

SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND ETERNAL LIFE

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“Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.”
John 14:19

IT is very noticeable, in this verse and in many other parts of the New Testament, what a sharp line of demarcation the Lord draws between His people and the world—“*The world seeth me no more, but ye see me.*” We have the same truth taught in John’s first epistle. “We know that *we* are of God, and the *whole world* lieth in the wicked one.”

It is quite evident that our Lord kept prominent in His teaching the distinction between the regenerate and the unregenerate—the converted and the unconverted—those who have been quickened by the Holy Spirit and those who have remained dead in trespasses and sins. This distinction, which our Lord kept up so strikingly, should always be made clear in every ministry.

I do feel that much evil comes of a mode of address, which is adopted by some of my ministerial brethren, in which they speak to the entire congregation as though all who were present were Christians. That is a false theory to go upon, because it is not at all likely that any congregation ever gathered together will consist wholly of Christians. The mere coming together for public worship, nowadays, does not at all prove people to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When they met in the Catacombs or in the caves of the earth, and every worshipper had to carry his life in his hands, there might have been some excuse for addressing the whole assembly as Christians. But in these days, we know right well that there are unconverted persons in the audience, and it is proper, therefore, to have one message to the saints and another message to the sinners—and to let it be seen, all through the sermon, that the preacher is aware that the Lord has made a distinction between Israel and Egypt—between them that fear Him and them that fear Him not.

The same rule ought, I think, to be observed in prayer. It is a radical mistake to have forms of prayer which take it for granted that the whole congregation is saved. In this way, many persons are comforted who ought to be aroused to a sense of their true spiritual condition. At the grave especially things are said of men who have lived and died in sin, which are calculated to make unsaved survivors think lightly of their own lost state.

There should be one prayer for the saint and another prayer for the sinner—and all through the supplication, as well as the preaching, there should be such a distinction as Christ drew, in this verse, between His disciples and “the world”—between those who continue to see Jesus and those who will never behold His face with joy—either in this world or in that which is to come.

If you look carefully at our text you will notice in it, first, a fact which should solemnize the mind of every unconverted person here, namely, that *the religious privileges enjoyed by the world will sooner or later be taken away*—“Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more.” Secondly, the text very clearly tells us that *the Holy Spirit has given to believers a sight of Christ*—“but ye see me.” And thirdly, *this sight is accompanied by a life which is linked with the life of Christ*—“because I live, ye shall live also.”

I. So the first lesson to be learned from our text is that THE PRESENT PRIVILEGES ENJOYED BY THE WORLD WILL BE TAKEN AWAY—“Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more.”

For a long time, comparatively, Jesus was seen here among the sons of men. I call His life a long time, for every moment of it must have been painful to Him, since, for His pure spirit to have dwelt in the midst of impurity such as pervades this world, must always have been painful. Yet He tarried here and worked innumerable miracles of blessing.

Sometimes He fed the thousands who crowded around Him, and He was constantly healing the sick, and doing everything that He could for man's good—the summary of His life was that “He went about doing good.” He is gone now, and the world sees Him no more. How shamefully the men of the world treated Him! It would not be right for Him to come back to another persecution and a second crucifixion. They said, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.”

They did kill Him, but He will never come here to be killed again. When He comes the next time, it will be in a very different fashion and for a very different purpose. The world will never again see Him as it saw Him then,—

*“A lowly man before His foes,
A humble man, and full of woes.”*

No, earth, you have lost your Miracle-Worker. You sick ones, you have lost your great Physician. You hungry ones, you have lost Him whose blessed hands fed you. Never again will the weeping Mary and Martha see their brother raised to life. Never again will sorrowing widows have their dead sons restored to them from the grave's mouth.

No, Jesus has gone and all the blessings which He was wont to bestow have ceased to be given, for the world sees Him no more. It will see Him again, certainly, but in a very different fashion—it will not see Him as Savior, and Friend, and Physician—it will only see Him with the rod of iron in His hand, passing sentence upon those who said, “We will not have this man to reign over us”.

Now, what has taken place as to the physical sight of Christ by the sons of men, will take place with all of you as to your mental sight of Christ unless you receive from the Gospel an inner and spiritual sight of Him. *All of you have, in a certain sense, seen Jesus Christ.* I mean that, when the Sabbath bells ring out, you are accustomed to go where you hear concerning Christ and His great salvation.

There you sit and Jesus Christ is set forth evidently crucified among you—and blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear what prophets and kings in vain desired to see and hear concerning Christ in days of yore. You go to your houses and there is that precious Book, the Bible, which contains the image of your Savior's face almost on every page. Your family altar brings Jesus very near even to some of you unconverted ones. The kingdom of God has indeed come nigh unto you.

Nowadays Jesus Christ is preached in almost every street. A man need not go far, especially on the Sabbath day, if he wants to hear about Jesus Christ. So far as the hearing with the ear is concerned, He may be heard of almost everywhere. But it will not always be so. Some of you will soon go where the Sabbath bell is never heard. You will go where Sabbaths themselves are all unknown, except as dreadful memories of shamefully neglected privileges. You will go where no minister will tell you of grace, and mercy, and pardon bought with blood. You will go where you will never hear the music of—

“Those charming bells, free grace and dying love.”

The very opposite sound to that will forever grate upon your ears. There will be no godly teacher there to urge you to seek the Lord in your youth and to give Him your heart while you are yet young. There will be no loving parents there, with tears, and sighs, and pious examples, striving to lead you to Jesus.

There will be no faithful preacher there, earnestly endeavoring, in simple language, to tell you “the old, old story” and to point you to Christ upon the cross. Only a little while and there shall be no Bible for you to read, no mercy seat to which you can go, no promise which you can plead, no blood of Jesus

in which you can ask to be washed—for you will be beyond the line of hope and beyond the reach of mercy.

I am sure that, if I had to come to you, and say that I had received a revelation from heaven telling me that never again would some of you be permitted to attend a place of worship, never again to read your Bible, never again to kneel in prayer—but that you were forever to be denied all these eternal privileges—you would feel unhappy indeed. I wish you felt something of that kind of unhappiness now, because to have these privileges and yet to neglect them, is as bad as—in some respects, it is even worse than—it would be to have the privileges taken away.

Godly Mr. Rogers, of Dedham, was preaching on one occasion about the Scriptures and their value, and endeavoring to impress upon the people the duty of prizing the Word and being obedient to it. And to bring the truth home very clearly to their consciences, he asked them to imagine that he was commissioned to take away the Bible from them. He took it up from the pulpit and turned round with it in his hand. “There,” he said, “you are never to have it again. It has been a dreary book to many of you—you have not cared for it and you have neglected the reading of it, so I must take it away and you shall never hear another sermon from it, or hear anything more read from it.”

Then he pictured them all weeping and begging that the Book might be brought back to them again. And I would that, even though the Lord should not take these privileges away from you while you are in this life, you might nevertheless prize them, for this life will soon be ended—and then these privileges will be gone forever.

Notice also that our Savior said, “Yet *a little while*, and the world seeth me no more.” Oh, it is *such* a little while even if we live the longest life that is possible to men! But human lives are often cut short, suddenly and unexpectedly. Useful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ are taken away in the very midst of their usefulness and the home-call to them is a message to us, saying, “Be you also ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man comes.”

Some of you young people are reckoning that it will be a long while before you need come to a decision, but I pray you, think how short your lifetime may be. Certainly, if you do ever reach that period in which the voice of mercy shall cease to have a syllable to address you, you will then realize what a little time it has been.

Why, even if a man could live as long as Methuselah, yet, if he once found himself shut up in hell, a life of a thousand years would seem to be but as a pin’s point compared with the endless eternity—and he would grieve and lament bitterly that he had wasted in sin those winged hours upon which his destiny throughout eternity had hung.

A little while, sinner, and you will never have another invitation to come to Christ. A little while, and there will be no outstretched arms of Him who died upon the tree, “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” A little while—and *such* a little while—and you will see Jesus no more as a Savior, but you will see Him as your Judge, and hear Him say, not, “Come, ye blessed,” but “Depart, ye cursed.” Those who have outward privileges, and yet neglect them, shall have them taken from them—and then how will they dare to appear before God?

II. Let us now turn to the second point, which is far more sweet to our souls. Let us think upon HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS GIVEN SIGHT TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD—“The world seeth me no more, but ye see me.”

In the deepest meaning of the word, *no one ever truly sees Christ until the Holy Spirit opens his eyes*. There are some persons who have very strange notions of what it means to see Christ. I occasionally have to talk with poor, ignorant people—who do not, however, think themselves ignorant—who tell me that they have seen Christ. And I soon discover that they mean that they fancy they have seen Him with their natural eyes.

I tell them that it is impossible, and then they tell me of some dream in which they think they saw Him. Now, my dear friend, even supposing you had a vision and that you did see Christ in it—do not place any reliance upon that. There is many a man, who has had a vision of the devil, yet has gone to

heaven—and there is many a man who has had a vision of Christ, yet has gone to hell. There is nothing in that.

Did not great multitudes, who lived in the days of Christ upon the earth, see Him with their natural eyes? Yet they were not saved. Many even stood around the cross and saw Him die, in that dread culmination of His life-work, when He was paying the price of His people's redemption, they stood and gazed at Him. But their hearts were not softened even by that matchless sight, for they jeered and jested while He was in His death-throes. That which can be seen with these eyes is of little consequence. The true sight of Christ—that sight which alone can save—is a spiritual sight, the sight of the inward soul.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples, "Ye see me." Let us notice the ways in which believers see Him in a spiritual sense. We see Him, first, with that earliest glance which continues throughout our whole lives—*the life-look at the Lord Jesus Christ*. You remember when you first saw Him thus. Could any other word describe your experience then? You did not see anything with your natural eyes, but you perceived, in your soul, that Jesus Christ stood as the one Substitute for sinners, and that, trusting in Him, your sin would be forever removed from you. And you did trust in Him.

You looked unto Him and were lightened, and your face was not ashamed. Possibly, you had been a diligent student of the Scriptures before that and you may have been a tolerably intelligent theologian. But did you not know more of Christ in a single moment, when you had looked to Him with that saving glance, than you had ever learnt from any book or heard from any ministry.

Then you could say, "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." Then you knew what was meant by pardon through His precious blood and justification by His righteousness, for you had looked for yourself and had seen that Christ is able to save, for He had saved you. From that moment, you began to see Christ with the opened eyes of your spiritual understanding. Just as Christ's disciples were made to know that He was in the Father and that the Father was in Him, so you began to know that Jesus of Nazareth was in you and that you were in Him.

You began to understand the eternal relationship between Christ and the Father, and between the Father and yourself. You began to perceive the offices of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King. You began to study Him—the different points of His character, the different stages of His life, the different gleams of glory that shone even amid the darkness of His death—and so you saw Him.

O dear brothers and sisters in Christ, *since that happy day, we have had many precious sights of Christ* and we have been constantly led to see more and more of Him. The Holy Spirit has lit up Christ to us by degrees, just as I have sometimes seen the lighting up of an illumination in which some one word was to be spelt out in letters of light. They have brought it out, letter by letter, with bright lamps, and at last, you could see the whole word.

I am afraid that we have not learned to spell the whole of Jesus Christ's name yet, but what we do know, we would not give up for twice ten thousand worlds. We do not yet see Him so clearly as we shall see Him by and by, but still, our spiritual understanding does perceive far more of Him than it once did and we expect, in due time, to "be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

If you follow the run of the chapter from which our text is taken, you will be helped further to perceive how it is that we see Christ. According to the twelfth verse, *we see Christ by participating in His power*. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

A preacher who has never seen Christ in the way I have been describing, delivers sermons which are without spiritual power. But if anyone—even the feeblest among us—will teach others the truth which he has received from the Holy Spirit, feeling that all power in heaven and earth is given to Christ, and that, therefore He has sent His servants to preach His Gospel to all nations—such a man shall have the presence of Christ, and shall realize it by the power which will rest upon him, and by the results which will follow his testimony.

Yes, brethren, Christ is with His people still. The power of Christ is not only up there in heaven, but it is given to Him on earth as well, and He clothes with His Spirit those who preach His Gospel simply and humbly, and that Spirit breaks men's hearts and binds them up again—spiritually slays men and makes them alive again—and does great marvels so that the power of Jesus Christ is truly seen in the midst of the assembly. Out of His mouth proceeds that two-edged sword with which the battles of divine grace are fought and won. I wonder how many of you who are here have ever seen Christ in this sense—that His power has rested upon you in all forms of Christian service that are done as unto the Lord.

If you have seen Christ thus, you have also seen Him in the sense described in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses, *pleading through you and with you in prayer*—"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it."

Have you ever prayed in that way, as though Christ had said to you, "Go to My Father, tell Him I sent you. Use My name with Him, for My name has authority in the courts of heaven"? It is indeed blessed, when you are pleading with God, to feel that Christ is pleading through you—to see Him, as it were, as the great High Priest of our profession, standing before God with outstretched hands, pleading the merit of His blood that we may prevail.

It is powerful pleading when you have Christ praying by your side and know that you have Him there—and when you feel that your prayer is not the petition of a suppliant who is pleading alone, but the utterance of one who is covered up and lost sight of in the person of the greater Pleader—the Lord Jesus Christ. This is indeed seeing Christ. "Ye see me," said Christ to His disciples, and we do see Him when we realize His power with us in the hour of prayer.

We see Christ, again, *when we are obedient to His commands*, for the fifteenth verse tells us that He said to His disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." A real Christian does what Christ bids him do, whether he is observed of men or not, because he realizes that he is in the presence of Christ. The very best check upon sinful passions, and the most divine incentive to spiritual earnestness, is the presence of Christ.

O brethren, I cannot tell you what a delight it is to feel sure that Christ is near you and observing you—to feel as if His hands were upon your shoulder and His shadow resting upon you, like that of a father leaning over his child, and guiding the child's hand as he writes his copy—while you are trying to serve Him and yielding yourself up completely to Him, saying, "Tell me, my Lord, what You have for me to do and by Your grace, I will do it, for I live in Your sight and to please You is the one desire of my soul."

Sinners never see Christ in this way. In fact, they do not care anything about Him. The children of God constantly see Jesus Christ before them, so that if they are tempted to sin, they cry, "How can we do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" If they are tempted to slumber when they ought to be actively engaged in His service, they can hear Christ knocking at their door and saying to them, "Open to Me." And they rise from their beds, and open the door to Him, and go forth with Him to do His will. You can, each one of you judge, beloved, whether in this sense Christ can say to you, "Ye see me."

Christ is also to be seen by believers *in the efficacy of His Spirit*. Read what He says in the seventeenth verse—"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Have you never felt the presence and power of the Spirit of God working within you? Does He never comfort you when you are depressed? Does He never guide you when you are in perplexity? Has He never come upon you to calm you when you have been getting excited with worldly joy? Have you never known the Spirit of God illuminate a truth which before you could not understand?

Have you not known Him to point out to you a way of answering your accuser or adversary which you had not thought of, giving you in the self-same hour the very words that you should speak? Some of us know what it is to be more swayed by the Spirit of God than by our own spirit—and it should be so with every Christian.

He should yield himself up absolutely to that Divine Spirit who will bear him whithersoever He pleases, upward or downward, to ecstatic joy or to holy sorrow, but ever onward in that which glorifies God. Those who feel this power of the Holy Spirit really see Jesus Christ and so hear Him say to them as He said to His disciples, “Ye see me.”

And beloved, I must add here what some of you know right well—I would that we all knew it more and more—that *Jesus Christ is to be seen by that near, and dear, and intimate communion which He permits His children to have with Him.* They are to be daily walking with God, but as the sea, though always full, is not always at flood-tide, so the believer, who lives nearest to God, will not always experience precisely the same delights.

There are high days and holidays for us—have you not had them? We hardly like to talk about them, for the love-dealings of Christ with our souls are such sacred secrets between Himself and us that we can scarcely speak of them to others. We have known such joy in fellowship with Christ that we have felt almost as the apostle did when he said that “He was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

Indeed, we cannot utter them, for human language can never express the bliss which sometimes fills our spirit when Jesus Christ reveals Himself to us. It is vain for infidels to tell me that there is no Christ, for I have seen Him. When men tell us that there is no heaven, we say, as Bunyan’s pilgrims did, “What! No Mount Zion? Did we not see from the Delectable Mountains, the gate of the city?” Do they tell us that the love of Christ is a myth? We reply that it has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost and that, therefore, we can never doubt its reality and power.

There is an individual, who is accustomed to go down the sewers and who has no sense of smell—“He has got no nose,” a man told me once. Suppose that this man comes into a place which has been recently perfumed with perfume of roses or lavender water, and while we are all saying, “What a delicious perfume!” he says, “I do not believe there is any perfume here.” But we are sure that there is.

He says that he cannot see it, he cannot hear it, he cannot taste it, he cannot feel it, and he cannot smell it, so he does not believe it is there. No, poor man, he has lost one of his senses, so he cannot perceive it. And the world has lost its spiritual sense—that delicate nostril which can perceive the sweet perfume of the Rose of Sharon and detect His presence wherever He may be.

But we, beloved, are not to be argued out of an undoubted fact of our spiritual experience. It is useless to try to pervert a genuine Christian from the faith, because he knows it, for he has tasted it, and handled it, and felt it. It is not a matter of opinion to him, but a matter of fact. The heathen philosophers said, of the early Christians, that they were the most obstinate men and women that they ever met. They said that the plainest arguments were lost upon them, for they clung to certain things which they asserted to be facts, and no one could, by any logic whatsoever, induce them to deny those facts.

If we are genuine Christians, we are of the same stamp as those early saints. We might change our opinions, but we cannot give up our knowledge of the great facts of our spiritual experience—and we do know that Jesus Christ has revealed Himself unto us as He does not unto the world—and we dare not deny that it is so.

He has given us such sweet fellowship with Himself that only in heaven itself can we ever be happier. Sometimes we have seemed to sit on the very doorstep of heaven and have heard the music inside—and we have wondered whether they could be happier there than we were outside. We have felt that they must have larger capacity for joy than we had if they had more joy than we possessed, for we were as full of joy as we could be. Well, this being the case with us, we cannot be made to deny the faith by anything that may be said to us by those who are strangers to our joy. “Ye see me,” said Christ to His disciples and oftentimes we have felt that He might also say to us, “Ye see me,” for, in the highest sense, it is true.

Beloved friends, I must leave this point, but I wish, first, to ask everyone here, “Have *you* thus seen Jesus Christ? Do you see Him at this moment?” Remember that you must spiritually see Him with the

eye of your soul, or else, when He comes to judgment, you will in vain call upon the rocks to hide you from His face.

Recollect also that you cannot see Christ till the Spirit of God opens your eyes. You are blind. Spiritually, you are dead, and only the Spirit of God can make you live and give you sight. Oh, that the prayer might ascend from every unsaved soul here, “Blessed Spirit, breathe into me the breath of life that my dead soul may be quickened and that my darkened mind may be enlightened, that I may truly see You.” May the Lord first give you that prayer—and then may He graciously answer it in your happy experience this very hour!

III. My last point is this—THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT ONLY GIVES US LIGHT, BUT HE ALSO GIVES US LIFE. Jesus said to His disciples, “Because I live, ye shall live also.”

Every soul, that has seen Christ in the ways I have described, is a living soul, and such a living soul that, as long as Christ lives, and because Christ lives, that soul shall live too. What a precious promise this is! One wants to have a whole sermon upon it—“Because I live, ye shall live also.”

That is to say, *we first get spiritual life from Christ*. We are dead in trespasses and sins, but a glance from His eye, through the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, creates the first spark of life within us and then we look to Him—and so we live. We find in Jesus Christ, and in connection and in communion with Him, all that our souls need, so that we not only derive from Him spiritual life, but also the sustenance of that life.

Then, *we get the life of Christ reproduced in us by living in fellowship with Him*—a life which is to bloom and come to perfection in the eternal life with Christ in glory. All the life that any believer ever had on the face of the earth, he must have derived from the Lord Jesus Christ, for he had none of his own.

And when the Holy Spirit had given him this life from Jesus Christ, he could not keep it alive by his own power. He had to remain in union with Jesus if he was to continue to live, as Christ reminded His disciples, “Without me, (severed from Me), ye can do nothing.” Let us recognize this fact, beloved, that we, who have seen Christ, have a new life within us which we did not create and which we could not nourish and sustain, but which Jesus keeps, and Jesus feeds, and Jesus preserves through the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit. And thus we live as the world does not live—it is dead in sin, but we are alive unto God by Jesus Christ.

This life, being Christ’s life, is an everlasting life. “I give unto them eternal life,” says Christ concerning His sheep. Somebody once said, “Ah, but they may lose it!” What nonsense! How can they lose eternal life. How can that be eternal which comes to an end? “Eternal life” means a life that never ends. Language can only be meant to conceal men’s thoughts if it does not mean that.

But God uses language, not for the sake of concealing the truth, but in order to reveal it. And when the Lord Jesus Christ puts everlasting life into a believer, he has everlasting life, and he will live forever. And for this reason, he will live forever because Christ will live forever. “Because I live, ye shall live also.” When Christ can die, then can the believer perish. When it shall be possible for Christ to be cast out of heaven—for His power and glory to be taken from Him, ay, for His very Deity to wax old and grow effete with age—then may the believer’s life be quenched, but not till then.

What strange notions some people seem to have about this matter! The doctrine of final perseverance, or the eternal preservation of believers, seems to me to be written as with a beam of sunlight throughout the whole of Scripture. If that is not true, there is nothing at all in the Bible that is true, for that truth is there if anything is. It is impossible to understand the Bible at all if it is not so. But it is so, glory be to God!

What do the objectors say concerning the mystical body of Christ? Do they suppose that Christ’s body keeps losing its members, as lobsters shed their claws, and grow fresh ones? Is that their strange simile—that the blessed mystical body of Christ goes on changing its members and getting new ones? To suggest such a monstrosity is approaching blasphemy.

The members of Christ's body must be safe forever, for they are one with Him. Shall Christ be mutilated? Shall He be cut in pieces and His beauty marred? That is impossible.

*“Once in Christ in Christ forever;
Nothing from His love can sever.”*

He never did and He never can lose one of those who are in Him.

Put your trust in Jesus, dear friends, and this passage shall be true concerning you, “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”—“being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth forever.”

Blessed is the man who has this Word of the Lord sown in His heart as a living seed, which cannot die or be destroyed. The Lord grant this blessing to each one of you, for His dear Son's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

JOHN 14:15-31

Verses 15-17. *If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

“I am going away from you. You will not have My personal presence much longer, but I will send you One who will never go away from you, for whom there is no death and no departure—‘another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth’—who knows the truth, who can teach the truth, and who applies the truth to the hearts and consciences of men—‘whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.’”

Let us not imagine that the world ever will receive the Spirit of God. It is supposed by some, that the world gets more enlightened from age to age, but that is a supposition for which there is not the slightest foundation. The death of human nature never develops into life. The darkness brought by the Fall never becomes the light without the operation of a supernatural power.

It is the Spirit of God that works this change in God's own children—“but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” He was with them in a certain sense, even while Christ was here, else they would have learned nothing. And He was more fully in them when Christ had gone back to heaven—hence they learned, after Pentecost, more of the meaning of the Gospel than they had ever gathered from the teaching of their Master.

18-19. *I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.*

There is a continuous sight of Christ even as there is a continuous life in Christ. They who have not received the life of Christ cannot see Christ. How can there be eyes without life and how can there be the spiritual sight of Christ without the spiritual life in Him?

20. *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*

This is a wonderful trinity of unities, each one a mystery, but each one to be known by the believer when he is instructed of the Spirit of God—Christ in the Father, the saints in Christ, and Christ in them. He that experientially knows what it is to be in Christ knows more than all the secular philosophers who have ever lived.

21. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

Oh, what privileges are enjoyed by those who love the Lord Jesus Christ! We cannot help loving Him, and by that love we are assured that the Father Himself loves us, and we have the promise that Christ will yet more and more manifest Himself to us.

22. *Judas said unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?*

“Why are we the subjects of this election, this selection, this gracious manifestation?”

23. *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

Just as the angels came to believing Abraham and sojourned for a little while with him, so will Jesus and the Father, strangers in this world, become sojourners with us. Jesus says of the man who loves Him, “My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” This is not a mere call, it is an abiding—“We will make our abode with him.”

God, whom the heavens cannot contain, yet comes and dwells in a lowly heart, and abides with a loving spirit—“We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” There is an aroma about these words which I cannot convey to you. But if you have the spiritual nostril, you will perceive their fragrance for yourselves.

24. *He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.*

You see that the Lord Jesus Christ does not profess to be a great original thinker, but He speaks as the Messenger sent by the Father. And unless we also are commissioned and taught by the Father, of what value will our poor feeble thoughts be? Our only power lies in the fact that we do not utter our own thoughts, but the truths which have been taught to us by the Holy Spirit. To some, this may look like weakness, but it is real strength.

25-27. *These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

When men in the East met one another, they usually gave the salutation, “Peace be unto you,” “Peace be to this house.” But Christ says—

27. *My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

“I do not say, ‘Peace, Peace,’ where there is no peace. It is not a mere formal salutation, but there is a real, true peace communicated to you when I thus speak.”

28. *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.*

Love makes us rejoice in the prosperity of the one we love. The Lord Jesus Christ, in coming to this earth, had taken upon Himself a subordinate position—He had become the stepping-stone between man and God. But now that He was returning to His glory—returning to His Father—it was the bounden duty of those who loved Him to rejoice—and we should do the same now.

He has left behind Him the humiliation, the scorn, the spitting, the crucifixion, and who among us, who truly loves Him, would wish to bring Him back to this poor earth as He came at first? Ah, no! It is well that all that is over. There is sweetest music to our ears in our Lord’s declaration, “It is finished,” and our soul swims in a sea of light as we think of the ineffable glory with the father to which He has returned forever.

29-31. *And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in*

me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

“Let us go to Gethsemane and to the Passion. Let us go fulfill the Father’s will.” It was a sure proof of Christ’s love when He went forward from speaking to suffering that He might save His own forever.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—785, 451, 841

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