

The Spirit Uniting to Christ.

One of the principal ends or designs of the Gospel is the communication to God's elect of those benefits or blessings which are in the Redeemer; but the communication of benefits necessarily implies communion, and all communion as necessarily presupposes union with His Person. Can I be rich with another man's money, or advanced by another man's honours? Yes, if that other be my surety, or my husband. Peter could not be justified by the righteousness of Paul, but both could be justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, seeing they are both knit to one common Head. Principal and surety are one in obligation and construction of law. Head and members are one body; branch and stock are one tree, and a slip will live by the sap of another stock when once engrafted into it. We must, then, be *united to Christ* before we can receive any benefits *from Him*.

Now there are two kinds of union between Christ and His people: a judicial and a vital, or a legal and a spiritual. The first is that union which was made by God between the Redeemer and the redeemed when He was appointed their federal Head. It was a union in law, in consequence of which He represented them and was responsible for them, the benefits of His transactions redounding to them. It may be illustrated by the case of suretyship among men: a relation is formed between the surety and that person for whom he engages, by which the two are thus far considered as one—the surety being liable for the debt which the other has contracted, and his payment is held as the payment of the debtor, who is thereby absolved from all obligation to the creditor. A similar connection is established between Christ and those who had been given to Him by the Father.

But something farther was necessary in order to the actual enjoyment of the benefits procured by Christ's representation. God, on whose sovereign will the whole economy of grace is founded, had determined not only that His Son should sustain the character of their Surety, but that there should be also a vital as well as legal relation between them, as the foundation of communion with Him in all the blessings of His purchase. It was His good pleasure that as they were one in law, they should be also one spiritually, that Christ's merit and grace might not only be imputed, but also imparted to them, as the holy oil poured on the head of Aaron descended to the skirt of his garments. It is this latter, this vital and spiritual union, which the Christian has with Christ, that we now purpose to treat of.

The preaching of the Gospel by the ambassadors of the Lord Jesus is the instrument appointed for the reconciling or bringing home of sinners to God in Christ. This is clear from Romans 10:14 and 1 Corinthians 1:21, and more particularly from 2 Corinthians 5:20, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." But, as we have pointed out in previous papers, the mere preaching of the Word—no matter how faithfully—will never bring a single rebel to the feet of Christ in penitence, confidence, and allegiance. No, for *that* there must be the special and supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit: only thus are any actually drawn to Christ to receive Him as Lord and Saviour: and only as this fact is carefully kept prominently before us does the blessed Spirit have His true place in our hearts and minds.

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power” (Psa. 110:3). It is by moral suasion—“with cords of a man” (Hosea 11:4)—that the Holy Spirit draws men to Christ. Yet by moral persuasion we must not understand a simple and bare proposal or tender of Christ, leaving it still to the sinner’s choice whether he will comply with it or no. For though God does not force the will contrary to its nature, nevertheless He puts forth a real efficacy when He “draws,” which consists of an immediate operation of the Spirit upon the heart and will, whereby its native rebellion and reluctance is removed, and from a state of unwillingness the sinner is made willing to come to Christ. This is clear from Ephesians 1:19, 20 which we quote below.

“And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places.” Here is much more than a mere proposal made to the will: there is the putting forth of Divine power, great power, yea the exceeding greatness of God’s power; and this power hath a sure and certain efficacy ascribed to it: God works upon the hearts and wills of His people “according to the working of His mighty power, which He *wrought in Christ*, when He raised Him from the dead”—both are *miracles* of Divine might. Thus God fulfills “all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith *with power*” (2 Thess. 1:11). Unless the “arm of the LORD” is revealed (Isa. 53:1) none believe His “report.”

Spiritual union with Christ, then, is effected both by the *external* preaching of the Gospel and the *internal* “drawing” of the Father. Let us now take note of the *bands* by which Christ and the believer are knit together. These bands are two in number, being the Holy Spirit on Christ’s part, and faith on our part. The Spirit on Christ’s part is His quickening us with spiritual life, whereby Christ first takes hold of us. Faith on our part, when thus quickened, is that whereby we take hold of Christ. We must first be “apprehended” (laid hold of) by Christ, before we can apprehend Him: Philippians 3:12. No vital act of faith can be exercised till a vital principle be first communicated to us. Thus, Christ is in the believer by His Spirit; the believer is in Christ by faith. Christ is in the believer by inhabitation; the believer is in Christ by implantation (Rom. 6:3-5). Christ is in the believer as the head is in the body; we are in Christ as the members are in the head.

“He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit” with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). The same Spirit which is in the Head is in the members of His mystical body, a vital union being effected between them. Christ is in Heaven, we upon earth, but the Spirit being omnipresent is the connecting link. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles” (1 Cor. 12:13)— what could be plainer than that? “Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit (1 John 4:13). Thus, Christ is unto His people a Head not only of government, but also of *influence*. Though the ties which connect the Redeemer and the redeemed are spiritual and invisible, yet are they so real and intimate that He lives in them and they live in Him, for “the Spirit of life *in Christ Jesus* hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2).

“But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Rom. 8:11), and this, because the Spirit is the bond of union between us and Christ. Because there is the same Spirit in the Head and in His members, He will therefore work the same effects in Him and in us. If the Head rise, the members will fol-

low after, for they are appointed to be conformed unto Him (Rom. 8:29)—in obedience and suffering now, in happiness and glory hereafter. Christ was raised by the Spirit of holiness (Rom. 1:4), and so shall we be—the earnest of which we have already received when brought from death unto life.—A.W.P.

The Epistle to the Hebrews.

88. *Chastisement: Hebrews 12:6.*

The problem of suffering is a very real one in this world, and to not a few of our readers a personal and acute one. While some of us are freely supplied with comforts, others are constantly exercised over procuring the bare necessities of life. While some of us have long been favoured with good health, others know not what it is to go through a day without sickness and pain. While some homes have not been visited by death for many years past, others are called upon again and again to pass through the deep waters of family bereavement. Yes, dear friend, the problem of suffering, the encountering of severe trials, is a very personal thing for not a few of the members of the household of faith. Nor is it the *external* afflictions which occasion the most anguish: it is the questioning they raise, the doubts they stimulate, the dark clouds of unbelief which they so often bring over the heart.

Very often it is in seasons of trial and trouble that Satan is most successful in getting in his evil work. When he perceives the uselessness of attempting to bring believers under the bondage in which he keeps unbelievers, he bides his time for the shooting at them of other arrows which he has in his quiver. Though he is unable to drag them down to the commission of the grosser outward forms of sin, he waits his opportunity for tempting them to be guilty of inward sins. Though he cannot infect them with the poison of evolutionism and higher criticism, he despairs not of seducing them with questionings of God's goodness. It is when adversity comes the Christian's way, when sore trials multiply, when the soul is opposed and the mind distressed that the Devil seeks to instill and strengthen doubtings of God's love, and to call into question the faithfulness of His promises.

Moreover, there come seasons in the lives of many saints when to sight and sense it *seems* as though God Himself had ceased to care for His needy and afflicted child. Earnest prayer is made for the mitigation of the sufferings, but relief is not granted. Grace is sought to meekly bear the burden which has been laid upon the suffering one; yet, so far from any sensible answer being received, self-will, impatience, unbelief, are more active than ever. Instead of the peace of God ruling the heart, unrest and enmity occupy its throne. Instead of quietness within, there is turmoil and resentment. Instead of "giving thanks always for all things unto God" (Eph. 5:20), the soul is filled with unkind thoughts and feelings against Him. This is cause for anguish unto the renewed heart; yet, at times, struggle against the evil as the Christian may, he is overcome by it.

Then it is that the afflicted one cries out, "Why standest Thou *afar off*, O LORD? why *hidest* Thou Thyself in times of trouble?" (Psa. 10:1). To the distressed saint, the Lord seems to *stand* still, as if He coldly looked on from a distance, and did not sympathise with the afflicted one. Nay, worse, the Lord appears to be *afar off*, and no longer "a very present help in trouble" (Psa. 46:1), but rather an inaccessible mountain, which it is impossible to reach. The felt presence of the Lord is the stay, the strength, the consolation of the believer; the lifting up of the light of His countenance upon us is what sustains and cheers us in this dark world. But when *that* is withheld, when we no longer have the joy of His presence with us, drab indeed is the prospect, sad the heart. It is the *hiding* of our Father's face which cuts to the quick. When trouble *and desertion* come together, it is unbearable.

Then it is that the word comes to us, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the

Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him” (Heb. 12:5). Ah, it is easy for us to perceive the meetness of such an admonition as this while things are going smoothly and pleasantly for us. While our lot is congenial, or at least bearable, we have little difficulty in discerning what a sin it is for any Christian to either “despise” God’s chastenings or to “faint” beneath them. But when tribulation comes upon us, when distress and anguish fill our hearts, it is quite another matter. Not only do we become guilty of one of the very evils here dehorted from, but we are very apt to excuse and extenuate our peevishness or faintness. There is a tendency in all of us to pity ourselves, to take sides with ourselves against God, and even to justify the uprisings of our hearts against Him.

Have we never, in self-vindication, said “Well, after all we are *human*; it is *natural* that we should chafe against the rod or give way to despondency when we are afflicted. It is all very well to tell us that we *should not*, but how can we help ourselves? we cannot change our natures; we are frail men and women, and not angels.” And what has been the issue from the fruit of this self-pity and self-vindication? Review the past, dear friend, and recall how you felt and acted inwardly when God was tearing up your cozy nest, overturning your cherished plans, dashing to pieces your fondest hopes, afflicting you painfully in your affairs, your body, or your family circle. Did it not issue in calling into question the wisdom of God’s ways, the justice of His dealings with you, His kindness towards you? Did it not result in your having still stronger doubts of His very goodness?

In Hebrews 12:5 the Christian is cautioned against either despising the Lord’s chastenings or fainting beneath them. Yet, notwithstanding this plain warning, there remains a tendency in all of us not only to disregard the same, but to act contrary thereto. The Apostle anticipates this evil, and points out the remedy. The mind of the Christian must be fortified against it. But how? By calling to remembrance *the source* from which all his testings, trials, tribulations and troubles proceed, namely, the blessed, wondrous, unchanging love of God. “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him.” And then verse 6: “FOR whom the Lord *loveth* He chasteneth.” Here a reason is advanced why we *should not* despise God’s chastening nor faint beneath it—all proceeds from His *love*. Yes, even the bitter disappointments, the sore trials, the things which occasion an aching heart, are not only appointed by unerring wisdom, but are sent by infinite Love! It is the apprehension and appropriation of this glorious fact, and that alone, which will preserve us from both the evils forbidden in verse 5.

The way to victory over suffering is to keep sorrow from filling the soul: “Let not your *heart* be troubled” (John 14:1). So long as the waves wash only the deck of the ship, there is no danger of its foundering; but when the tempest breaks through the hatches and submerges the hold, then disaster is nigh. No matter what floods of tribulation break over us, it is our duty and our privilege to have peace within: “Keep thy *heart* with all diligence” (Prov. 4:23): suffer no doubtings of God’s wisdom, faithfulness, goodness, to take root there. But how am I to prevent their so doing? “*Keep yourselves in the love of God*” (Jude 21), is the inspired answer, the sure remedy, the way to victory. There, in one word, we have made known to us the secret of how to overcome all questionings of God’s providential ways, all murmurings against His dealings with us.

“Keep yourselves in the love of God.” It is as though a parent said to his child, “Keep yourself in the sunshine”: the sun shines whether he enjoys it or no, but he is responsible not to walk in the shade and thus lose its genial glow. So God’s love for His people abides unchanging, but how few of them keep themselves in the warmth of it. The saint is

to be “rooted and grounded in love” (Eph. 3:17); “rooted” like a tree in rich and fertile soil; “grounded” like a house built upon a rock. Observe that both of these figures speak of *hidden* processes: the root-life of a tree is concealed from human eyes, and the foundations of a house are laid deep in the ground. Thus it should be with each child of God: the heart is to be fixed, nourished by the love of God.

It is one thing to believe intellectually that “God is love” and that He loves His people, but it is quite another to enjoy and live in that love in the soul. To be “rooted and grounded in love” means to have a settled assurance of God’s love for us, such an assurance as nothing can shake. This is the deep need of every Christian, and no pains are to be spared in the obtaining thereof. Those passages in Scripture which speak of the wondrous love of God should be read frequently and meditated upon daily. There should be a diligent striving to apprehend God’s love more fully and richly. Dwell upon the many unmistakable proofs which God has made of His love to you: the gift of His Word, the gift of His Son, the gift of His Spirit. What greater, what clearer proofs do we require! Steadfastly resist every temptation to question His love: “keep yourselves *in* the love of God.” Let *that* be the realm in which you live, the atmosphere you breathe, the warmth in which you thrive.

This life is but a schooling. In saying this we are uttering a platitude, yet it is a truth of which all Christians need to be constantly reminded. This is the period of our childhood and minority. Now in childhood everything has, or should have, the character of education and discipline. Dear parents and teachers are constantly directing, warning, rebuking; the whole of the child-life is under rule, restraint and guidance. But the only object is the child himself—his good, his character, his future; and the only motive is love. Now as childhood is to the rest of our life, so is the whole of our earthly sojourn to our future and heavenly life. Therefore let us seek to cultivate the spirit of childhood. Let us regard it as natural that we *should be* daily rebuked and corrected. Let us behave with the docility and meekness of children, with their trustful and sweet assurance that *love* is behind all our chastenings, that we are in the tender hands of our Father.

But if this attitude is to be maintained, *faith* must be kept in steady exercise: only thus shall we judge aright of afflictions. Sense is ever ready to slander and belie the Divine perfections. Sense beclouds the understanding and causes us to wrongly interpret God’s dispensations with us. Why so? Because sense estimates things from their outside and by their present feeling. “No chastening *for the present* seemeth to be joyous, but grievous” (Heb. 12:11), and therefore if when under the rod we judge of God’s love and care for us by our *sense of* His present dealings, we are likely to conclude that He has but little regard for us. Herein lies the urgent need for the putting forth of faith, for faith “is the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). *Faith* is the only remedy for this double evil. Faith interprets things not according to the outside or visible, but according to the promise. Faith looks upon providences not as a present disconnected piece, but in its entirety to the end of things.

Sense perceives in our trials naught but expressions of God’s disregard or anger, but faith can discern Divine wisdom and love in the sorest troubles. Faith is able to unfold the riddles and solve the mysteries of providence. Faith can extract honey and sweetness out of gall and wormwood. Faith discerns that God’s heart is filled with love toward us, even when His hand is heavy and smarts upon us. The bucket goes down into the well the deeper, that it may come up the fuller. Faith perceives God’s design in the chastening is

our good. It is through faith “that He would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is!” (Job 11:6). By the “secrets of wisdom” is meant the *hidden* ways of God’s providence. Divine providence has two faces: the one of rigor, the other of clemency; sense looks upon the former only, faith enjoys the latter.

Faith not only looks beneath the surface of things and sees the sweet orange beneath the bitter rind, but it looks beyond the present and anticipates the blessed sequel. Of the Psalmist it is recorded, “I said *in my haste*, I am cut off from before Thine eyes” (31:22). The fumes of passion dim our vision when we look only at what is present. Asaph declared, “My feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked” (Psa. 73:2, 3); but when he went into the sanctuary of God he said, “Then understood I *their end*” (v. 17), and that quieted him. Faith is occupied not with the scaffolding, but with the completed building; not with the medicine, but with the healthful effects it produces; not with the painful rod, but with the peaceable fruit of righteousness in which it issues.

Suffering, then, is a test of the heart; chastisement is a challenge to faith—our faith in His wisdom, His faithfulness, His love. As we have sought to show above, the great need of the Christian is to keep himself in the love of God, for the soul to have an unshaken assurance of His tender care for us: “casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7). But the knowledge of that “care” can only be experimentally maintained by the exercise of faith—especially is this the case in times of trouble. A preacher once asked a despondent friend, “Why is that cow looking over the wall?” And the answer was, “Because she cannot look through it.” The illustration may be crude, yet it gives point to an important truth. Discouraged reader, look over the things which so much distress you, and behold the Father’s smiling face; look above the frowning clouds of His providence, and see the sunshine of His never changing love.

“For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth” (Heb. 12:6). There is something very striking and unusual about this verse, for it is found, in slightly varied form, in no less than five different books of the Bible:—”Happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty” (Job 5:17); “Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of Thy law” (Psa. 94:12); “Whom the LORD loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth” (Prov. 3:12); “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten” (Rev. 3:19). Probably there is a twofold reason for this reiteration. First, it hints at the importance and blessedness of this truth. God repeats it so frequently lest we should forget, and thus lose the comfort and cheer of realising that Divine chastisement proceeds from *love*. This must be a precious word if God thought it well to say it five times over! Second, such repetition also implies our slowness to believe it; by nature our evil hearts are inclined in the opposite direction. Though our texts affirms so emphatically that the Christian’s chastisements proceed from God’s love, we are ever ready to attribute them to His harshness. It is really very humbling that the Holy Spirit should deem it necessary to repeat this statement so often.

“For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth” (Heb. 12:6). Four things are to be noted. First, the best of God’s children *need* chastisement—”every son.” There is no Christian but what has faults and follies which require correcting: “in many things we offend all” (James 3:2). Second, God *will correct* all whom He adopts into His family. However He may now let the reprobate alone in

their sins, He will not ignore the failings of His people—to be suffered to go on unrebuked in wickedness is a sure sign of alienation from God. Third, in this God acts as a *Father*: no wise and good parent will wink at the faults of his own children: his very relation and affection to them oblige him to take notice of the same. Fourth, God's disciplinary dealings with His sons proceed from and make manifest His *love* to them: it is this fact we would now particularly concentrate upon.

1. The Christian's chastisements *flow from* God's love. Not from His anger or hardness, nor from arbitrary dealings, but from God's heart do our afflictions proceed. It is love which regulates all the ways of God in dealing with His own. It was love which *elected* them. The heart is not warmed when our election is traced back merely to God's sovereign will, but our affections are stirred when we read "in *love* having predestinated us" (Eph. 1:4, 5). It was love which *redeemed* us. We do not reach the centre of the atonement when we see nothing more in the Cross than a vindication of the law and a satisfaction of justice: "God so *loved* the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). It is love which regenerates or *effectually calls* us: "with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). The new birth is not only a marvel of Divine wisdom and a miracle of Divine power, but it is also and superlatively a product of God's affection.

In like manner it is *love* which ordained our trials and orders our chastisements. O Christian, never doubt the love of God. A quaint old Quaker, who was a farmer, had a weather-vane on the roof of his barn, from which stood out in clear-cut letters "God is love." One day a preacher was being driven to the Quaker's home; his host called attention to the vane and its text. The preacher turned and said, "I don't like that at all: it misrepresents the Divine character—God's love is not variable like the weather." Said the Quaker, "Friend you have misinterpreted its significance; that text on the weather-vane is to remind me that, no matter which way the wind is blowing, no matter from which direction the storm may come, still, "God is love."

2. The Christian's chastisements *express* God's love. Oftentimes we do not think so. As God's children we think and act very much as we did when children naturally. When we were little and our parents insisted that we should perform a certain duty we failed to appreciate the love which had respect unto our future well-being. Or, when our parents denied us something on which we had set our hearts, we felt we were very hardly dealt with. Yet was it *love* which said, "No" to us. So it is spiritually. The love of God not only gives, but also *withholds*. No doubt this is the explanation for some of our unanswered prayers: God loves us too much to give what would not really be for our profit. The duties insisted upon, the rebukes given, the things withheld, are all *expressions of* His faithful love.

Chastisements manifest God's care of us. He does not regard us with unconcern and neglect, as men usually do their illegitimate children, but He has a true parent's solicitation for us: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him" (Psa. 103:13). "And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live" (Deut. 8:3). There are several important sermons wrapped up in that verse, but we have not the space here to even outline them. God brings into the wilderness that we may be drawn nearer Himself. He dries up cisterns that we may seek and enjoy the Fountain. He destroys our nest down here that our affections

may be set upon things above.

3. The Christian's chastisements *magnify* God's love. Our very trials make manifest the fullness and reveal the perfections of God's love. What a word is that in Lamentations 3:33: "He doth not afflict willingly"! If God consulted only His own pleasure, He would not afflict us at all: it is for our profit that He "scourges." Ever remember that the great High Priest Himself is "*touched* with the feeling of our infirmities"; yet, notwithstanding, He employs the rod! God is love, and nothing is so sensitive as love. Concerning the trials and tribulations of Israel of old, it is written, "In all their affliction *He* was afflicted" (Isa. 63:9); yet out of love He chastens. How this manifests and magnifies the unselfishness of God's love!

Here, then is the Christian supplied with an effectual shield to turn aside the fiery darts of the wicked one. As we said at the beginning, Satan ever seeks to take advantage of our trials: like the fiend that he is, he makes his fiercest assaults when we are most cast down. Thus it was that he attacked Job—"Curse God and die." And thus some of us have found it. Did he not, in the hour of suffering and sorrow, seek to remind you that when you had become increasingly diligent in seeking to please and glorify God, the darkest clouds of adversity followed; and say, How unjust God is; what a miserable reward for your devotion and zeal! Here is your recourse, fellow-Christian: say to the Devil, it is written, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth" (Heb. 12:6).

Again; if Satan cannot succeed in traducing the character of God and cause us to doubt His goodness and question His love, then he will assail our assurance. The Devil is most persevering: if a frontal attack fails, then he will make one from the rear. He will assault your assurance of sonship: he will whisper "*You* are no child of His: look at your condition, consider your circumstances, contrast those of other Christians. *You* cannot be an object of God's favour; you are deceiving yourself; your profession is an empty one. If you *were* God's child, He would treat you very differently. Such privations, such losses, such pains, show that you cannot be one of His." But say to him, it is written, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."

Let our final thought be upon the last word of our text: "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He *receiveth*." The one whom God scourges is not rejected, but "received"—received up into Glory, welcomed in His House above. First the cross, then the crown, is God's unchanging order. This was vividly illustrated in the history of the children of Israel: God "chose them in the furnace of affliction" (Isa. 48:10), and many and bitter were their trials ere they reached the promised land. So it is with us. First the wilderness, then Canaan; first the scourging, and then the "receiving." May we keep ourselves more and more in the love of God.—A.W.P.

The Life of David.

40. *His Bringing up the Ark.*

“And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obbedom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbedom into the city of David with gladness” (2 Sam. 6:12). There are five things to be observed here. First, the Lord’s blessing of a man is a very real and evident thing. Second, it is so patent that others take notice thereof. Third, they perceive why it is that the blessing of God is bestowed. Fourth, so impressed are they therewith, they mention it to others. Fifth, the effect which the evident blessing of the Lord of Obbedom had upon David. Let us briefly ponder each of these points, and pray that their distinct messages may find lodgment in our hearts.

First, the Lord’s blessing of a man is a very real and evident thing. “All these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God . . . Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out” (Deut. 28:2, 5, 6). In view of our recent articles on “Dispensationalism” we shall not take space now in replying to those who say “such promises are not for us”: suffice it to point out that *God’s governmental ways* are the same in all dispensations. “The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it” (Prov. 10:22): for the meaning of the word “rich” see verse 4—in the former the means is in view, in the latter the Source; in neither verse does spiritual “riches” exclude material ones. “No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Psa. 84:11).

Second, God’s blessing of a person is so obvious that others are obliged to take notice thereof. So much so was this the case with Isaac, that Abimelech and two of his chief men went to him and said, “We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee” (Gen. 26:28)—what a testimony was that! Of the one who purchased Joseph it is recorded, “And his master *saw* that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand” (Gen. 39:3)—do people now see this is the case *with us*? “And Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David” (1 Sam. 18:28). The wicked may not read God’s Word, but they do the lives of His people, and are quick to perceive when His blessing is upon them; and the recognition of *that* has far more weight than anything they say!

Third, nor are men ignorant of *the reason why* the Lord prospers those with whom He is pleased. This is evident from the case now before us: “And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obbedom, and all that pertaineth unto him, *because of* the ark of God” (2 Sam. 6:12). This is very striking: they traced the effect back to the cause: they recognized that God had honoured the one who had honoured Him. The same principle is illustrated again in Acts 4:13, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and *they took knowledge* of them, that they had been with Jesus.” The men who drew this deduction were not regenerate, but the most notorious enemies of Christ; nevertheless they were right in attributing the spiritual graces of the Apostles unto their fellowship with the Saviour.

Fourth, the recognition of God’s evident blessing upon those whose ways are pleasing in His sight is voiced by men unto their fellows. It was so in the incident now before us. When it was so apparent that Obbedom was being blessed in all his affairs, some

went and informed the king thereof. Ah, my readers, we little know what impression is being made upon our neighbours by God's governmental dealings with us, nor how they speak one to another when it is manifest that His smile is upon us. How we should plead this before God in prayer, that He would enable us so to walk that we may not miss His best, and this that *His* name may be glorified through those around us taking note of the fact that "godliness with contentment (Greek "a sufficiency") is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6).

Fifth, the effect which this tidings had upon David. As he had perceived God's frown in His stroke upon Uzzah, so now he discerned God's smile in Obededom's prosperity. It was clear to him that the Ark was not a burdensome object, for so far from being the loser, he who had provided a home for it had been noticeably blest of the Lord. This encouraged David to resume his original design of bringing the sacred coffer to Jerusalem: his fears were now stilled, his zeal was rekindled. "The experience which others have of the gains of godliness should encourage us to be religious. Is the Ark a blessing to others' homes? let us bid it welcome to ours" (Matthew Henry). Do we perceive that those who are most yielded to the Lord make the best progress spiritually? then let that be an incentive to fuller consecration on our part.

"He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake" (Psa. 23:3). In restoring the souls of His erring people, God does not act uniformly: according to His lovingkindness, unerring wisdom, and sovereign pleasure, He is pleased to use and bless a variety of means. Sometimes it is by a process of disappointment, withering the gourd under which we luxuriated, blowing upon that in which we had promised ourselves satisfaction. Sometimes it is by the application of a verse of Scripture, searching our conscience or melting our heart. Sometimes it is by a sore calamity, like the death of a loved one, which casts us back more closely upon the Lord for strength and comfort. In the case now before us it was the words of friends, who reported to David the blessing which the presence of the Ark had brought to the family of Obededom.

The effect of David's restoration of soul is seen very blessedly in 1 Chronicles 15:2, 3, 12, 13. "Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto Him for ever. And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place, which he had prepared for it. And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after the due order." There are several things in these verses which we do well to note.

First, David now gave the Lord His proper place in his plans and submitted to the regulations which He had given. He learned from painful experience that God's work must be done in God's prescribed way, if His approval and blessing was to rest upon the same. None but those whom God had specifically appointed must carry the sacred Ark: this was one of the duties assigned the Levites, who had been definitely set apart unto the Lord's service. The application of this to our own day is obvious. The Ark was a type of Christ: the carrying of the Ark from place to place prefigured the making known of Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. Only those are to preach the Gospel whom God has specially called, separated, and qualified for His holy service. For others to invade this sacred office is but to introduce confusion and incur God's displeasure.

Second, David now realized that suitable preparation must precede holy activities:

“Sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it” (1 Chron. 15:12): let the reader compare Exodus 19:10-15; 2 Chronicles 29:5. Those who carried the Ark must cleanse themselves from all ceremonial pollution and compose themselves for the solemn service of the Lord: only thus would they strike reverence upon the people. The same principle holds good in this Christian dispensation: “The LORD hath made bare his Holy arm in the eyes of all the nations . . . *be ye clean*, that bear the vessels of the LORD” (Isa. 52:10, 11). Those whom God has separated unto the sacred ministry of the Gospel must be “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12 and cf. 2 Tim. 2:21, 22)—God’s servants today are to “sanctify” themselves for the discharge of their honourable duties by repentance, confession, faith, prayer, and meditation, availing themselves constantly of that precious Fountain which has been opened for sin and uncleanness.

Third, David owned his previous failures: “The LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after the due order” (1 Chron. 15:13). In like manner, Daniel acknowledged, “O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against Thee” (9:7). “The life of faith is little more than a series of falls and restorations, errors and corrections displaying, on the one hand, the sad weakness of man, and on the other, the grace and power of God” (C.H.M.).

“So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the LORD” (1 Chron. 15:14, 15). All was now carried out “after the due order.” God requires obedience in small things as well as great. And due notice is taken and record made by Him of all our actions. Blessed is it to behold these Levites now being governed, in every detail, by the revealed will of the Lord. “*Then* we make a good use of the judgments of God on ourselves and others, when we are awakened by them to reform and amend whatever has been amiss” (M. Henry). O that each of us may have more and more occasion for saying “Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I *kept* Thy word” (Psa. 119:67).

“So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the house of Obededom *with joy*” (1 Chron. 15:25). That is no small part of the present reward which God bestows upon His obedient people. Satan would feign seek to persuade us that a strict compliance with all the statutes of Holy Writ would be irksome. One of his favourite dogmas is, Law-keeping brings one into bondage. That is one of his lies. The Psalmist was better instructed: said he, “And I will walk *at liberty*: for I seek Thy precepts” (119:45): the more we practice the precepts of Scripture, the more are we delivered from the dominion of sin. God fills the heart of the obedient with gladness; hence, the reason why there is so much gloom and unhappiness among Christians today is because their obedience is so half-hearted and spasmodic.

“And it came to pass, when God *helped* the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams” (1 Chron. 15:26). God is honoured when we acknowledge His assistance—for without Him we can do nothing—

even in those things which fall within the compass of our natural powers. But more especially should we own His aid in all our spiritual exercises: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing" (Acts 26:22). These Levites were in need of special help, for remembering the fate of Uzzah, they were likely to tremble when they took up the Ark; but God calmed their fears and strengthened their faith. God enabled them to discharge their duty decently and orderly, without any mishap.

"And it came to pass, when God *helped* the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams" (1 Chron. 15:26). This is very blessed. Everything was changed now: there was no stumbling, no thrusting forth of presumptuous hands to steady a shaking Ark, no judgment from God; instead, His evident smile was upon them. It is ever thus: when God's work is done in God's way, we may confidently count upon His help. Go against the Word of God, and He is against us, as we shall discover sooner or later; but go according to the Word and God will bless us. "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord *working with them*, and confirming the Word with signs following" (Mark 16:20).

"And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings" (2 Sam. 6:13). Probably David offered this sacrifice unto God with a twofold design: to make an atonement for his former errors, and as a thank-offering for present mercies. Great must have been his gratitude and joy when he perceived that all was now well. "*Then* we are likely to speed (prosper) in our enterprises when we begin with God, and give diligence to make our peace with Him. When we attend upon God in holy ordinances, our eye must be to the great Sacrifice, to which we owe it that we are taken into covenant and communion with God" (M. Henry).

"And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod" (2 Sam. 6:14). The ordinances of God are to be partaken in with joy as well as reverence. In seeking to preserve a becoming decorum and sobriety, we need to be on our guard against lapsing into a cold and stilted perfunctoriness. No doubt there are certain occasions when higher expressions of joy are more suited than at others. It was so here. After his previous disappointment David was now transported with delight. His exultation of mind was manifested in his leaping for gladness, which he did "with all his might." "We ought to serve the Lord with our whole body and soul, and with every endowment or capacity we possess; our religious affections cannot be too intense, if properly directed; nor our expressions of them too strong, provided 'all be done decently and in order,' according to the spirit of the dispensation under which we live" (Thos. Scott).

"And David was girded with a linen ephod." On this auspicious occasion, David laid aside his royal robes, and, as taking the lead in the worship of God he wore a linen ephod. This was the ordinary garb of the priests when officiating, yet it was also used in religious exercises by those who were not priests, as the case of Samuel shows: 1 Samuel 2:18. The Spirit of God has here duly noted the fact that, though king over all Israel, David deemed it no disparagement to appear in the clothing of a minister of the Ark; yet let it not be supposed that he was making any attempt to encroach upon the priestly office. The practical lesson for us in this detail is, that instead of decking ourselves out in worldly finery, we should be garbed plainly when we attend the public worship of God.

In conclusion it should be pointed out that the best expositors, ancient and modern, have regarded Psalm 24 as a sacred song composed by David on the glad occasion of the Ark being brought to Jerusalem. The joy and triumph, the awe and the memories of vic-

tory which clustered around the dread symbol of the presence of the Lord are wonderfully expressed in that choral piece. It is divided into two parts. The first replies to the question, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?" (v. 3)—an evident echo of the terror-stricken exclamation of the Bethshemites (1 Sam. 6:20). The answer is given in a description of the men who dwell with God. The second half deals with the correlative inquiry "Who is the King of glory?" And the answer is, The God who comes to dwell with men.

Inexpressibly blessed is verse 7. As the precession reached the walls of Jerusalem, and ere the Ark—type of Christ—entered, the cry was made "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." It was as though their towering portals were too low. How clearly David recognized his own derived power, and the real Monarch of whom he was but the shadowy representative! The newly-conquered city was summoned to admit its true Conqueror, whose throne was the Ark, which was expressly named "the glory" (1 Sam. 4:21), and in whose train the earthly king followed as a subject and a worshipper.—A.W.P.

The Divine Covenants.

2. *The Adamic (Completed).*

We must now bring to a close our rather lengthy remarks upon the first covenant which the Lord made with man, the issues of which were so momentous. This primordial compact or “Covenant of Works,” was that agreement into which the Lord God entered with Adam as the federal head and representative of the entire human family. It was made with him in a state of innocency, holiness and righteousness. The terms of that covenant were perfect and continuous obedience on man’s part, and the promise of confirming him in immutable holiness and happiness on God’s part. A test was given whereby his obedience or disobedience should be evidenced. That test consisted of a single positive ordinance: abstinence from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, so named because so long as Adam remained dutiful and faithful, he enjoyed that inestimable “good” which issued from communion with his Maker, and because as soon as he disobeyed he tasted the bitter “evil” which followed the loss of communion with Him.

As we have seen in the previous papers, all the essential elements of a formal covenant between God and Adam are clearly to be seen in the Genesis record. A requirement was made—obedience; a penal sanction was attached—death as the penalty of disobedience; a reward was promised upon his obedience—confirmation in life; Adam consented to its terms; the whole was Divinely sealed by the tree of life—so called because it was the outward sign of that life promised in the covenant, from which Adam was excluded because of his apostasy, and to which the redeemed are restored by the last Adam (Rev. 2:7). Thus Scripture presents all the prime features of a covenant as co-existing in that constitution under which our first parent was originally placed.

Adam wickedly presumed to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree, and incurred the awful guilt of violating the covenant. In his sin there was a complication of many crimes: in Romans 5 it is called the “offence, disobedience, transgression.” Adam was put to the test of whether the will of God was sacred in his eyes, and he fell by preferring his own will and way. He failed to love God with all his heart; he had contempt of His high authority; he disbelieved His holy veracity; he deliberately and presumptuously defied Him. Hence, at a later date, in the history of Israel, God said, “But they *like Adam have transgressed the covenant*: they dealt treacherously against Me” (Hosea 6:7 margin). Even Mr. Darby (notes on Hosea, in “Synopsis” vol. 2, p. 472) acknowledged, “It should be rendered ‘But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant.’”

It is to this Divine declaration in Hosea 6:7 the Apostle makes reference, when of Adam he declares that he was “the figure of Him that was to come.” Let it be duly noted that Adam is not there viewed in his creation-state simply, but rather as he is related to an offspring whose case was included in his own. As the vicar of his race Adam disobeyed the Eden-statute in their room and stead, precisely as Christ, the “last Adam” (1 Cor. 15:45), obeyed the moral law as the Representative of His people in their room and stead. “By *one man* sin entered into the world” (Rom 5:12). This is a remarkable statement, calling for the closest attention. *Eve* sinned too; she sinned *before* Adam did; then why are we not told that “by *one woman* sin entered into the world”?—the more so seeing that she is, equally with Adam, a root of propagation.

Only one answer is possible to the above question: because Adam was the one *public person* or federal head that represented us, and not she. Adam was the legal representa-

tive of Eve as well as of his posterity, for she was taken out of him. Remarkably is this confirmed by the historical record of Genesis 3: upon *Eve's* eating of the forbidden fruit no change was evidenced, but as soon as Adam partook “the eyes of them *both* were opened, and they knew that they were naked” (Gen. 3:7)!!—which means that they were instantly conscious of *the loss of innocency*, and were ashamed of their woeful condition. The eyes of a convicted conscience were opened, and they perceived their sin and its awful consequences: the sense of their bodily nakedness only adumbrating their spiritual loss.

Not only was it by Adam (rather than by Eve) that sin entered into the world, “the judgment was by *one* (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification” (Rom. 5:16). The fact that Eve is entirely omitted from Romans 5:12-19 shows that it is the *guilt* of our federal head being imputed to us which is there in view, and not the pravity of nature which is imparted, for corruption has been directly derived through her as much as from Adam. The fact that it was by Adam’s one offence that condemnation has come upon all his posterity shows that his subsequent sins are not imputed to us; for by his original transgression he lost the high honour and privilege conferred upon him: in the covenant being broken, he ceased to be a public person, the federal head of the race.

Man’s defection from his primordial state was purely voluntary, and from the unconstrained choice of his own mutable and self-determining will. Adam was “without excuse.” By eating of the forbidden fruit, he broke, first, the law of his very being, violating his own *nature*, which bound him unto loving allegiance to his Maker: self now took the place of God. Second, he flouted the Law of God, which requires perfect and unremitting obedience to the moral Governor of the world: self had now usurped the throne of God in his heart. Third, in trampling upon the positive ordinance under which he was placed, he broke the covenant, preferring to take his stand alongside of his fallen wife.

“Every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Psa. 39:5). Thus was Adam. In full-grown manhood, with every faculty perfect, amid ideal surroundings, he rejected the good and chose the evil. He was not deceived: the Scriptures declare he was not—1 Timothy 2:14. He knew well what he was doing. “Deliberately he wrecked himself and us. Deliberately he jumped the precipice. Deliberately he murdered unnumbered generations. Like many another who has loved ‘not wisely but too well,’ he would not lose his Eve. He chose her rather than God. He determined he would have her if he went to Hell with her” (G.S. Bishop). Direful were the consequences: the death-sentence fell upon Adam the day in which he sinned, though for the sake of his posterity, the full execution of it was delayed.

As Romans 5:12 declared, “Wherefore, as by one man (the first man, the father of our race) sin (guilt, criminality, condemnation) entered (as a solemn accuser in the witness-stand) into the world (not into “the universe,” for that had previously been defiled by the rebellion of Satan and his angels; but the world of fallen humanity), and death (as a judicial infliction) by sin (the original offence); and so death (as the Divine punishment) passed (as the penal sentence from the Judge of all the earth) upon all men (none, not even infants, being exempted), in whom (the correct rendering—see margin) all have sinned”—that is, sinned in the “one man,” the federal head of the race, the legal representative of the “all men”; note, not all now “sin,” nor all are inherently “sinful” (though sadly true), but “in whom all have sinned” in Eden.

Direful and dreadful as was the outcome of the Adamic covenant, yet we may, with awe, perceive and admire the Divine wisdom in the same. Had God permitted and enabled Adam to stand, all his posterity had been eternally happy. Adam had then been in a very real sense their Saviour, and while enjoying everlasting bliss, all his posterity would have exclaimed, "For all this we are indebted to our first parent." Ah, what anointed eye can fail to discern that *that* would have been far too great a glory for any finite creature to have borne. Only the last Adam was entitled to and capable of sustaining such an honour. Thus, the first man, who was of the earth, earthy, *must* fall, so as to make way for the second Man, who is "the Lord from Heaven."

It must also be pointed out that, in taking this way of staining human pride (involving the dreadful fall of the king of our race), displaying His own infinite wisdom, and securing the glory of His beloved Son (so that in all things He has "the pre-eminence") God made not the slightest infraction of His justice. In decreeing and permitting Adam's fall, with the consequent imputation of the guilt of his offence unto all his posterity, God has wronged no man. This needs to be emphatically insisted upon and plainly pointed out, lest some in their blatant haughtiness should be guilty of charging the Most High with unfairness. God is inflexibly righteous, and *all* His ways are right and just. Nor is the one which we are now considering any exception, and this will be seen, once it is rightly understood.

In saying that the guilt of Adam's offence is imputed to all his posterity, we do not mean the human race is now suffering for something in which *they* had no part, that innocent creatures are being condemned for the act of another which cannot rightly be laid to their account. Let it be clearly understood that God punishes none for Adam's personal sin, but only for *his own* sin in Adam. The whole human race had a federal standing in Adam. Not only was each of us seminally in his loins in the day God created him, but each of us was legally represented by him when God instituted the Covenant of Works. Adam acted and transacted in that covenant not merely as a private being, but as a *public* person; not merely as a single individual, but as the surety and sponsor of his race. Nor is it lawful for us to call into question the meetness of that arrangement: all God's works are perfect, all His ways are ordered by infinite wisdom and righteousness.

Of necessity the creature is subject to the Creator, and his loyalty and fealty must be put to the proof. In the nature of the case only two alternatives were possible: the human family must either be placed on probation in the person of a responsible and suitable head and representative, or each individual member must enter upon his probation for himself. Once again we quote the words of Mr. Bishop, "The race must have either stood in a full grown man, with a full-orbed intellect, or stood as babies, each entering his probation in the twilight of self-consciousness, each deciding his destiny before his eyes were half-opened to what it all meant. How much better would that have been? How much more just? But could it not have been some other way? There was no other way. It was either the baby or it was the perfect, well-equipped, all-calculating man—the man who saw and comprehended everything. That man was Adam."

The simplest and most satisfactory way of reconciling with human reason the federal constitution which was given to Adam, is to recognize it was of *Divine* appointment. God cannot do that which is wrong. It must therefore have been right. The principle of representation is inseparable from the very constitution of human society. The father is the legal representative of his children during their minority, so that what he does binds his

family. The political heads of a nation represent the people, so that their declarations of war or treaties of peace bind the whole commonwealth. This principle is so fundamental that it cannot be set aside: human affairs could not move nor society exist without it. Founded in man's nature by the wisdom of God, we are compelled to recognize it, and being of *His* appointment we dare not call into question its rightness. If it was unjust for God to impute to us Adam's guilt, it must equally have been so to impart to us his depravity; but seeing God *has* righteously done the latter, we must vindicate Him for doing the former.

The very fact that *we* go on breaking the Covenant of Works and disobeying the Law of God, show our oneness with Adam under that covenant. Let that fact be duly weighed by those who are inclined to be captious. Our complicity with Adam in *his* rebellion is evidenced every time that *we* sin against God. Instead of challenging the justice which has charged to our account the guilt of the first human transgression, let us seek grace to repudiate Adam's example, standing out in opposition to his insubordination by gladly taking upon us the easy yoke of God's commandments. Finally, let it again be pointed out that if we were ruined *by another*, Christians are redeemed *by Another*. By the principle of representation we were lost, and by the same principle of representation—Christ transacting for us as our Surety and Sponsor—we are saved.

In what sense is the Covenant of Works abrogated? and in what sense is it still in force? We cannot do better than subjoin the answers of one of the ablest theologians of the last century. "This Covenant having been broken by Adam, not one of his natural descendants is ever able to fulfill its conditions, and Christ having fulfilled all of its conditions in behalf of all His own people, salvation is offered now on the condition of faith. In *this* sense the Covenant of Works having been fulfilled by the second Adam is henceforth abrogated under the Gospel.

"Nevertheless, since it is founded upon the principles of immutable justice, it still binds all men who have not fled to the refuge offered in the righteousness of Christ. It is still true that 'he that doeth these things shall live by them,' and 'the soul that sinneth it shall die.' This law in *this* sense remains, and in consequence of the unrighteousness of men condemns them, and in consequence of their absolute inability to fulfill it, it acts as a school-master to bring them to Christ. For He having fulfilled alike its condition wherein Adam failed, and its penalty which Adam incurred, He has become the end of this covenant for righteousness to every one that believeth, who in Him is regarded and treated as having fulfilled the covenant, and merited its promised reward" (A.A. Hodge).

It only remains for us now to point out wherein the Adamic Covenant adumbrated [foreshadowed] the Everlasting Covenant. While it be true that the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace are diametrically opposed in their character—the one being based upon the principle of Do and live, the other on Live and do—yet there are some striking points of agreement between them. That engagement into which the Father entered into with the Mediator before the foundation of the world was foreshadowed in Eden in the following respects. First, Adam, the one with whom the covenant was made, entered this world in a manner none other ever did: without being begotten by a human father, he was miraculously produced by God: so with Christ. Second, none but Adam of the human family entered this world with a pure constitution and holy nature; so was it with Christ.

Third, his wife was taken out of him, so that he could say, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:23): of Christ’s Wife it is declared, “We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones” (Eph. 5:30). Fourth, Adam voluntarily took his place alongside of his fallen wife: he was not deceived, but had such a love for Eve that he could not see her perish alone: compare Ephesians 5:25. Fifth, in consequence of this, Adam fell beneath the curse of God: compare Galatians 3:13. Sixth, the father of the human family was their federal head; so is Christ the federal Head of His people, the “last Adam.” Seventh, what Adam did is imputed to the account of all those whom he represented: the same is true of Christ, “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19).—A.W.P.

Union and Communion.

1. *Divine Union (Completed).*

Right views of the Divine Being and Character lie at the foundation of all genuine and vital godliness. It should, then, be our supreme quest to seek after the knowledge of God. Without the true knowledge of Him, in His nature, Persons, attributes, we can neither worship Him acceptably nor serve Him aright. The *unity* of the Godhead is an essential part of His character. The God whom the Scriptures command us to adore and serve, love and obey, is the one only living and true God. There cannot be but *one* First Cause of all things, absolutely, independent, necessarily existent, and infinite in all perfections. But this one God subsists in a *threefold*, though to us incomprehensible, manner. Though He is one simple, undivided essence, yet in the mode of His existence He subsists in three Persons. Incomprehensible as this is, yet it is no more so than as *uncaused* and eternal existence: God is infinitely above all creatures, and exists in a manner peculiar to Himself.

This truth of three Persons in the Godhead is basic, being essential to the very scheme of Salvation itself, and it has been accounted the catholic doctrine of the whole Christian Church in all ages. In Scripture, the work of our salvation is represented as engaging the *joint-agency* of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God *the Father* it was who, in infinite wisdom planned the amazing scheme, providing Himself a Lamb to purge away sin. God *the Son*, in His own Person, executed the plan, by submitting to be “delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification.” God *the Spirit* secures an effectual reception of this scheme of salvation, sanctifying the souls of the elect unto eternal happiness, in which it finally issues.

Each of these sacred Persons, who thus co-operate in our salvation, must of necessity be really and truly *God*, for none less could possibly execute any part of that grand scheme. Who, but the supreme Lord Himself, could admit an innocent Substitute to become Surety for criminals and bear their curse! What being *beneath* the dignity of Deity could possibly offer a satisfaction of infinite sufficiency to the Divine government, possessing such merits that, by obeying and suffering the penalty of the law, full atonement should be made for all innumerable offences committed against the Majesty of Heaven by the entire election of grace! And unto whom beside God Himself, the eternal and blessed Holy Spirit, doth such power belong as to change the darkness of human depravity into ineffable light, subdue rebellious wills, and bring them into loving obedience unto the Lord!

All that pertains to salvation is the gift of the Father, through the incarnate Son, by the Holy Spirit: and it is inexpressibly blessed to find in so many Scriptures how *all* the Persons in the Godhead are individually as well as unitedly concerned in the grand matter of the Church’s redemption. This ought ever to be viewed as the standard of orthodoxy. Whatever is presented from pulpit or press which does not give *equal* place and ascribe equal honour to *each* of the Eternal Three is the doctrine of demons. There is not a vestige of real “Christianity” where this foundation truth of the Trinity is not known, acknowledged, and magnified. Nor is there a vestige of true piety in any heart where the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit do not dwell. Furthermore, it is not possible to obtain a clear and full view of any doctrine of the Word, unless the telescope of this transcendent truth be applied to the eye of faith and be viewed through it.

Now if the Holy Scriptures be so plain and full in declaring in the interposition and

operations of each Person in the blessed Trinity in the work of our salvation, it must of necessity be the bounden duty as well as the precious privilege of each Christian to pay a becoming attention to and endeavour by devout meditation and prayerful searching of the Word, to get impressed on his mind and heart what God has revealed on the subject. It most certainly behooves each one of us to spare no pains in endeavouring to attain unto a full spiritual knowledge of how the Divine Three stand related to us, how They are severally interested in us, and what we are to expect from Them. This will lead us to render unto Each Divine Person that honour and praise, that loving obedience, which is His distinctive due. For “this is life eternal, that they might *know Thee* the only true God” (John 17:3).

“The knowledge of God here spoken of, must include in it such a knowledge of the Holy Trinity as is revealed in the blessed gospel. The divine persons in their essential and distinctive relation to each other, and to us, must be so far known as to be believed, and acknowledged by us. The truth of their existence (not the knowledge of their subsisting in the infinite essence), is most essential to the being and to the well-being of our faith. As also how they are related unto us, and have acted for us in the everlasting covenant, in and by which they are and have revealed themselves to be the Lord our God. To know the Father, to be our Father in Christ Jesus, that He hath loved with an everlasting love, is life eternal. To know the Son, as one with the Father, of the same essence with the Father, and that He was set up to be God-man, from everlasting, this is life eternal. To know the Holy Spirit, to be personally distinct from the Father and the Son, yet of the same essence, glory, perfections and blessedness with the Father and the Son, is life eternal” (S.E. Pierce).

A distinction in the Divine nature inconceivable by us, but plainly revealed in Holy Writ, must be acknowledged by us on the all-sufficient testimony of Him who alone can instruct us in what we are concerned to know of His ineffable essence and being. “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three *are one*” (1 John 5:7). To each of these three Persons the perfections of Deity are attributed and ascribed in hundreds of passages of Scripture. Each of Them, therefore, is *God*, and yet it is equally clear that there is but *one* Jehovah. Nor is there the slightest ground for us to demur in the face of this insuperable and insoluble mystery. “Let us first if we can, account for the nature, essence, and properties of the things with which, as to their effects, we are familiarly acquainted. Let us *explain* the growth of a blade of grass, or the virtues of the lodestone. Till we are able to do *this*, it becomes us to lay our hands upon our mouths, and our mouths in the dust” (John Newton).

A plurality of Persons does *not* mean that the Godhead is divided, so that the Father is *one part of* deity, the Son another part, and the Spirit still a third part. “The Divine *nature* IS the Godhead, simply and absolutely considered; a *person* is that which subsisteth IN the Godhead, as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (W. Perkins, 1595). It is the Divine Persons in the union of the Divine Essence which are to be distinguished, and not the Essence itself. Jehovah is to be worshipped as a Unity in Trinity, and a Trinity in Unity: one God is to be acknowledged in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. When Scripture is compared with Scripture it is plain to be seen that the Divine Unity is *not* a unity of Persons, but of nature and essence. Though there are three in the Godhead, who are dignified with the incommunicable name of Jehovah, possessing *the same* attributes and perfections and entitled to the same adoration, yet Holy Writ does not exhibit a plu-

rality of Deities.

That each of the Eternal Three partakes of the one Divine Essence is proved by Their names. Each is called “God”: the Father in Hebrews 1:1, the Son in Hebrews 1:8, the Spirit in Acts 5:4—see verse 3. Each of them is designated “Jehovah”: the Father is Psalm 110:1, the Son in Psalm 23:1, the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 11:2. Each of them is denominated “The Living God”: the Father in Matthew 16:16, the Son in Hebrews 3:12 and 1 Timothy 4:10, the Spirit in 2 Corinthians 6:16—cf. 1 Corinthians 3:16. Each of them is addressed as “The Almighty”: the Father in 2 Corinthians 6:18, the Son in Revelation 16:7, the Spirit in Job 32:8. Each of them is set forth as a “Fountain”: the Father in Jeremiah 2:13, the Son in Zechariah 13:1, the Spirit in John 7:38. In Ephesians 1:17 the first Person is termed “the Father of Glory”; in James 2:1 the second Person is termed “the Lord of Glory,” while in 1 Peter 4:14 the third Person is termed “the Spirit of Glory.”

That these three names—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—are *not* so many diverse titles for one and the same august Person, but instead, belong to three distinct but equally Divine Persons, is clear from the fact that in Scripture they are frequently represented as *speaking to one another*. Thus, in the 2nd Psalm the Messiah declares, “The LORD hath said *unto* (not “of”) Me, Thou art my Son . . . *Ask of Me*, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance” (vv. 7, 8). In the 40th Psalm the Son is heard speaking *to* the Father, saying “Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within My heart” (vv. 7, 8). In the 45th Psalm the Father says to His Son, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre” (v. 6). And again in the 110th Psalm, “The LORD *said unto* my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool” (v. 1). What could possibly set forth more clearly the distinction of Persons in the Godhead!

In the previous section of this article we called attention to a number of passages in the Old Testament where the Eternal Three are all mentioned together: the same blessed phenomenon is presented again and again in the New Testament. “When the (1) Comforter is come, whom (2) I will send unto you from (3) the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of Me” (John 15:26). “I beseech you, brethren, for (1) the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for (2) the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers (3) to God” (Rom. 15:30). “For through Him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (Eph. 2:18). “To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God (the Spirit), and of the Father, and of Christ” (Col. 2:2). “The Lord (the Spirit) direct your hearts into the love of God (the Father), and into the patient waiting for Christ” (2 Thess. 3:5). “Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” (Heb. 9:14). “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:2).

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). In the name of the Triune God believers are to be baptized. What a conclusive confirmation of the blessed doctrine of the Holy Trinity is this! Here are three Divine Persons, but with *one* “Name”—note carefully it is not “names!” The absolute Deity of the Son and of the Spirit are here unmistakably intimated by their conjunction with the Father, since baptism is administered *equally* in the name of all Three as a religious ordinance, yea, as a part of Divine worship, which could

never be were either of the Three merely a creature. Not only is there a profession of faith in the three Divine Persons made by those who are scripturally baptized, but there is a solemn dedication unto Their service and worship, being laid under obligation of obedience unto Each.

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God (the Father), and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14). This passage contains another clear proof of a trinity of Persons in the Godhead, for here distinct things are ascribed and of Them asked, as *equal Objects* of prayer and worship. That comprehensive benediction includes all the prime blessings and benefits of redemption: the “grace” of our adorable Saviour, the “love” of our heavenly Father, and the “communion” of our Divine Comforter. Unto what wretched shifts are the enemies of the Truth put, who would reduce the meaning of this verse unto “the grace of a *creature* and the love of the *Creator* be joined with the communion of *an energy* of Deity, be with you all!” Unspeakably solemn is 1 John 2:23, “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father”: a denial of the Trinity is a repudiation of the Deity of the Son and the Spirit, and he who is guilty of that most awful sin knows not, hath not “the Father!” In denying *one* they equally deny *all*.

“And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:16, 17). Let it be carefully observed here were presented all three Persons of the Godhead, clearly distinguished from each other and manifested severally, and that, in such a way and manner as is needed to define the Persons of Each. Here was the Person of the Father, manifested by a voice from Heaven. Here was the Person of the Son, manifested in our nature, coming up from the water. Here was the Person of the Holy Spirit manifested in the form of a dove, lighting upon the Son. What could more clearly distinguish the Eternal Three—the Father speaking, the Son spoken of, and the Spirit manifested apart from Both! Forever be His name praised that the Triune God there so gloriously revealed Himself.

Not only are the Eternal Three in one God plainly revealed in Scripture in their distinctive personalities, but Their *absolute equality* One with the Other is also clearly made known. It would extend this article unto too great a length were we to present a small part of the proof that each One is possessed of the same Divine perfections, and quote some of the texts which affirm that Father, Son and Spirit are alike eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. Instead, we will here simply point out how Their equality is evidenced by the *order* in which They are mentioned in various Scriptures. In Matthew 28:19 it is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In 2 Corinthians 13:14 it is the Son, the Father, and the Spirit. In Ephesians 4:4 it is the Spirit, the Son, and the Father. In Colossians 2:2 it is the Spirit, the Father, and the Son. In Revelation 1:4, 5 it is the Father, the Spirit, and the Son. What could more definitely intimate Their equality than this *variation* of order!

Infidels have sought to turn into ridicule the fact of Christ praying to the Father, arguing that if both were Divine and there be only one God, then God was praying to Himself. In this they betray their ignorance, failing to discern the distinctions in the Godhead: though the Divine Essence be one, there is a distinction of Persons in the undivided nature. “The language of *I* and *Thou*, and *Me* and *Thee*, so often used by Christ in John 17, are so many proofs of the Divine personalities of Himself and of the Father. The word

personalities is expressive of the mode of existing in the Divine nature. The word person, besides that, implies the nature and substance in whom He subsists. A person is an individual that subsists and lives of itself, endowed with will and understanding, who is neither sustained by, nor is part of another. Such is the Father, therefore a Person; such is the Son, therefore a Person; such is the Holy Spirit, therefore a Person. The great and incommunicable name of Jehovah is always in the singular number, because it is expressive of His essence, which is but one; but the first name we meet with in the first verse of Scripture is plural” (S.E. Pierce).

Scripture does not present the doctrine of the sacred Trinity in any way of contradiction, and affirms that God is one and three, three and one, in the *same* manner: instead, it reveals that God is one in *nature*, but three in His *Persons*. When Christ said “I and (My) Father are one” (John 10:30), He signified one in nature, not one in Person. The word “God” is sometimes expressive of the Divine Essence, and sometimes of one of the Persons in that Essence. The three Persons are one in substance, one in the depths of a common consciousness, one in purpose, and with absolute equality in power and glory. “They agree with one another in nature, being, life, time, dignity, glory, or anything else pertaining to the Divine Essence: for in all these They are one and the same, and consequently co-essential, co-equal, co-eternal” (J. Usher, 1640).

The Divine Persons are not only one, but they are *in* one Another: “As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee” (John 17:21)—there is an intimate inhabitation without any confusion of the three Subsistences. They enjoy perfect, absolute, and Divine union and communion with Each Other. In the Scriptures we hear Them speaking *to* Each Other, and *of* Each Other in such a way as to clearly show a distinction of Persons, while constituting one Jehovah in the indivisible Essence of the Godhead. The ineffable union between the Eternal Three is such that Each One is *in* and *with* the Others; Each One loves, possesses, glories, in the Other, and works the same thing. “The Father loveth the Son” (John 3:35); “the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19); “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?” (John 14:10).

“The union of the Trinity in Godhead is an essential one. There can be no greater unity. Nothing can be more one than the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one. Yet it is a unity which consists with order and distinction: the Unity of the Trinity does not take away the distinction of the Persons, nor confuse Their order. They are one, yet three. They keep Their distinct Personalities, and Their distinct Personal operations, and Their different manner and order of acting. It is an eternal and inseparable union, for in the Divine nature or Essence there can be no change. It is from the unity of the Persons in the same Essence ariseth their essential Inbeing in Each Other. All the Persons having the same Essence and being in the one Essence, it follows that in respect of the Essence, one Person is as Another.

“The great and incomprehensible God is essentially and infinitely holy, happy, blessed, and glorious. His nature is a fountain of infinite perfection. He is life itself, eternity itself, love itself, and blessedness itself. His happiness arises from the knowledge which He hath of His own essential nature, Persons and perfections. Nothing can be added unto Him, for ‘of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things’ (Rom. 11:36). From the in-being, society, and mutual intercourse held between the Eternal Three in the one Jehovah, flows that life of joy and bliss which belongs to God alone. The essential

union between the Persons in the Eternal Godhead is incommunicable, and the communion which They had from everlasting with Each Other is incomprehensible. Yet we may venture to say, Their communion consisteth in the eternal life of the three Persons among Themselves, in the common interests and propriety which They have in Each Other, in reciprocal affections, communion and enjoyment; in an equal knowledge of Each Other; in an alternate communication of Each Other's mind in mutual love and delight, and in Their possession of one common glory and blessedness.

“There is an incomprehensible love borne by the Three in Jehovah to Each Other: it is a part of Their essential perfection and blessedness. Whilst the Scripture is not altogether silent on this most sublime truth, yet it speaks but sparingly of it, because it exceeds all created conceptions; it can no more be comprehended than the life and self-sufficiency of Jehovah can. Yet, as in the order in which the Essential Three exist and co-exist in the incomprehensible Jehovah, They have been pleased to make known and manifest Their Personalities in all Their eternal, internal and external acts of grace in election, regeneration, sanctification, preservation and eternal glorification. So Their love to Each Other is intimated in those distinct displays of grace which are attributed to Each of Them in the sacred Word. It is expressly said, ‘The Father loveth the Son’ (John 3:35), ‘I love the Father’ (John 14:31). And from the co-equality of the Father, Son and Spirit, in the Essence or Godhead, and from the unity of the Holy Ones in the whole revelation of grace, it is evident that the Spirit loves the Father and the Son” (S.E. Pierce, 1810).

Thus we have sought to begin this series of articles with the highest and most glorious of all: the union of the Eternal Three. It is the union of distinct Persons in the unity of a single nature. It is an union which is absolute, essential, eternal, incomprehensible, ineffable. It is not only futile, but grossly impious, to attempt any *illustration* of it, for there exists *no* analogy in all the universe. GOD is unique! But though profoundly mysterious, every truly regenerated soul has *proof of this truth* in his own inward experience. He knows that he has access through Christ, by the Spirit unto the Father. He knows that the Man who has saved him from Hell is indwelt by “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” He knows that the invincible power which subdued his enmity and caused him to throw down the weapons of his rebellion, was exercised by God the Spirit. And he knows that he has received the spirit of adoption whereby he cries “Abba, Father.”—A.W.P.

The Doctrine of Sanctification.

3. *Its Necessity (Completed).*

In the first part of our treatment of the necessity of sanctification it was shown that the making of a sinner holy is indispensable unto his salvation, yea, that sanctification is an integral part of salvation itself. One of the most serious defects in modern ministry is the ignoring of this basic fact. Of only too many present-day “converts” does it have to be said, “Ephraim is a cake not turned” (Hosea 7:8)—browned underneath, unbaked on the top. Christ is set forth as a fire-escape from Hell, but not as the great Physician to deal with the malady of indwelling sin, and fit for Heaven. Much is said upon how to obtain forgiveness of sins, but little is preached of how to be cleansed from its pollutions. The necessity for His atoning blood is set forth, but not the indispensability of experimental holiness. Consequently, thousands who mentally assent to the sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice know nothing about heart purity.

Again; there is a woeful disproportion between the place which is given to faith and the emphasis which the Scriptures give to that obedience which flows from sanctification. It is not only true that “without faith it is impossible to please God” (Heb. 1:6), but it is equally true that without holiness “no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). Not only are we told “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature” (Gal. 6:15), but it is also written, “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, *but the keeping of the commandments of God*” (1 Cor. 7:19). It is not for nothing that God has told us, “*Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*” (1 Tim. 4:8). Not only is there in all the promises a particular respect unto personal, vital, and practical “godliness,” but it is that very godliness which, pre-eminently, gives the saint an especial interest in those promises.

Alas, how many there are today who imagine that if they have “faith,” it is sure to be well with them at the end, *even though they are not holy*. Under the pretence of honouring faith, Satan, as an angel of light, has deceived, and is still deceiving multitudes of souls. But when their “faith” be examined and tested, what is it worth? Nothing at all so far as insuring an entrance into Heaven is concerned: it is a powerless, lifeless, and fruitless thing; it is nothing better than that faith which the demons have (James 2:19). The faith of God’s elect is unto “the acknowledging of the truth *which is after godliness*” (Titus 1:1). Saving faith is a “most holy faith” (Jude 20): it is a faith which purifieth the heart (Acts 15:9), it is a faith which worketh by love (Gal. 5:6), it is a faith which overcometh the world, (1 John 5:4), it is a faith which bringeth forth all manner of good works (Heb. 11). Let us now enter into detail, and show more specifically *wherein* lies the necessity for personal holiness.

1. *Our personal holiness is required by the very nature of God.* Holiness is the excellence and honour of the Divine character. God is called “rich in mercy” (Eph. 2:4), but “glorious in holiness” (Exo. 15:11): His mercy is His treasure, but holiness is His glory. He swears by this perfection: “Once have I sworn by My holiness” (Psa. 89:35). Over thirty times is He called “The Holy One of Israel.” This is the superlative perfection for which the angels in Heaven and the spirits of just men made perfect do so much admire God, crying “Holy, holy, holy” (Isa. 6:3, Rev. 4:8). As gold, because it is the most excellent of the metals, is laid over inferior ones, so this Divine excellency is laid upon all connected with Him: His sabbath is “holy” (Exo. 16:23), His sanctuary is “holy” (Exo.

15:13), His name is “holy” (Psa. 99:3), all His works are “holy” (Psa. 145:17). Holiness is the perfection of all His glorious attributes: His power is holy power, His mercy is holy mercy, His wisdom is holy wisdom.

Now the ineffable purity of the Divine nature is every where in the Scriptures made the fundamental reason for the necessity of holiness in us. God makes the holiness of His own nature the ground of His demand for holiness in His people: “For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; *for* I am holy” (Lev. 11:44). The same fundamental principle is transferred to the Gospel, “But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15, 16). Thus God plainly lets us know that His nature is such as unless we be sanctified, there can be no intercourse between Him and us. “For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, *to be your God*: ye shall *therefore* be holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11:45). Without personal holiness the relationship cannot be maintained that *He* should be our God and we should be *His* people.

God is “of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Hab. 1:13). Such is the infinite purity of His nature, that God cannot take any pleasure in lawless rebels, filthy sinners, the workers of iniquity. Joshua told the people plainly that if they continued in their sins, they could not serve the Lord, “for He is an holy God” (24:19). All the service of unholy people toward such a God is utterly lost and thrown away, because it is entirely inconsistent with His nature to accept of it. The Apostle Paul reasons in the same manner when he says, “Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: *for* our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28, 29). He lays his argument for the necessity of grace and holiness in the worship of God from the consideration of *the holiness of His nature*, which, as a consuming fire will devour that which is unsuited unto and inconsistent with it.

He who resolveth not to be holy, must seek another god to worship and serve, for with the God of Scripture he will never find acceptance. The heathen of old realized this, and liking not to retain the knowledge of the true God in their hearts and minds, (Rom. 1:28), and resolving to give up themselves unto all filthiness with greediness, they stifled their notions of the Divine Being and invented such “gods” to themselves as were unclean and wicked, that they might freely conform unto and serve *them* with satisfaction. God Himself declares that men of corrupt lives have some secret hopes that He is not holy: “Thou thoughtest that I was *altogether such an one as thyself*: but I will reprove thee” (Psa. 50:21). Others, today, while professing to believe in God’s holiness, have such false ideas of His grace and mercy that they suppose He will accept them though they are unholy.

“Be ye holy, for I am holy.” Why? Because herein consists our conformity to God. We were originally created in the image and likeness of God, and that, for the substance of it, was *holiness*—therein consisted the privilege, blessedness, pre-eminence of man over all the lower creatures. Wherefore, without this conformity unto God, with the impress of His image and likeness upon the soul, we cannot stand in that relation unto God which was designed us in our creation. This we lost by the entrance of sin, and if there be not a way for us to acquire it again, we shall forever come short of the glory of God and the end of our creation. Now this is done by our becoming holy, for therein consists the renovation of God’s image in us (Eph. 4:22-24 and cf. Col. 3:10). It is utterly vain for any

man to expect an interest in God while he does not earnestly endeavour after conformity to Him.

To be sanctified is just as requisite as to be justified. He that thinks to come to enjoyment of God without holiness makes Him an unholy God, and puts the highest indignity imaginable upon Him. There is no other alternative: we must either leave our sins, or our God. We may as easily reconcile Heaven and Hell, as easily take away all difference between light and darkness, good and evil, as procure acceptance for unholy persons with God. While it be true that our interest in God is not built upon our holiness, it is equally true that we have none without it. Many have greatly erred in concluding that, because piety and obedience are not meritorious, they can get to Heaven without them. The free grace of God towards sinners by Jesus Christ, by no means renders holiness needless and useless. Christ is not the minister of sin, but the Maintainer of God's glory. He has not purchased for His people security *in* sin, but salvation *from* sin.

According to our growth in likeness unto God are our approaches unto glory. Each day both writer and reader is drawing nearer the end of his earthly course, and we do greatly deceive ourselves if we imagine that we are drawing nearer to Heaven while following those courses which lead only to Hell. We are woefully deluded if we suppose that we are journeying towards glory, and yet are not growing in grace. The believer's glory, subsequently considered, will be his likeness to Christ (1 John 3:2), and it is the very height of folly for any to think that they shall love hereafter what now they hate. There is no other way of growing in the likeness of God *but in holiness*: thereby alone are we "changed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18)—that is, from one degree of glorious grace to another, until by one last great change shall issue all grace and holiness in eternal glory.

But is not God ready to pardon and receive the greatest and vilest sinner who comes unto Him by Christ? Is not His mercy so great and His grace so free that He will do so apart from *any consideration* of worth or righteousness of their own? If so, why insist so much on the indispensability of holiness? This objection, though thousands of years old, is still made. If men must be holy, then carnal reasoners can see no need of grace: and they cannot see how God is gracious if men perish because they are unholy. Nothing seems more reasonable to carnal minds than that we may live in sin because grace has abounded. This is met by the Apostle in Romans 6:1, where he subjoins the reasons why, notwithstanding the superaboundings of grace in Christ, there is an indispensable necessity why all believers should be holy. Without the necessity of holiness in us, grace would be disgraced. Note how when He proclaimed His name "gracious and merciful," the Lord at once added, "and will by no means clear the guilty" (Exo. 34:6, 7) i.e. those who go on in their sins without regard unto obedience.

2. *Our personal holiness is required by the commands of God.* Not only is this so under the Covenant of Works, but the same is inseparably annexed under the Covenant of Grace. No relaxation unto the duty of holiness is granted by the Gospel, nor any indulgence unto the least sin. The Gospel is no less holy than the Law, for both proceeded from the Holy One; and though provision be made for the pardon of a multitude of sins for the acceptance of the Christian's imperfect obedience, yet the standard of righteousness is not lowered, for there is no abatement given by the Gospel unto any duty of holiness nor any license unto the least sin. The difference between those covenants is twofold: under that of works all the duties of holiness were required as our righteousness be-

fore God, that we might be justified thereby (Rom. 10:5)—not so under grace; no allowance was made for the least degree of failure (James 2:10)—but, now, through the mediation of Christ, justice and mercy are joined together.

Under the Gospel-commands for universal holiness respect is required unto three things. First, unto the *authority* of Him who gives them. Authority is that which obligates unto obedience: see Malachi 1:6. Now He who commands us to be holy is our sovereign Lawgiver, with absolute right to prescribe that which He pleases, and therefore a non-compliance is a despising of the Divine Legislator. To be under God's command to be holy, and then not to sincerely and earnestly endeavour always and in all things so to be, is to reject His sovereign authority over us, and to live in defiance of Him. No better than *that* is the state of every one who does not make the pursuit of holiness his daily and chief concern. Forgetfulness of this, or failure to heed it as we ought, is the chief reason of our careless walking. Our great safeguard is to keep our hearts and minds under a sense of the sovereign authority of God in His commands.

Second, we must keep before our minds the *power* of Him who commands us to be holy. "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy" (James 4:12). God's commanding authority is accompanied with such power that He will eternally reward the obedient and eternally punish the disobedient. The commands of God are accompanied with promises of eternal bliss on the one hand, and of eternal misery on the other; and this will most certainly befall us according as we shall be found holy or unholy. Herein is to be seen a further reason for the indispensable necessity of our being holy: if we are not, then a holy and all-powerful God will damn us. A due respect unto God's promises and threatenings is a principal part of spiritual liberty: "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1): the way to walk uprightly is to ever bear in mind that He who requires it of us is Almighty God, under whose eyes we are continually. If, then, we value our souls, let us seek grace to act accordingly.

Third, respect is to be had unto the infinite *wisdom and goodness* of God. In His commands God not only maintains His sovereign authority over us, but also exhibits His righteousness and love. His commands are not the arbitrary edicts of a capricious despot, but the wise decrees of One who has *our good* at heart. His commands "are not grievous" (1 John 5:3): they are not tyrannical restraints of our liberty, but are just, wholesome, highly beneficial. It is to our great advantage to comply with them; it is for our happiness, both now and hereafter, that we obey them. They are a heavy burden only unto those who desire to be the slaves of sin and Satan: they are easy and pleasant unto all who walk with God. Love for God carries with it a desire to please Him, and from Christ may be obtained that grace which will assist us thereto—but of this, more later, D.V.

3. *Our personal holiness is required by the Mediation of Christ.* One principal end of the design of God in sending His Son into the world was to recover us unto that state of holiness which we had lost: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Among the principal of the works of the Devil was the infecting of our natures and persons with a principle of sin and enmity against God, and that evil work is not destroyed but by the introduction of a principle of holiness and obedience. The image of God in us was defaced by sin; the restoration of that image was one of the main purposes of Christ's mediation. Christ's great and ultimate design was to bring His people unto the enjoyment of God to His eternal glory, and this can only be by grace and holiness, by which we are made "meet for the inheritance

of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12).

Now the exercise of Christ’s mediation is discharged under His threefold office. As to His priestly, the immediate effects were the making of satisfaction and reconciliation, but the mediate effects are our justification and sanctification: “Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14)—no *unholy* people, then, have any sure evidence of an interest in Christ’s sacrifice. As to His prophetic office, this consists in His revelation to us of God’s love and will: to make God known and to bring us into subjection unto Him. At the very beginning of His prophetic ministry we find Christ restoring *the Law* to its original purity—purging it from the corruptions of the Jews: Matthew 5. As to His kingly office, He subdues our lusts and supplies power for obedience. It is by these things we are to test ourselves. To live in known and allowed sin, and yet expect to be saved by Christ is the master deception of Satan.

From which of Christ’s offices do I expect advantage? Is it from His priestly? Then has His blood cleansed me? Have I been made holy thereby? Have I been redeemed out of the world by it? Am I by it dedicated to God and His service? Is it from His prophetic office? Then have I effectually learned of Him to “deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world”? (Titus 2:12). Has He instructed me unto *sincerity* in all my ways, in all my dealings with God and men? Is it from His kingly office? Then does He *actually* rule in me and over me? Has He delivered me from the power of Satan and caused me to take *His* yoke upon me? Has His sceptre broken the dominion of sin in me? Am I a loyal subject of His kingdom? If not, I have no rightful claim to a personal interest in His sacrifice. Christ died to procure holiness, not to secure an indulgence for unholiness.

4. *Our personal holiness is required in order to the glory of Christ.* If we are indeed His disciples, He has bought us with a price, and we are “not our own,” but His, and that to glorify Him in soul and body because they are His: 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. He died for us that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him who redeemed us at such a fearful cost. How, then, are we to do this? *In our holiness* consists the principal part of that revenue of honour which the Lord Jesus requires and expects from His disciples in this world. Nothings glorifies Him so much as our obedience; nothing is a greater grief and reproach to Him than our disobedience. We are to witness before the world unto the holiness of His life, the heavenliness of His doctrine, the preciousness of His death by a daily walk which “shows forth HIS praises” (1 Peter 2:9). This is absolutely necessary if we are to glorify Him in this scene of His rejection.

Nothing short of the *life* of Christ is our *example*: this is what the Christian is called to “follow.” It is the life of Christ which it is his duty to express in his own, and he who takes up Christianity on any other terms woefully deceives his soul. No more effectual reproach can be cast upon the blessed name of the Lord Jesus than for His professing people to follow the lusts of the flesh, be conformed to this world, and heed the behests of Satan. We can only bear witness for the Saviour as we make His doctrine our rule, His glory our concern, His example our practice. Christ is honoured not by wordy expressions, but by a holy conversation. Nothing has done more to bring the Gospel of Christ into reproach than the wicked lives of those who bear His name. If I am not living a holy and obedient life this shows that I am not “for” Christ, but *against* Him.—A.W.P.

N.B. Much in this article is a condensation of John Owen on the same subject, Vol-

ume 3, of his works.

A Personal Word

At the time this issue is being printed [1935], indications are that our stay in Cheltenham is drawing to a close. We are not yet sure where the Lord will next have us pitch our tent: prayer that our steps may be definitely directed by Him, will be valued. Until further notice, please address us c/o "Shalom," Old Bath Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham.—
A.W.P.

Evil Speaking

“He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction” (Prov. 13:3). “A guard upon the lips is a guard to the soul: he that is careful, who thinks twice before he speaks once, that, if he hath thought evil, lays his hand upon his mouth to suppress it, that keeps a strong bridle on his tongue, and a strict hand on the bridle, he keeps his soul from a great deal of guilt and grief, and saves himself the trouble of many bitter reflections on himself, and others upon him” (Matthew Henry). Alas, how many are now saying—by their very attitude and actions “our lips are our own: who is lord over us?” (Psa. 12:4).

“Speak not evil one of another, brethren” (James 4:11). Is not this a word which is much needed by some of us today? Alas, in some quarters the habit of discrediting others behind their backs has become so common that it is regarded almost as a matter of course; the mentioning to others of a brother’s faults or a sister’s failures, the repeating of unfavourable reports which have come to our ears is so general that few appear to make any conscience thereof. Nevertheless, God still says “*Speak not evil* one of another, brethren.” Yes, this *is* an exhortation which requires to be prayerfully taken to heart by not a few. Personally, the writer has to acknowledge with shame that this Divine injunction has not had the restraining influence upon his unruly tongue which it ought, and in what follows he desires to preach unto himself as well as to others.

How solemn it is to observe that one of the sins mentioned in that awful catalogue enumerated in Romans 1:29-31 is that of detraction or injuring the reputation of others—”whisperers, backbiters”: therein does the corruption of man’s vitiated nature evidence itself. To stain the good reputation of another is highly reprehensible. God commanded us to love our neighbour as ourself, and this requires that I am to be concerned not only about his person and property, but to protect his good name. “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Prov. 22:1), and therefore to rob a man of his good name is worse than stealing his property. A citizen of Zion is thus described: “He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour” (Psa. 15:3).

“Speak not evil one of another, brethren” (James 4:11). That which is here forbidden is the saying of anything, be it true or false, to the prejudice of another. God requires that our words should be governed by “the law of kindness” (Prov. 31:26), and anything which would hurt or injure the reputation of another is to be rigidly eschewed. Whenever I cannot speak well of my brother or sister, I must say nothing at all. It is devilish to take delight in exposing the faults of fellow-Christians, and stirring up prejudice and bitter feelings against them (Rev. 12:10). God requires that our words should agree with love as well as with truth. Since Christians are *brethren*, the last thing they should be guilty of is defaming one another.

“Take no heed unto all words that are spoken” (Eccl. 7:21). “Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge” (Prov. 19:27). *Beware of evil listening!* Those who receive tales about others, who delight to hear of the failings of their brethren, encourage evil speakers in their sin and are partakers of their guilt. “The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue” (Prov. 25:23). The Christian is not only bidden to abstain from all evil speaking himself, but is required to discourage this sin in others by frowning on it and endeavouring to put it out of countenance. Slanders would not be so readily spoken as they are, if they were not so

readily heard. “Many abuse those spoken evil *of*, only in hopes to curry favor with those they speak *to*” (Matthew Henry). Disappoint them by showing your disapproval.

Since it be a grievous sin to speak evil of a brother in Christ, how much greater is the offence when it is committed against one of His ministering servants! True, they are not faultless, yet their blemishes are not to be blazed abroad, but should be covered with the mantle of love. “Wherefore then *were ye not afraid* to speak against my servant Moses?” (Num. 12:8): observe the emphasis—ye should be afraid to speak evil against any one, much more against My honoured servant. It is written, “Against an elder (bishop) *receive not an accusation*, but before two or three witnesses” (1 Tim. 5:19). It is at our peril that we say or do anything against the servants of God, for He reckons those who touch them as touching “the apple of *His eye*” (Zech. 2:8). “Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets *no harm*” (Psa. 105:15) is His express command.

To speak evil of others proceeds from ill will or malice, either desiring that they should be made odious in the esteem of others, or being quite indifferent if that effect be produced. To say that no harm is intended is to talk foolishly: “As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?” (Prov. 26:18, 19). Much repeating of the ill reports about others issues from an uncharitable readiness to believe the worst: “For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and *we will report it*” (Jer. 20:10). But the chief cause of this evil is an unruly tongue, nor are we likely to seek grace for bridling that member until we really make conscience of this sin.

It is both striking and searching to note how often the Holy Spirit addresses Himself to God’s children on this subject. Many are the verses in the Book of Proverbs which contain salutary instruction for the right use of our tongues. So also in the New Testament exhortations are frequently given against the wrong use of our tongues. “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, *and evil speaking*, be put away from you, with all malice” (Eph. 4:31). “Let your speech be *always* with grace, seasoned with salt” (Col. 4:6). “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, *and all evil speakings*, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:1, 2): there must be the definite and daily “laying aside” of these bad habits if we are to preserve a healthy appetite for spiritual things. “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him *refrain his tongue from evil*, and his lips that they speak no guile” (1 Peter 3:10): here is one of the Divine rules of longevity—“evil speaking” has more ill effect upon the health than many imagine!

But is *all* speaking evil of another unlawful? No, though even here it is hard to keep clear of sinning. There are times when it is a duty to caution our friends against those who might prove a menace to them: if I know one is about to buy an article that has been misrepresented, or trust some money to a dishonest person, then I must faithfully raise my voice in warning. If I should be summoned as a witness in court, then I am bound to tell what I know. Yet, where the glory of God and the honour of His Gospel is at stake, or where there is danger of a brother being imposed upon or wronged, and my duty to speak out is plain, nevertheless, the following cautions need to be heeded. First, take pains to fully *verify* what you have heard, and make sure that what you relate is true. Second, do it in a right spirit: not censoriously, nor with delight, but with godly sorrow. Third, be impartial, and if occasion requires you to mention another’s faults, be careful not to conceal his virtues.

Except where the glory of God plainly requires it and the good of our neighbour or brother demands it, we must refrain from all evil speaking of others. If we are duly occupied with and humbled over *our own* many faults, we shall have neither time nor inclination to dwell upon or publish those of others. If we properly heed the exhortation of Philippians 4:8, we shall cultivate the habit of admiring the graces in our brethren instead of like filthy flies settling on their sores. Certain it is that if we are not tender of the reputation of others, God will make us taste of the bitterness of this affliction for ourselves: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 6:7); “with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Matt. 7:2). How solemn is that word, “speaking evil of you: who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead” (1 Peter 4:4, 5). Well may we pray, “Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips” (Psa. 141:3).—A.W.P
