceptance before God; and also of our final resurrection with Him to life everlasting. Hence, we reject the doctrine of sprinkling and pouring for baptism, as the setting aside of the true ordinance, both as to the act and its signification, and the substitution therefor of human tradition. Read Col. 2:12.

V. We learn from the Bible concerning a church

of Jesus Christ, that it is composed of those who have been baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, after they have professed repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The association of such persons, in order to form a New Testament church, must be entirely voluntary on their part, and must be for the purpose of observing such ordinances and practices as are in accordance with the teachings of the New Testament concerning such organization. Read Acts 2:41-47.

The New Testament recognizes as the proper officers of churches Pastors or Elders, and Deacons. Read Phil. 1:1.

The New Testament shows also concerning churches of Jesus Christ, that every local church has the right to govern itself. It recognizes no right in civil governments to assume control over any church. It recognizes no such thing as priestly or papal domination, nor any authority in its own officers to be in any way lords over God's heritage. It recognizes no ecclesiastical courts or bodies of higher jurisdiction which shall have any right to interfere in the affairs of the churches. Churches may, in mere matters of expediency, associate and co-operate in Christian work if they see fit. Yet no association or council can have any power or jurisdiction, except what the churches see fit to allow. Read Matt. 23:8-11; 2 Cor. 1:24.

VI. The New Testament teaches concerning the Lord's Supper that it is a memorial ordinance, intrusted to the churches; and that it is to commemorate the offering of the Lord's body and his shed blood till he comes. A careful examination of these ordinances, as appointed by Christ, and of their essential meaning, and of the way in which they were observed by the Apostles, will show that Baptism, which is administered

but once and for all time, should precede the Lord's Supper. And, inasmuch as God's Word gives us no warrant whatever for inviting unbaptized persons to the table, which is the Lord's table, we dare not allow our Christian sympathies to lead us into giving such invitations, lest we be found changing the order of God's Word, and ministering to the confusion and obscurity of God's truth. We reject the idea that the Lord's Supper is designed to celebrate love among Christians, or is an ordinance for deciding questions of fellowship either in an individual church or between churches. And in declining to invite members of other denominations, we do not question their piety at all, but only declare that we believe them according to the example and command of Christ, to be unbaptized persons and not walking in the New Testament order of ordinances. Read Cor. 6:17-34.

And for this, as in all things, we appeal to the Bible.

May the Lord give light and knowledge, and the Spirit of the Covenant.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE AND TEST LESSON STUDY.

The chapters indicated below (18) are for study by our Convention Normal students. Students should read carefully the remaining chapters. These questions are for use in the study of each lesson. The class teacher will for the examination select questions from the list given on page 241.

LESSON I. (Chapter 1, Page 9.)

1. Name some departments of effort in which there are commonly accepted beliefs and practices. Why are our religious beliefs worthy of study?
2. What two distinctions are to be made in our study of the relation of knowledge to belief? State the difficulty of distinguishing between knowing and believing.
3. Show that religious belief is a real, important, and vital part of our thought and action.
4. Discuss the internal sources of our religious beliefs.
5. Say something as to each of the external sources.

LESSON II. (Chapter 2, Page 17.)

1. What three things do we study as regards the Bible?
2. Suggest three reasons why we accept the Bible as a revelation from God.
3. State fully the argument from Christian tradition, and indicate the force of this argument.
4. In what two ways does the Bible witness to itself as the Word of God?
5. How does the Bible witness to itself by its character?
6. "What sort of message from God is the Bible?"
7. What was the means of communication? Name some of the forms in which the Bible comes to us. What as to contents? What as to character?
8. Suggest three things as to how to use the Bible.

LESSON III. (Chapter 3, Page 25.)

1. Why believe in the existence of God?
2. Why believe in God's Self-existence?
3. Why believe in God's Unity?
4. What kind of a Being is God?

LESSON IV. (Chapter 4, Page 32.)

1. What is meant by the holiness of God?
2. Prove this doctrine from Scripture.
3. What is the wisdom of God?
4. Quote two passages to prove this doctrine.
5. What is meant by God's justice?
6. Quote two passages to prove this doctrine.
7. Suggest two inferences from this doctrine.
8. What is meant by God's goodness?
9. Quote two passages which affirm goodness in God.

LESSON V. (Chapter 6, Page 47.)

1. May not God have voluntarily placed limits upon himself when he made laws for nature to go by?
2. What is meant by God's sovereignty?
3. Show that God works by plan.
4. Show that God still works in his universe.
5. What is meant by God's immiuece? What is meant by his transcendence?
6. What does God's sovereignty include?
7. Quote two passages of Scripture to prove God's sovereignty.
8. Prove God's sovereignty from reason.
9. What two suggestions are made as regards the difficulty of the doctrine?
10. State the three main difficulties.

LESSON VI. (Chapter 8, Page 61.)

1. What do we consider in this chapter?
2. State the doctrine of the divine Unity.
3. Name two errors which are to be shunned. What is pantheism? What is polytheism?
4. Give an argument apart from Scripture for the divine Unity.
5. Quote two Scripture passages to prove the doctrine.
6. Where do we learn concerning the doctrine of the Trinity?
7. State this doctrine. What of the word "person" in this connection?
8. How can such a doctrine be proved?
9. What two classes of Scripture teach the doctrine?
10. State the difficulty of the doctrine.
11. What as to the value of this doctrine?

LESSON VII. (Chapter 9, Page 68.)

1. Where are we to find information concerning the doctrine of Christ?
2. What three things does the New Testament tell us concerning Christ?
3. Where do we begin in our study of Christ? Why?
4. Suggest and develop two lines of argument for the doctrine of Christ's real manhood.

5. Outline in three points the argument for the doctrine that Jesus Christ was God. Quote two Scriptures to show that Christ claimed to be God. Quote two statements of his followers in this connection.
6. Give three incidental proofs to show that Christ was God.
7. What is the significance of the hyphen in God-man?

LESSON VIII. (Chapter 10, Page 75.)

1. Is the Holy Spirit a person? State some other views.
2. In what sense is the Holy Spirit a synonym for God?
3. Is the Holy Spirit merely a divine power or influence? Should we use the impersonal pronoun "it" and "its" in referring to the Spirit?
4. Give four arguments for the personality of the Spirit.
5. What two lines of Scripture passages prove the deity of the Spirit?
6. How is the work of the Spirit related to the work of the Father and the Son?
7. How is the Spirit's work related to the universe?
8. What four things does the Spirit do for man?

LESSON IX. (Chapter 13, Page 97.)

1. Why do all come into the world with a taint and tendency to sin? What as to the reality of sin?
2. In what three ways do we get man's verdict in his own case?
3. What verdict comes from history in the worst it records? In the best it records?
4. What does observation declare in this connection?
5. What does consciousness declare as to man's sinfulness?
6. In what two ways do the Scriptures testify against man?
7. Show how the Scriptures bear witness historically.
8. What is the doctrine of original sin?
9. What is the doctrine of depravity? Is man totally depraved?
10. What does the Scripture declare as to the universality of sin?

LESSON X. (Chapter 18, Page 134.)

1. What three things do we consider in connection with the mediation of the God-man?
2. State the human demand for mediation.
3. State the divine demand for mediation.
4. What do the Scriptures show as to the reality of mediation in Christ?
5. State four ways in which Christ's services as mediator are exhibited.
6. Show Christ's fitness as mediator.
7. State three erroneous views as to Christ's mediation.
8. State two inadequate views.
9. State the scriptural view. Quote two passages which bear out this view.

LESSON XI. (Chapter 19, Page 140.)

1. How do we know concerning the fact and method of God's work in delivering man from sin?
2. How does the Old Testament present the divine work in saving men? Quote two Old Testament passages in this connection.
3. Quote two passages from the New Testament to show that God is active in saving men.
4. What one great word includes both love and sovereignty? What does this word mean?
5. What is meant by election? When does God elect? Are there any conditions to God's choice?
6. What is regeneration? Where do we find the doctrine taught?
7. What two difficulties grow out of this doctrine of God's work in saving men?
8. What can you say as to each of these difficulties?
9. What consolation have we here?

LESSON XII. (Chapter 20, Page 147.)

1. What two things do we consider in the matter of God's part in saving men?
2. What two considerations prove the necessity of man's part?
3. How does man's nature as a moral agent prove this necessity?
4. In what two ways do the Scriptures assume this necessity?
5. What three things are necessary on man's part in order to salvation?
6. What two things does repentance involve?
7. What is faith? Quote Scripture passages to show that faith is essential to salvation.
8. What two elements are said to constitute faith?
9. What is meant by perseverance? Quote Scriptures to show that this is a necessary element in salvation.

LESSON XIII. (Chapter 21, Page 154.)

1. In what four phrases do the Scriptures represent the new life of the believer? Why are four terms necessary?
2. What is justification? Quote Paul's words which set forth the nature of justification. Whose act is justification? What is the nature of this act?
3. What is adoption? In what sense is God the Father of all men? Quote passages to show that only the believer may really claim this sonship.
4. On what is the sonship based and what does it involve?
5. What is sanctification? Show how the divine and human elements cooperate.
6. Quote Scripture passages to show that sanctification is a process.
7. Show in the four things here considered the gradual increase of the human element.
8. What two sides of the Christian life are here discussed?

LESSON XIV. (Chapter 22, Page 163.)

1. What human tendency is recognized in the formation of churches? How often did the Lord speak of the church?
2. How often does the word "church" occur in the New Testament?
3. What is meant by "the church general?"
4. In what sense is the word "church" generally used in the New Testament? Name two kinds of passages when the word is so used.
5. Of whom were New Testament churches composed? How were members received? Cite a case in point.
6. Name the officers of New Testament churches. What officers were regular and permanent?
7. What of the government of the church?
8. In what senses is the word "church" used in modern times? Which of these are scriptural?
9. Name three forms of church polity. Which do you regard as scriptural?

LESSON XV. (Chapter 23, Page 171.)

1. What is meant by worship?
2. Show its true scriptural meaning from the Old Testament. From the New Testament.
3. What as to forms of worship? What are four elements in Christian worship?
4. What as to the value of worship?
5. What are the two ordinances of the New Testament?
6. What five points are considered touching baptism?
7. Are we obligated to observe baptism? What is the act of baptism? Who should be baptized? Who should baptize? What is the design of baptism?
8. State four views concerning the Supper.
9. To whom is the keeping of the Supper entrusted?

LESSON XVI. (Chapter 27, Page 200.)

1. What four points do we consider in regard to our Lord's second coming?
2. Quote three Scriptures to show that Jesus is coming again. Name some distinctions which are to be observed here?
3. What did our Lord teach as to his own coming again? What was the expectation of the apostolic age?
4. What is meant by the millennium? Will our Lord come before or after the millennium?
5. Give the threefold purpose of our Lord's coming again.
6. What four statements are made concerning the manner of our Lord's coming?

LESSON XVII. (Chapter 28, Page 207.)

1. What is the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection?
2. What traces of this doctrine do we find in the Old Testament?

3. What was our Lord's attitude toward the belief current in his day?
4. What did our Lord assert as to his own connection with the resurrection?
5. What three statements are made as to "the doctrine of the apostles?"
6. What three salient points must be emphasized in connection with the great discussion of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15.
7. State and discuss three difficulties in connection with this doctrine.
8. Name three consolations of the doctrine.

LESSON XVIII. (Chapter 30, Page 222.)

1. What as to Scripture statements regarding heaven being figurative?
2. Under what human conceptions does the Bible represent heaven? Quote a Scripture to illustrate each of these.
3. What as to the character of heaven?
4. Name three elements in the glorious state of the redeemed.
5. What as to the company of the redeemed?
6. What as to the presence of the Lord?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND EXAMINATION.

The class teacher will select and submit one question on each lesson (18 questions) for examination. Pupils making a grade of 70% will be awarded seal 6 for their diploma.

LESSON I. (Chapter 1.)

1. Name the external sources of our religious beliefs
2. Name the internal sources of our religious beliefs.

LESSON II. (Chapter 2.)

1. Give three reasons for accepting the Bible as the true revelation from God.
2. Give three suggestions as to how to use the Bible.

LESSON III. (Chapter 3.)

1. Give two arguments to prove that the God of the Christian faith is a reality.
2. Set forth the nature of God in three phrases.

LESSON IV. (Chapter 4.)

1. Name four attributes in God's character.
2. Define each of these attributes.

LESSON V. (Chapter 6.)

1. What is God's sovereignty?
2. Give two proofs of God's sovereignty.

LESSON VI. (Chapter 8.)

1. What is meant by the unity of God?
2. What is meant by the divine trinity?

LESSON VII. (Chapter 9.)

1. Prove that Jesus was man.
2. Prove that Jesus was God.

LESSON VIII. (Chapter 10.)

1. Give proof of the personality of the Holy Spirit.
2. Give proof of the deity of the Spirit.

LESSON IX. (Chapter 13.)

1. What three sources of information lead man to know his own sin?
2. What do we mean by total depravity?

LESSON X. (Chapter 18.)

1. From what two sources is there demand for mediation?
2. State the fitness of Christ the Mediator.
3. State the scriptural view of Christ's mediation.

LESSON XI. (Chapter 19.)

1. What is election?
2. What is regeneration?

LESSON XII. (Chapter 20.)

1. What three things must man do to be saved?
2. What is repentance?
3. What is faith?
4. What is perseverance?

LESSON XIII. (Chapter 21.)

1. In what four ways do the Scriptures present the new life of the believer?
2. Define each of these four phrases.

LESSON XIV. (Chapter 22.)

1. State four modern uses of the word church.
2. Name three forms of church polity.

LESSON XV. (Chapter 23.)

1. Concerning baptism—
 - (1) Why observe the ordinance?
 - (2) What is baptism?
 - (3) Who should be baptized?
 - (4) By whom to be administered?
 - (5) What its design?
2. Concerning the Supper—

State four views as to the meaning of the Supper.

LESSON XVI. (Chapter 27.)

1. When will Christ come again?
2. For what purpose will Christ come again?
3. What will be the manner of Christ's coming again?

LESSON XVII. (Chapter 28.)

1. What is meant by the resurrection of the dead?
2. Name three difficulties involved here.

LESSON XVIII. (Chapter 30.)

1. Name three Scripture phrases which indicate that heaven is a locality.
2. Name three things which indicate the state, eternal life.

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