

Shiloh Christian Library

Author and Title

Changed by Beholding

by

H.A. Ironside

Putting on the New Man

Ephesians 4. 17-32.

I FEEL it is important for us to have God's Word. If you do not remember a thing I say, if you will only get what is written here into heart and mind, it will be well worth while. For after all, as David says: "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple," and Paul tells us that we are cleansed by the washing of water by the Word.

The Epistle to the Ephesians, as you doubtless well know, carries us up to the very highest peak of Christian privilege. It is the letter that pictures believers as having been raised up together and seated together in Christ in the heavenly places. You could not get any higher, as long as you are here on earth, than Ephesians carries you, but, on the other hand, this letter is just as intensely practical as it is deeply doctrinal. The first three chapters are largely doctrinal,

being mainly occupied with *our* place, *our position*, and our privileges in Christ. They contemplate us as members of that new creation of which our risen glorified Lord is the Head. But the last three chapters are perhaps as intensely practical as any portion of the Word of God. Unfortunately, very often in our study of this Epistle, we stop at the end of the third chapter. We delight to read of our privileges in Christ. We glory in the fact that we have been made accepted in the Beloved, that God has linked **us** up eternally with His Blessed Son, but we are inclined to forget that privileges such as these imply tremendous responsibilities. So if we delight in the first three chapters, we , should be glad to let the last three search us to the very depths of our being.

You will notice in this Letter there is a great deal about the Christian's *walk*. Seven times we have the word "walk," and once the word "walked." Twice the reference is to our walk in our unconverted days, the way we behaved before we were saved, and the other six references have to do with the walk of the new creation, that which should

characterise us now as redeemed men and women.

Both appear in the 17th verse : “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth *walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the* vanity of their mind.” That is the way we used to walk, when we were unsaved. We walked in the vanity of our minds, just chasing after the vain empty things of this world, and we never found any satisfaction. Yet men and women all around **us** are living like that. Solomon tried it to the full, and then gave his verdict : “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit, ” or, as it might be rendered, “**Empti-**ness of emptinesses, all is emptiness, and a chasing after the wind. ” That is what the men of the world are doing. That is what we were once doing, we who are now saved ; we walked after the vanity of our minds, until God, in infinite grace, awakened us and gave us a sight of His Beloved Son. What a wonderful event that was ! What a **mar-**vellous thing, when we were brought to see something of our lost, ruined, undone condition, as poor, guilty sinners going on to

judgment, and then God turned our eyes to the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and trusting in Him, our souls were saved !

“I once was far away from God,
On ruin’s dark and fatal road,
And little dreamed I’d see the day
When I should tread the narrow way.

“But while from God I wandered far,
And with His holy will made war,
My Saviour met me far astray,
And beckoned me to come away.

“He said on Calvary’s Cross He died;
A sacrifice for sin was made.
And all because He loved me so,
Then how could I do else than go ?”

So that ended one chapter in my **life** ; that ended the times past, when **I** walked in the ways of the Gentiles. You know what that means, don’t you ? I trust the great majority of us here know the blessedness of that wonderful change. Am I addressing even one person in this audience this afternoon who does not know it ? Let me plead with you, whoever you may be, if you are out of Christ to-day, don’t think to find satisfaction in a world that has never satisfied anybody. It has disappointed everybody that ever sought satisfaction in it, during all

these vast millenniums, and you can depend upon it, it is going to disappoint you. But oh, that even to-day, you might turn to One Who never disappoints, to our blessed Lord Jesus, and find in Him everlasting salvation ! Then you may be able to sing :

“I tried the broken cisterns, Lord,
But ah ! the waters failed !
E’en as I stooped to drink they’d fled,
And mocked me as I wailed.

“The pleasures lost I sadly mourned,
But never wept for Thee,
Till grace the sightless eyes received,
Thy loveliness to see.

“**Now** none but Christ can satisfy,
None other name for me ;
There’s love, and life, and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in Thee. ”

The Apostle is addressing people who have found Christ and been found of Him, and yet he has some very serious things to say to them, because the remarkable fact is that salvation does not necessarily imply that one enters immediately upon full holiness of life. Salvation is the start, it is the entrance into a new life, and then we shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord and to walk in His ways.

So the command comes : “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk. ” You are not to be like the world : **you** are not to go on in the way you once did, “in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. ” We who have trusted Christ have received divine life, and with that there come new cravings and new longings, and, thank God, new possibilities ! Our outward ways are expected to be different because of the light that we have received. He is our Lamp, and will lighten our darkness.

A great many people make the mistake of trying to live the life before they receive the life. The hardest thing I know is to try to live the Christian life when you do not have it to live. There must be a Christian life first, before you can exemplify and manifest it. To try to live a Christian life when you have never been born again is just as hopeless as for a chimpanzee to try and live a human life. I have seen some **chim-**

panzees that could copy things people do in a remarkable way. At a **Zoo in** Philadelphia, they once said to me, "Come along and see a couple of your ancestors !" I went along ; there were two trained chimpanzees who had learned to mimic human beings to a remarkable degree. They wore clothes, sat at a table, ate and drank, and in a clumsy way handled a knife and fork. When they got all through, they settled back, and put cigarettes in their mouths, and a keeper lit them, and they looked to me exactly like a lot of our own people do when smoking cigarettes. I never was in such **difficulty** in assuring myself that there is no truth in Evolution ! But although they could do all those things, they did not know anything about real human life. They did not know anything of the principles controlling men and women. They were simply imitators. Many people imitate Christians, and try to behave like them. They do not know anything of the power of the Christian life. They have never been born again.

"Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of Cod. " Some people are

seeking holiness of life when they need to be born again. They have joined the Church, they have observed certain ordinances. They hear people talk of a deeper, more wonderful life, and they say, "That is what I want : I must go on and get into this richer, more blessed life." They try and try, and never get anywhere, because they have never begun right. They did not get in by the wicket gate. You remember in Bunyan's immortal Allegory how Christian is going along a road, and a couple of fellows come jumping over the wall. "Who are you, and where do you come from ?" he asked. "We come from the town of Carnal Security," they say to him. "We are going to the Celestial City. " "Well, you didn't get in where I did," says Christian in surprise, "I got in at the wicket gate." "Oh, that is the old-fashioned way !" they reply, "we have a short cut over the wall. After we are over the wall, what difference does it make? You are in the way and we are in the way, and we are all headed for the same place. You'll see we will come out just as well as you." But they didn't have the seal on their forehead. They had never

been to the Cross ; they did not have the robe of righteousness. You remember one fell over the cliff, and the other was lost in the forest. They never made their way to the Celestial City.

A lot of people get over the wall and not in by the wicket gate ; never born again, they go striving for holiness, purity, and higher life, but it will be all in vain until they confess their sins in the presence of God, and trust the Saviour for themselves. They must give up all hope of righteousness in themselves, of being able to do anything to retrieve their condition, casting themselves wholly on Divine mercy. Then they are in the way, and can grow in grace.

The Apostle talks to people in the way ; be careful, don't allow the spirit of the world to control you. In the world you find people in ignorance, blindness, past feeling. The word "feeling " (v. 19—it is a peculiar thing) this is one of the only two places where it is found in the New Testament. A lot of Christians talk so much about feelings that you would think it was to be found in every third chapter. Certain heathen here are "past feeling. "

The other place is in the Epistle to the Hebrews. "We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." The word "feel" only occurs once in the New Testament. Paul was talking to the Athenians, and said that God is not far from any one of us, "if **haply** they might feel after Him and find Him," as

" An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
With no language but a cry. "

What are our words ? "Trust," "believe," "receive." When we believe God, there follows the happy, joyous emotion ; no question about that, as we walk in fellowship with Him. The thing we are to be concerned about is not feeling, but *trusting*. Someone said : "Believing is the root, and feeling is the fruit." So when we believe first, the joy comes. These outsiders are "past feeling, and have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness," but you who are saved, "ye have not so learned Christ." You have been linked up with a Risen Christ at God's right hand, and He is the Holy One, the High Priest holy and

undefiled. He says, as it were, “Do not dishonour Him by linking any kind of impurity with His Holy Name. “Ye have not so learned Christ. If so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus.”

Why does he say “Christ” in the one place and “Jesus ” in the other ? You see, you and I became acquainted with Him in the glory. “God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified to be Lord and Christ, ” and He is there, the Anointed One in the Glory. That is where we became acquainted with Him. We did not know Him down here on earth as Jesus. We never had that privilege. We know Him up there in His glory. He, the glorified One, undertakes to show you and me how we ought to live. He undertakes to show us the truth as to holy living. Do you know what He does ? He points us back to the life Jesus lived on earth. There is the truth as to holy living, fully manifested. There is the truth in Jesus. The Risen Christ says : Go back now and see the path I took through this world, if you want to find out how you should walk

⌞

in the world. I have left you an example, follow in My steps.

What a searching thing this is ! I can hear all kinds of stirring sermons, perhaps, and they may deal seriously with sin and all the rest of it, but I can bow the head and let it roll over, and say, "I do hope those folk behind are taking it. " But bring me face to face with Jesus, solely Jesus. Occupy my mind with the life He lived when He walked in this scene, and I begin to shrivel up. I say : "Oh, dear, is that what a man should be for God ? Is that the divine ideal ? Is that what I ought to be as a Christian ? " I see the truth in Jesus, and while it does shrivel me up, and while it does humble me, it stirs within my soul an earnest desire to become increasingly like Him. I want to walk as He walked. I want to be before God as He was when He was in this scene. So the risen Christ is teaching us the truth in Jesus.

Don't neglect the study of the four Gospels. I do not know how it is over here, but in America we have some very advanced Fundamentalists, who have gotten clear be-

yond the four Gospels ! They do not need them any more. They are all heavenly saints. They do not need much of the rest of the New Testament either. In fact, they have only four Epistles, and that is all they need, You can easily tell they neglect the four Gospels. You can see it in their lives and behaviour. In the four Gospels we have the path of God's holy blessed Son through this scene. If you and I want to know how to walk, we have to study His ways. I do not know anything more sanctifying, more helpful for the believer, than to read over and over again the story of His blessed lowly ways, as He went through this world. It will stir your heart, it will break your heart sometimes, but it will encourage you too, as you seek to go on, and walk with God.

So Paul now says, having been taught the truth in Jesus, through the Risen Christ, put *off the former manner of life, the old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. What does he mean by the old man? Do not think I am quibbling if I say it means more than "the old nature," The old man that I have put off is really the man of old,

It is all that I used to be as a man in **the** flesh, that is the old man. That old man was corrupt, was vile in the sight of God. God said, "I cannot improve him ; the only thing I can do with him is to put him to death in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ." So He did that very thing. When I see the end of the old man in the Cross of Christ, then I am through trying to improve him, and am ready to let the Risen Christ live out His life in me. "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, " but He Who has redeemed me, and now lives for me in the glory of God, in the power of the Spirit, comes to dwell within me. So I put on the new man, the man in Christ. The old man was corrupt according to deceitful lusts. Even those things which are legitimate in themselves, the various appetites of the body, divinely implanted, yet because of sin, have become deceitful lusts.

I once did an unkind thing. A lady came up to me after a meeting, where she had heard me confess sin in prayer. She was physically enormous. She said to me : "Look here, sir, do you mean to tell me

that you, as a Christian and a preacher, ever sin ? ” “Oh, ” I said, “I am sure I do, even when I am not always aware of it.” “Well,” said she, “I am ashamed to think you should be in the pulpit. I want to tell you I never sin.” I said, “**You** never sin ! ” “No, never !” she said. I do not know whether it was the Lord or the Devil who got hold of my tongue. I looked at her, and said, “Pardon me ” (she weighed about 320 lbs.), “do you ever eat too much ?” She looked at me and flushed. “That is none of your business, ” she said. “Not exactly my business, ” I said, “but over-eating, you know, is a sin !” She turned, and out she went. I know she was hurt. The next moment I repented, and I ran after her, but, big as she was, she had gotten down the street and away, and I didn’t have a chance to apologise.

The desire for food is divinely implanted, and we should starve to death without it, yet even that desire may become a deceitful lust, because it is so easy to over-eat to the **hurt of the body, instead of its building up.** The desire for drink is divinely implanted,

otherwise we would be famished for the want of water, but how easy it is to pervert that desire. It can be a deceitful lust. Other physical appetites are perfectly legitimate, divinely implanted, but have become deceitful lusts, and we need to watch constantly against indulging them in a wrong way.

Then Paul says, “be **renewed in the spirit of your mind.**” All renewal must begin within. Unless one is settled in his inmost being that he is going to be right with God above everything else, he will never attain the goal he should as a Christian. “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind ... put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Recognise ~~the~~ fact that the old man has been put to death in the Cross of Christ and now the new man is the man in Christ. That is the man whose nature and whose desires you are to manifest as a Christian. So he tells us how to do this : “Wherefore, putting away lying.” Putting away lying ! This in the Epistle to the Ephesians, the epistle that tells us we are raised up and seated together in heavenly places in Christ ! **Yes**, he tells

us to stop telling lies ! Do Christians ever tell lies ? Well, evidently there was danger of some of these Ephesians telling lies. ‘Wherefore putting away lying.’ I wonder sometimes if we really are conscious of how much untruthfulness there is in us. “Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the uncircumcised Philistines hear,” but I have known even preachers who, in counting their audiences, can see double or treble, and perhaps are quite unconscious of the fact they are lying when they tell you of a thousand people listening to them in a hall that seats three hundred !

It seems to me so easy for us to slip off into exaggeration and untruthfulness. We need to judge this thing. You remember the lady who came to Moody, and said, “Oh, Mr. Moody, I am in great trouble ; I have a habit which has got hold of me, I know it is hurting my testimony, the habit of exaggeration. I start to tell something, and go on and exaggerate, and people know it is not true, and lose confidence in me. I try to get over it. I wondered if you could help me.” Mr. Moody looked at her and said,

“Let’s talk to the Lord about it.” So she went on her knees and said, “Oh, Lord, Thou knowest I have this habit of exaggeration.” “Call it lying, Ma’am, ” said Moody, “and you may get over it !” We don’t like to tell the truth about ourselves. I liked what Mr. Langston told us this morning, “He shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing.” Drag the thing out and call it honestly by its name, and deal with God about it to get deliverance from it.

“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour. ” How can we think of deceiving our neighbours ? It is like deceiving ourselves. “We are members one of another, ” we who are Christians. Think of trying to mislead one another ; it is as though this right hand should try to fool the other hand. ‘Speak every man truth with his neighbour. ”

Then he takes up something that troubles a lot of us. “Be ye angry, and sin not : let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil. ” Temper is, I suppose, a divinely implanted thing. A man with no temper would not amount to

very much. But how easy it is to let temper become **bad** temper, and to let it get away with us, and then try to excuse it. There are a lot of Christians who have never grown much just because of that kind of thing. They will fly into a rage and hurt people, and then say, "Oh, well, I flare up, but I cool down," and let it go. Never a word of confession. They hurt people right and left, and never face them honestly ; **they** excuse it, and call a bad temper, "nerves. "

I remember when I was a young preacher, only a short time married, I had an idea that a preacher was entitled to indulge in the luxury of "nerves. " I had seen others do it. I thought it a preacherified thing to go all to pieces. I got a lesson once ; it takes a wife to give it you sometimes ! I had been preaching in San Francisco, and had a very full day. I went over early and had one meeting at 9 a.m., then participated with a gathering of Christians in remembrance of the Lord at 11 ; then a meeting in the afternoon, and another later, and a street meeting, and then an inside meeting, and in all I preached five times. On my way home I was

all in, I huddled in a corner of the street car (you call it tram), and was luxuriating in “nerves.” My wife said something to me : I don’t remember what it was. I answered her in that husbandly way that so many of us are familiar with ! She turned to me and said, “What do you mean, snapping at me like that, just after coming out of a meeting ? You stand up on the platform and you look so holy, you would think butter wouldn’t melt in your mouth ; then you snap at me on the way home. I haven’t done anything to deserve that. I just asked you a simple question. What would your congregation think of you now ?” O dear, I was all down at once and humbled. I said, “My dear, I am so sorry. I didn’t mean to snap at you, but you know I am all worn out. I preached five times to-day, and I am all unnerved.” My wife said : “Well, I have *listened* to you five times. I am just as tired as you are. If I can afford to be pleasant, you certainly can.” I had to apologise. I learned then not to excuse a bad temper and just call it “nerves.”

You know, if you confess the thing you

can get deliverance from a bad temper as from anything else, if you confess it honestly in the presence of God. He says here, "Be ye angry, and sin not." Is there a time to be angry ? Solomon says there is. Our Lord Jesus was angry. You remember where it says, "He looked round about upon them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts." What was it that angered Him ? Downright hypocrisy on the part of the religious leaders, devoid of all sympathy for a poor suffering woman, but intensely jealous of religious observances and ordinances and ritual. The Lord Jesus was indignant at such hypocrisy. Yes, there is a place to be angry. An old Puritan once said : "I am determined so to be angry as not to sin, therefore to be angry at nothing but sin" -not at the sinner, but at sin.

Suppose you do lose your temper, "let not the sun go down upon your wrath. " Do not let the day come to an end that you leave a failure like that unjudged and unconfessed. If you go to the people you say these sharp angry things to, and make confession to them, and go to God about it, you **will** not

have to do it many times before you are through with it, through the infinite grace of God. “Neither give place to the devil,” he is the slanderer, and the Lord does not want you to be in his company.

Think of talking to the Ephesians as Paul does in the next verse. “Let him that stole steal no more : but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” Are there Christians who actually stoop to steal ? Oh, how many Christians I have had come to me and say : “I am terribly burdened, and I must talk to you.” I say, “Burdened ? What about ?” “Oh, well, I was working in a shop, and I saw a pair of gloves, and I thought there was nobody about, and there wasn’t, so I slipped them into my bag. I just don’t know what to do about it.” “There is only one thing to do about it,” I said, “and that is to go straight back and face the thing honestly, and pay for them, and confess the theft and get things put right.” Isn’t it strange how people won’t do that ? They say, “I am afraid they will think I am dishonest.” I

say, ‘Well, they’ll think the truth, won’t they?’” We like to cover things up. We will never get right with God so long as we cover up. The Scripture says : “He that covereth his sin shall not prosper, but **whoso** confesseth and forsaketh it shall **find** mercy. ”

The stealing is not always from man. I received recently through the mail a brown paper package, about as big as my Bible, in ordinary butcher’s paper. My address was on it, and I opened it. At the same time I received a letter. I opened the package first and was amazed to find \$800 (about £160) in currency, and it was not registered. So I read the letter which was in the same handwriting. It was from a lady. She said : “My dear brother, I read an article of yours in the *Sunday School Times*, in which you spoke of our responsibility to see that the Lord has at least a tenth of our income. As I read it I was deeply convicted. I had been robbing God for years. I had been going back over my accounts, and find I have stolen \$800 from God. I have been down to the bank and drawn it out, and mailed it to you. Will you please use it for the Lord’s

work ?” She gave no name, and I could only put a note in the *Sunday School Times*, hoping she would see it. She sent it wrapped up in a package ; any dishonest postal employee might have made off with it and no one could have traced it. There were \$800 that woman sent in to settle with God. She had been stealing and using His money for herself, and her conscience would not allow it any longer. When people get as genuine as that, blessing comes, something happens. “Let him that stole steal no more ; but rather let him **labour**, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. ”

Then Paul goes on, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. ”

Do you ever pass on salacious stories ? I was at a conference in Canada, not as large as this, some years ago. A number of preachers were chatting together in the sitting-room of the house where they were staying. Several of their wives were present. The gong rang, and the ladies all disappeared

to help serve the lunch. A man who just came in, rather a well-known man, a Christian farmer, turned to the rest and said : “By the way, brethren, now that the ladies have gone, I want to tell you a good story.” Immediately one of the brothers spoke up and said : “Just a moment, brother, before you tell your story. There are no ladies here, but the Holy Ghost is here, and He is far more sensitive than the most fastidious lady that ever lived. Is your story fit for Him ? ” “Oh,” said the farmer, as he **coloured**, “thank you, brother, I accept the rebuke. By the grace of God I will never tell such a story again.” Christians are guilty sometimes of corrupt communication, and it is right in this connection that Paul adds, “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God,” for He is dwelling within you.

Dishonesty in word and action and corrupt words and anger—all these things grieve Him. “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger and **clamour**, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice ; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, for-

giving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Time forbids further comment, but may God the Holy Spirit drive every word home to our consciences, that, living in the power of His truth, we may glorify our blessed Lord in all our ways.

Cleansing by the Word

John 13. 1-17.

I FEEL in my own heart that God has given me gracious evidence that I have selected the right portion of Scripture from which to speak to you this afternoon. As I listened this morning to the precious messages, and particularly when the Rev. Colin Kerr spoke to us on the various aspects of cleansing, I felt, as you can realise, it would lead right up to this. I had been meditating on this during last evening, and whenever I woke in the night, and so I felt the Lord was saying, "That is the train of thought and you keep to it." It is not always easy to know what one had better take up, with so many different people gathered together who have so many varied needs.

In this 13th chapter of John's Gospel we have pictured for us in a very graphic way our Lord's present ministry at God's right hand. We often speak, and rightly,

of the finished work of Christ. When we use that term we refer to the work of redemption, His propitiatory work accomplished on Calvary's Cross.

When Moody and Sankey were in this country years ago, Sankey popularised the little hymn that is the answer to the question: "What must I do to be saved?"

"Nothing, either great or small,
Nothing, sinner, no.
Jesus did it, did it all,
Long, long ago.

"When He from His lofty throne
Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done,
Hearken to His cry :

"It is finished,' yes, indeed,
Finished every jot.
Sinner, this is all you **need**—
Tell me, is it not ?

"Weary, working, burdened one,
Wherefore toil you so ?
Cease your doing ; all was done
Long, long ago.

"Till to Jesus' work you cling,
By a simple faith,
Doing is a deadly **thing**—
Doing ends in death.

"Cast your deadly doings down,
Down at Jesus' feet.
Stand in Him, in **Him alone**,
Gloriously complete. "

I remember James Anthony Froude says in one of his essays that that hymn was absolutely immoral, because it laid no stress whatever on man's part in the work of salvation. It was not intended to : it was intended to put the stress where it properly belongs, on the finished work of our **Lord** Jesus Christ. Man's part comes in after he has trusted Christ, not before.

You remember the coloured brother who was converted, and oh, he was a happy man ! and he got up in a testimony meeting. He was telling what the Lord had done for him, it was Jesus first, and Jesus last, and Jesus all the way. The leader of the meeting was a legalist, and when the good coloured brother sat down, he said, "Our brother has given us the Lord's side in the work of salvation, but when I got converted there was a whole lot I had to do first : I had to do my part before God did His. Brother, don't you want to tell us about your part ?" The coloured brother got up and said, "Brethren, I clean done forgot, didn't I. I didn't tell you of my part. I sure did my part. I did it well, running away from God

as fast as my sins could carry me for over thirty years. That was my part. God took after me till He ran me down. That was His part. ”

We did the sinning, and He did the saving. So we love to look back on that finished work. “It is finished !” exclaimed a dying saint, and added, “On that I can hang my whole eternity.”

Now while it is right to speak of the finished work of Christ, it is just as proper to speak of the unfinished work of Christ. The work whereby guilty sinners are saved was finished on the Cross, but the work whereby saints are sustained and perfected has been going on ever since He went back to the glory. It is written : “He will keep the feet of His saints. ” Up there in Heaven “we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but One who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin ”; Who is able, therefore, to **succour** those who are tempted. He is able to save to the uttermost, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

In 1 John 2, 1, it says : “If any man sin,

we have ***an advocate with the Father***, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins : and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." In introducing that chapter, John said : "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." It is not the will of God that His people should be sinning and constantly failing. Some people have an idea they can never get beyond continually failing.

There came to a town where I was ministering once, in Grass Valley, California, a brother, maybe a bit of an extreme holiness preacher, but I think he was a very godly man. His preaching excited the ire of one good sister. She finally sprang up in the meeting, and said : "Look here, sir, I object to the kind of teaching you have given. It is only conducive to the pride of the human heart. I want to confess here before God that I sin in every thought I think, in every breath I draw, and in everything I do. " And the preacher said : "Well, dear sister, the devil himself couldn't say any more than that !"

Some people have an idea that God Himself would have us sinning in order that we might be humble. It is certainly humbling enough, but He has other ways of humbling us than through insisting we go on living in disobedience to His Word. No! “Little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.” But then, recognising our infirmity, and recognising the fact that we are prone to wander, prone to get our eyes off Christ, and if we do we are certain to fail, he immediately adds : “and if any man sin “-he makes it individual-“if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.” That word “advocate,” as you know, is exactly the same word in the original as that which the Lord Jesus used in John, chapters **14** to **16**, where He gives us five times over the promise of the coming Comforter. “I will send the Comforter,” and in the first Epistle of John it is the same word : we have a Comforter, an Advocate, a Paraclete, One Who comes to our side to help.

Why do we need “an Advocate with the Father” ? Because we have an accuser.

Satan is called the accuser of the brethren, which accused them before God day and night. Be sure you don't get in with him and join forces with him as an accuser of the brethren, the people of God. You say : "Oh, I can't help seeing their blunders !"

You would not see so many if you were looking at your own. I know people who can see all kinds of blunders in others, and who are blind to their own failures.

I heard a man get up in a meeting where he had no right to speak, and try to regulate other people ; **he** was trying to regulate the women of the meeting. In fact, he himself was violating the Scripture which definitely forbids brawling. He was brawling in a public meeting where he had no right to speak. It is so easy to try and set others right and forget ourselves. When we begin to accuse the brethren we get into the company of the devil. He is the accuser of the brethren, and he accuses always. When I say "brethren," I don't mean **the** little company that looks upon me as one of them, not "**the Brethren**" with the capital "B," but all the brethren, whether Presbyterian, Angli-

can, Baptist, Congregational, or what not. "But," you say, "it's true." Of course, the Devil would not have the cheek to accuse if it were not true. He sees a believer fail, and says to God : "Look ! there's one of Your Christians. Listen to him now. Listen to what he is saying. Do You acknowledge him as a Christian ? See what he is doing." The Blessed Lord Jesus is there, and shows His wounds, and spreads His hands, and says : "My Father, I took even that into account when I died on Calvary's Cross. Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning ? Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan, and leave Me to attend to My own," He will look after them and restore them. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Why not "an advocate with God" ? We read : "We have a great High Priest with God," that is, One to give us a perfect representation before the throne of God. Why doesn't it say here "we have an advocate with God ?" It says we have "an advocate with the Father" because He wants us to understand that even failure on the part of the believer has not altered the relationship. God is still

Father to the failed believer ; the believer is still His child, and the Blessed Lord Jesus is His advocate, and is going to see his soul is restored. “He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. ”

“We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ” Oh, how we need that-“the *righteous*,” when we are so conscious of our own unrighteousness, when our hearts are breaking as we think of the failure and sin, and when saying, “Oh, Lord, I never thought that I would dishonour Thee like this ! I, redeemed by precious blood ; to think I would do such an unrighteous thing. ” The Holy Spirit says : “Look yonder ! there is the infinitely righteous One in the presence of God on your behalf. Jesus Christ, the righteous, is the propitiation for your sins. He took every sin into account from cradle to grave, when He went to that Cross.”

“All thy sins were laid upon Him,
 Jesus bore them on the tree ;
 God, Who knew them, laid them on Him,
 And believing, thou art free. ”

Then, notice again, “If any man sin, we

have an advocate.” It doesn’t say, “If any man confesses sin, we have an advocate.” Before we confess, before ever we are broken at all, the Devil is there to accuse, but Christ is there to defend as our advocate. As a result of His advocacy the blessed Holy Spirit brings the truth of God to bear upon our heart and consciences. It is that which leads the believer to get into the presence of the Lord and judge his sin and confess it. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

See how this is pictured in this 13th chapter of John : “Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” I like that ; He knew all the blunders and mistakes and sins that they would ever be guilty of, yet having loved them, He loved them unto the end. Someone translated it : “He loved them all the way through.” He loved Peter all the way through his denial, and his cursing and

swearing, and He loved him back to Himself. His love broke Peter's heart, and resulted in his complete restoration eventually. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them all the way through."

"And supper being now ended, the Devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, **jesus,**" in the full consciousness of His Deity, in the full recognition of His **Sonship**, in the full realisation that all power was to be given to Him as Man in Heaven and earth, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God." Listen to that : is there anybody here questioning the eternal Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ ? Notice, He did not begin to be when He was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary here on earth. He came from God, and He went to God.

You have heard the story of the two men debating the question of the pre-existence of Christ on a railway station, one a Unitarian and the other a Christian man. The Unitarian was insisting that the Bible itself nowhere taught that Jesus had any existence before

He was born into the world. The other insisted to the contrary. The Unitarian was too much of a casuist for his adversary, and as the Christian would quote texts such as, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," the other replied, "In the mind of God, of course, but not actually." So one text after another was swept out of the way. Another Christian man stood near and heard the argument. He stepped over and listened carefully, when both turned to him, and said, "What do you think?" "Oh," he said, "one verse settles that for me." "What verse is that?" "2 Corinthians 8. g." "What does that say?" "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye, through His poverty, might be rich."

"Well," said the Unitarian, "I don't see what that has to do with it. That is not discussing the same question." Even the Christian said, "I don't see that that throws any light on the subject." But the other said, "Gentlemen, think! It says He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor. Was

He ever rich on earth ? Was He rich when born in a stable and cradled in a manger ? Was He rich when working in that mean village of Nazareth as a carpenter ? Was He rich going over the hills and through the valleys of Palestine when He could say, ‘foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head’ ? The text says He was rich. When was He rich ?” The Unitarian’s reply was : “I am not going to discuss that,” and he walked off, The train whistled, and the stranger hurried aboard. As the train pulled out, the Christian man was seen running after the Unitarian, saying, “Tell me this, when was He rich ? I want to know,” but the other was on his way.

When was He rich ? Oh, He was rich in those uncounted ages when He dwelt in the bosom of the Father, ere He Who was Lord of all stooped to become poorer than the poorest for our redemption.

“Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God.” Notice that, He came from God, He went back to

God. He says in the **17th** chapter of John :
 “Now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with
 Thine **Own Self with the** glory that I had
 with Thee before the world was.” There is
 no question as to what the Bible teaches
 about the eternal Deity of our Lord. Micah,
 in the Old Testament, says : “But thou, Bethle-
 hem Ephratah, though thou be little among
 the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall
 He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler of
 Israel, Whose goings forth have been from
 of old, from everlasting.” “Thou art the
 everlasting Word the Father’s Only Son.”
 He came in such lowliness and grace from
 all that glory to the Cross to die for sinners.
 Now He was going back again. In view of
 that, and the ministry He would be taking
 up in the glory, He gave us an acted parable.
 “**He** riseth from supper, and laid aside His
 garments ; and took a towel and girded
 Himself. ” A slave or a servant should have
 done this. But there was none to wait upon
 the blessed Lord and His company, so He
 took the servant’s place. None of them
 thought of doing it, not even the beloved
 John. It didn’t occur to him, or to the **im-**

pulsive Peter, or to any of the rest, but Jesus quietly arranged to take the servant's place.

He went from one to another *washing their feet, and wiping them with a towel*. He wiped away all the evidence of His own blessed work. He cleansed them, made them clean, and just dried them, so tenderly, that nobody could say, "I see you have just had a washing, and you needed it pretty bad." He used the towel and wiped all the traces of His own work away, leaving them clean and undefiled.

All the time Peter is looking on. I think I can tell what is going on in his heart. He says, "My word, I wouldn't have believed it! Even John letting the Master wash his feet. He ought to be ashamed of himself; and Thomas and Nathanael, and all the rest. Wait till He gets to me. I will give them all a lesson." But he never thought of doing it for his Lord. He never said : "This is not for You to do, Lord ; let me do this menial thing." He was resting on his dignity, and he would teach the others a lesson. Jesus came to Simon Peter, and Peter said to Him :

“Lord, dost Thou wash my feet ?” Every eye was watching, every ear listening. They thought : “Peter has more respect for the Lord than we had. Peter is showing the way. Maybe we made a mistake. ” Jesus said : “What I do thou knowest not now : but thou shalt know hereafter.” That is the answer I would give to people who think the Lord was creating a new Christian ordinance like baptism or the Lord’s supper. “Thou shalt know hereafter. ”

Peter found out what Jesus meant after that awful night when he fell into the mire of sin and got his feet so defiled, and for three days and nights he wandered about until on the Resurrection Day the Saviour sought him out and had a private interview, and used the basin and water again and cleansed his feet, that fellowship might be restored. “What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. ” Peter said, “Thou shalt never wash my feet.” It doesn’t do to be too positive. How many times do we say : “I am never going to do this or that,” and some of us have to take it back. We have found out we were setting our will against

the will of God ; ***the very things we were*** refusing were intended for our blessing.

Jesus says very seriously : “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me.” Think of that ; He is saying that to every Christian. “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. ” Notice what He did not say, and then what He did say. He did not say, “Thou hast no part ***in*** Me.” He could say that to unsaved people here to-day. No matter how religious you are, no matter how well meaning, if Jesus Christ wash thee not in His own precious Blood, you can have no part in Him. Do not forget that. Here He was not talking to the unsaved, but to one of His own. He didn’t say, “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in Me. ” Part ***in*** Him is life and union, and Peter already had part in Him. He had believed and trusted Him, and had life in Christ.

But what Jesus did say was : “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. ” Part with Him in communion, in fellowship. The believer who gets out of fellowship could never by any effort of his own restore that fellowship again to all eternity. Jesus says

to every one : “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. ” No fellowship with the Son of God, no communion with the Holy One, unless He Himself fits us for that fellowship and communion.

When Peter hears these words **said**—poor, blundering Peter (he is just like ourselves, isn’t he ?), he goes clean to the other extreme, and he says : “Is that it ? I would rather have part with Thee, Lord, than anything in the world ;so if I have to be washed, make it a complete job. Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Give me a whole bath if You like.” But Jesus said : “No, Peter, you are wrong again. He that is bathed ” (implying complete washing) “~~needeth~~ not save to wash his feet. ” What is He talking about ? We read in the Epistle to Titus of the washing, or the bath, of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. When we are born of God, when we are justified before God, we have been completely cleansed, we have been completely bathed. Jesus addressing His disciples, said : “Now ye are clean by the word which I have spoken. ” That word tells the story of the

redeeming value of the precious Blood of Jesus. When we believe that message, the Gospel message, we are born again ; that is the washing of regeneration, and we are clean every whit. You know it is by the Gospel we are born again. Some people have an idea that the new birth takes place somehow through the observance of some sacrament, but Peter says : “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 ... but the Word of our God shall stand for ever, and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.” That is how we are born again, through the Word of the truth of the Gospel. When we believe the Gospel we become new creatures in Christ Jesus.

“He that is bathed needeth not *save* to *wash his feet*. ” In the times in which these words were spoken, a well-to-do person living in a nice house would have a bathing place in a central court. In the morning he had a complete bath : afterwards, as he went out to the street and returned foot-soiled, a

servant would wash his feet. He did not need to be bathed again, but needed only to wash his feet. In the Tabernacle of old, Moses brought the priests to the door, and there they had to be stripped, as you have to be stripped of your own self-righteousness and self-confidence. Then they were washed all over. That official washing was never repeated so far as their priesthood was concerned. Then Moses clothed them with new garments. That is a picture of the new birth. There was the laver, and every time the priests passed through the courtyard they had to wash their feet at the laver. Jesus said : "He that is bathed, needeth not save to wash his feet."

Are your feet defiled ? Have you been deliberately allowing your feet to become defiled ? There is defilement that we contract almost unconsciously. You can scarcely walk through a world like this without defilement. Uncleanliness is everywhere. The books appearing in thousands from the Press are saturated with impurity ; the pictures have all kinds of impure and unholy things, the conversation of Christless men

and women is defiling. If it were not for the blessed fact that our Lord is constantly carrying on His gracious work, constantly applying the water of the Word to us, how dreadfully unclean we would become. There is defilement in that sense that we may not even be conscious of, that He is constantly washing away. Oh, what a terrible thing it is if we deliberately become defiled ! If we refuse then to put our feet in His hands : if we stand with Peter, and say : “Thou shalt never wash my feet !”

A young man came to me once in great soul-trouble. His Christian life was all wrong, because of a dreadful spirit of impurity that had laid hold of him. I talked to him of his habits, and I found that young man was **defiling** his mind continually by reading filthy pornographic novels, he was in the habit of attending salacious moving pictures ; everything that tended to stir up the worst lascivious feelings. He wondered why he could not be pure ! That is deliberately going into the mire and saying : “**Isn’t** it dreadful I’m getting my feet so **filthy** ? ”

Suppose we have been more or less to blame for our own defilement. You know whether there is anything in your life that is defiled, unclean, that you are **tolerating**—oh, then, here is the way of deliverance. Put your soiled feet into His hands. He wants to cleanse them. It is written, “Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the Word.” He took the water and applied it to their feet, and washed away their defilement. The Word is likened to water.

David says : “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word.” Suppose my hand becomes unclean. I plunge it into a basin of water and cleanse it. The water does its work. My life becomes defiled, my conscience, my mind, my heart : **I** let the blessed Lord apply the truth of His word, and do not shrink from it. I let God speak, and I listen humbly to His voice and seek through Christ to walk in obedience to what He reveals to me. The defilement is cleansed out of my life, and I am clean. We sing at

times, "Make me clean." But do we put our feet into His hands ? Do we come to Him and just turn ourselves over to Him and say, "Lord, I cannot cleanse myself, but here I am : I am ready now to act in obedience to Thy Word. Reveal Thy mind to me " ?

I had the privilege of meeting the late Bishop Taylor Smith when he visited America. I was with him in a number of conferences, and observed the godliness of his life, and I have been helped greatly by his ministry. I have just been reading the Rev. E. L. Langston's story of his life, and it has impressed me very much. He points out that every time the Bishop came to a crisis in his life, he sought the mind of God, and what the Lord showed him he obeyed without hesitation. I said, "Lord, help me always to be like that !"

I sat in a restaurant in Cincinnati with him, and he left the table first. The waitress came over after he had gone and said, "Pardon me, sir, but who was the very holy man who just left here ? He dresses in a very odd way, doesn't he ? " (You see, we are not used to gaiters in America !) I said,

“He is a Bishop of the Church of England, and that is their walking attire.” She said, “Is that so ? I have never seen anybody dressed like that. I have noticed him every day, and watched him at the table, and I felt he was the holiest man I have ever seen in my life.” He hadn’t talked to her very much, but his demeanour, everything about him, spoke to her. Why ? He was a man washed by the Word that he might be controlled by the Word.

You and I want to count for God. Let us settle it that when He speaks we obey. When He gives us the word, when we find the mind of God, we will not debate or argue, or wait, but will obey, and do what He Himself has asked us to do. Then we shall have blessing. In this way we can help others. The Lord Jesus says here after He had washed their feet, “Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well ; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.”

How can I wash my brother’s feet ?

When I see a brother or sister getting into defilement, getting away from the path of the Good Shepherd into the muck and mire of this world, and I see the defiling things of earth are clinging to them, I can ignore them, or talk about them, and that won't help ; or I can go to them in a kindly way, with the Word of God in my hand, and, not professing to be any better than they, I can point out something from God's Word that may be used to help and deliver. If I do that, I have washed their feet.

Did you ever try to wash your brother's feet ? Sometimes they get a bit stubborn, and they don't want you to wash them. But then we sometimes go to them with ice cold water, and no-one likes putting their feet in icy water. We are so legal and stern and they draw back. Then some, I think, use boiling water, and the feet are very tender.

Remember the word in Galatians : "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." That will temper it, and make

it luke-warm water ; don't you be lukewarm,
but only the water. You present the Word
graciously and lovingly, and God may use
you to wash the feet of His saints.

CHANGED BY BEHOLDING

Changed by Beholding

“But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay ” (2 Cor. 1. 18).

THE opening verses of this chapter are, I think, a bit ironical. The Apostle Paul had been used of God for the conversion of these Corinthians. Into that Godless city-one of the vilest cities in the ancient world (for if a person were given to utter depravity, he was said to Corinthianise, so vile and wicked were the standards by which the people generally lived)-into that city Paul came, preached the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, determined, as he says, “to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified,” and that old Gospel worked, as it always works when it is presented in the energy of the Holy Ghost. There is no other message needed to change men and women, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Under Paul’s ministry

for a year and a half a number of them were converted. You remember he cites a great list of sins of which he says no one given to these things shall inherit the kingdom of God. Then he adds, “and such were some of you : but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God ” (1 Cor. 6. 11).

Having been saved, they were brought together as a Christian company, a Christian *ecclesia*, a Christian church. They were a wonderful church in many ways. They came behind in no gift ; all sorts of spiritual gifts and graces were manifested among them, so much so that eventually a spirit of envy and jealousy came in, and teacher was set against teacher, preacher against preacher, and exhorter against exhorter, and by and by **parties came** into the church. Some said, “I am of Paul ; I like one who gives deep teaching.” Others said, “I am of Peter ; I like one who can stir up our pure minds, a real exhorter.” Others said, “I am of Apollos ; the eloquent man, one mighty in the Scriptures, a real evangelist.” So they

were dividing into groups according to their appreciation of the ministry God had given, and Paul rebuked them for that.

Then there came among them certain men from **Judea** who tried to undermine Paul's influence over them. These Judaising brethren hated the plain, simple Gospel of the grace of God, so they undertook to try to destroy the confidence of the saints in the one who had led them to Christ, in order that they might turn them away from the liberty of grace to the bondage of law. You have a good idea of how that kind would come in. I can imagine a couple coming from Jerusalem to see a few of the brethren. Perhaps it was prayer meeting night, so there might only be a few. They would say : "We are very pleased to see you, brethren. So you are Christians ? We are Christians too."

"Oh, where do you come from ? "

"We come from the centre of everything, from Jerusalem."

"Do you indeed ? "

"Yes, and you know we are just out ministering the Word as the Lord opens

doors, and we thought we would have some meetings with you, if you like. ”

“Oh, yes !”

“How were you converted ? ”

“We were converted through the Apostle Paul. ”

“You mean Paul of Tarsus ? Not an Apostle, exactly, you understand ; he was not an Apostle, not one of the twelve. He never attended the Apostolic College in Jerusalem. He is a free-lance. A very nice brother, of course, and very helpful for pioneer work, but the trouble is with dear Paul, he is not able to lead you saints on as he should. Did he tell you anything about the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant, the ordinance of Circumcision ?”

“No, he didn’t. ”

“He didn’t ? That’s just like dear Paul, He dwells on the simple things and leaves out the deep truths. Did he tell you anything about clean and unclean meats ?”

“No. ”

“He didn’t explain the difference ? Well, that’s too bad, Fortunately, the Lord has sent us to you. If you care to announce a

meeting or two we will give you some addresses and lead you on to these deeper things.”

I don’t know that it happened that way, but I’m pretty sure it did. It always happens that way nowadays. In a little while they were winning the affections of these Corinthians, who were so taken up with the new teaching that they went out of the meeting saying, “That was great, wasn’t it ? Wasn’t it deep ? I have never heard anything as deep as that. Paul never went into anything like that. This is great truth and wonderful teaching !” **Soon they began to think they** knew more than their old teacher, more than the man who had brought them to Christ. In fact they said, “If Paul comes back it is a question whether we can receive him or not. It’s just a pity he hasn’t got a better understanding of things. ”

Paul hears about this, and says, “I’m coming back all right. I’ll be there, and I will know the speech of those who speak, whether in words or in power ; I will be ready to face these false teachers in your presence. Then I’ll make them show what they really are.” And so he says to these

Corinthians : “I intend to come. Do we need letters of commendation to you ? Had I better write off to Peter or James and see if we can get a letter, ‘ We commend to your fellowship Paul of Tarsus ’? Do we need letters ? When we go to other places should we have a letter from you ? Maybe you should send a letter to say, ‘ We are happy to commend as an evangelist, not a teacher, our brother Paul.’ ”

Oh, you know the absurdity of it is manifest ! Letter ! “Why, you are our letter, ” he exclaims, “what were you when we came to you ? Poor, lost sinners of the Gentiles, sunk down in the depths of sin. Did these Judaisers come with the Gospel of the grace of God, and lift you out of sin and uncertainty ? They did not. Oh, no ! they waited until people were converted and formed into churches, and then they came. You are our Epistle. We found you in your sins ; we preached Christ to you, and through the Gospel we preached a tremendous change was brought about. Our message, our commendation, is written not on tablets of stone, but in fleshly tablets of the heart. ”

He says, as it were, "If anybody asks, 'What is the proof that you are called of God to preach ?' we shall reply, 'Go over to Corinth and see that church. Go to **Thessalonica** and see the church there. Go to Philippi-all the places where we have made known the Gospel ; then you will find what the Gospel can do. There you will see clearly enough how God has set His seal on our testimony.' " There is nothing that proves the truth of **the** Gospel and the power of the Cross of Christ like the lives of changed men and women. The Gospel proves its Divine origin by what it does for those who believe it.

Notice that Paul does not say, "Ye are the Epistles of Christ. " He uses, not the plural, but the singular, "Ye are the Epistle of Christ. " The whole Church is the Epistle, and every individual is just a word in that Epistle. Some of us are very little words, "oh " and "and, " and words like that, but all part of the Epistle telling the story of the grace of God. Paul says, "I don't think I need any other letter of commendation than yourselves, You will speak up when the

test comes, won't you, and you will be willing to say it was my message that brought you to Christ?" "Not that we are **sufficient** of ourselves, to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God Who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament." He did not mean the little book we call the New Testament, which was not written at that time, but the new covenant as a whole. "We are able ministers of the new covenant," not the letter (which refers to the old Covenant engraved on tablets of stone), but the spirit (the new covenant that was sealed by the Blood of Jesus and confirmed by the coming of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost). It is the Spirit of God that makes the new covenant a real thing in the lives of redeemed men and women.

Then he goes on to contrast the two covenants, and says what the old one could not do, the new does. "But if the ministration of death, written and **engraven** in stones, was glorious "-the ministration of death, what was that? It was the law given on Sinai. It said, "The man that doeth these things

shall live in them, ” but “cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” The law could only condemn men to death, because of their failures and sins. Yet there was a glory about it. It was the most marvellous revelation in the world when God came down in power on Sinai and gave Moses that Covenant. It was glorious “so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance ; which glory was to be done away ” (3. 7) . He refers to the second giving of the law, when Moses went up as Mediator, after the incident of the golden calf, and was in the mount forty days, and God gave him the law the second time, and tempered justice with mercy ; it was then that Moses came down with a shining face, because he had been looking ahead at the manifestation of the glory yet to be revealed when He, Who would fulfil all the types of the law, should come into this scene. He would magnify the law and make it honourable. When Moses came down, the people could not look at him. So he put a veil over his face while

he talked to them. We generally think he did that to save the eyesight of the people. Here it says it was because “that glory was to be done away, ” and Moses did not want them to see the glory of that covenant fade away, as it must do, because of man’s inability to meet its requirements.

“If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.” Why does he call the Gospel the ministration of righteousness ? Because it is in the Gospel that God’s righteousness is revealed.

“‘Tis in the Cross of Christ we see
 How God can save, yet righteous be ;
 ‘Tis in the Cross of Christ we trace
 His righteousness yet wondrous grace ;
 The sinner who believes is free,
 Can say, ‘The Saviour died for me’ ;
 Can point to that Atoning Blood,
 And say, ‘That made my peace with God !’ ”

The question of righteousness is taken care of in the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and so God’s grace can be extended to every believing sinner. “For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed

in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that **excelleth.**" All the glory of the old Covenant had derived it from the new. It was like the moon shining in the heavens ; it has no glory of its own, it gets it from the sun. All the glory of the old Covenant was reflected from that to which the Spirit of God was pointing when the Lord Jesus was to fulfil on our behalf all that was written in the law. "Seeing, then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech. " Even though we live in the glorious dispensation of the ministration of righteousness, some people look back to the law as a means of salvation still. Some who know we cannot be justified by it are trying to be sanctified by keeping the law. They make rules and regulations as if there were not enough in the Old Testament to regulate their lives. That is not the way.

I had a little school in Oakland, California, for young American Red Indians. I had one Navaho Indian there once, a **pretty little chap.** I brought him in from Arizona one Saturday night, and introduced

him to the others. On Sunday evening I went in to the young people's meeting. I liked to slip in and sit there and not interfere. They were discussing the question of law and grace. They were doing their best, but it was not much of a best. The more they talked, the deeper they got into the mud. Finally, one turned and said, "Maybe our Indian brother would like to say a word." John got up and this is what he said : "Well, my dear young brothers and sisters, I have been sitting here listening to you, and I don't know what you are talking about. I don't think you know either. I came over here to learn more about the Gospel to explain to my poor people. If I told them what I heard this evening, they would be worse off than they were before. Concerning this law and grace, let me tell you something. I have just come from Navaholand. I was never on a train except to go short distances before. We travelled all night, and in the morning we were at **Barstow**, in California. We got out and had our breakfast in the hotel. The train didn't leave for an hour, so I walked round and looked at the beautiful

hotel. I had never seen so many and such beautiful rooms, hundreds of rooms ; such a big hogan before (that is the name of the Navaho hut). As I walked about, I saw a sign, ‘Do not spit here.’ I looked at that and I looked at the pavement, and many people had spitted there, and before I thought what I was doing, I spitted there myself. Then I look for a policeman and feel I had better walk away, so I walk away.

“I came on to Oakland, and this morning I was introduced to Mrs. Albert. She took me home to dinner. When I got there in her house, I had never seen such beautiful furnishings. I didn’t like to put my foot down on the carpet, it was so lovely. I slipped into a big chair. I had never been in such a beautiful chair, and there were many pictures and everything beautiful. Mrs. Albert said, ‘John, you make yourself comfortable while I see if the maid has got the dinner ready.’

“I got up and walked around, looking at the pictures. Then I think of something. I looked all round the walls. I was looking for the sign that said, ‘Do not spit here.’

I couldn't see the sign, so I walked into the next room, and looked around, and there was no sign. I said, 'Isn't that too bad, such a pretty house, such beautiful furniture, and nothing to tell people not to spit. Maybe they will make it nasty and dirty.' Then I thought, 'Let me look and see.' I looked everywhere over the carpet, and I couldn't see anybody had spitted there at all. And I didn't, myself, feel like spitting there. I said, 'Isn't this a strange thing ; now I know this is law and grace.' Out there where the sign says 'Do not spit,' so many people spitted because law can't make people want to do right. But when I get in this lovely home, they don't have any sign and nobody spits, because they love their beautiful home and want to keep it nice. I think that is law and grace. " And John sat down. I thought it was too !

The Apostle tells us the ministration of condemnation could tell men what they should do, but couldn't put the desire within them to do the right thing. But the **ministration of grace not only shows men** how they should behave, but puts within

them a delight in the things of God, so they love to glorify Him above everything else.

“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech : and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not **sted-**fastly look to the end of that which is abolished ; but their minds were blinded ; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away, which veil is done away in Christ.” This, he shows, is true of the unconverted Jew when he reads the Old Testament.

When we come to Christ our eyes are opened. We are enabled to see things clearly and understand. “Even to this day ” the veil is upon their hearts. Nevertheless, when the nation of Israel in God’s appointed time “shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.” There is a day coming when the eyes of Israel will be opened, and they will look upon Him Whom they have pierced and **recognise** Him as their Saviour. In the meantime, however, what about ourselves ? “When it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the

Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” The Lord is the very spirit of the Old Testament, the fulfilment of all these types and shadows. Now as we read our Bibles, as we read the revelation God has given, “we all with open face **beholding** as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Here it is that I believe we have the deepest secret of holiness. Holiness is the result of heart occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ. I grant you, there are steps leading up to it. No one will enter into the blessing of a Spirit-filled life as long as he tampers with sin. When he comes to the place where he is ready to judge anything in his life that is hindering his spiritual growth, put it away and settle with God, no matter what it may mean. When he **recognises** the fact that the Holy Spirit of God Who dwells in all believers is come to dwell in him, not merely as a guest, but to take control of the whole man, then he enters more fully into the blessed life.

Do you realise that the Spirit of God

dwells in you, if you are a Christian ? “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” But does the Spirit of God control and dominate your heart and life, or is He pushed off to some corner ?

You have seen a song, perhaps, called “The Shelf Behind the Door.” It pictures a believer’s heart as a house, and the Lord has come in by the Spirit. He can go anywhere He likes in the house, only the believer has saved a little space for himself, a shelf behind the door, on which he keeps the things he doesn’t want the Lord to interfere with. The chorus goes like this :

“The shelf behind the door,
The shelf behind the door,
Tear it down and throw it out,
Don’t use it any more.

For Jesus wants His temple clean,
From the ceiling to the floor ;
He even wants that little shelf
That’s hid behind the door. ”

What a lot of people have a shelf behind the door ! Have you got one ? I remember a man once said to me : “I’ve got my shelf behind the door cleared at last. ” He had an old black pipe on it. Another one had a pack

of playing cards. There are lots of things people have on that shelf, you know ! Ambition, the love of money, the love of fame, the love of pleasure and many other things. What is on that shelf behind the door ? Tear it down, throw it out, don't use it any more. When you have surrendered to Him, you have said to Him, "Lord, by Thy Spirit, take full control. Henceforth, let me be for Thyself alone. I would live only for Thy glory." Make this book your counsel. Live in it. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. As this blessed Book is opened up to you, Christ Himself will loom large before the eyes of your soul, and as you are occupied with Him, you will be transformed into the same image, from glory to glory. Do not think you will be like Christ all at once, for you will not. No one of us can claim to have reached the complete ideal yet. But it is always before us, being changed day by day, growing in grace in the knowledge of Christ, changed by beholding.

I have often heard my friend, Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, President of the Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas, interrupt

some one giving out the hymn, "Take time to be holy." He always says, "Just a moment, let me take the liberty of changing a word or two. Sing it, 'Take time to behold Him.' "

That is the way to be holy. Sit in His presence. Let the beauty of Jesus so occupy your own soul that you yourself will become like Him, and others "will take knowledge of you, that you have been with Jesus." This is the secret of Christian holiness, heart-occupation with Christ Himself.

We do not become holy by looking into our own hearts. We shall only find corruption there. We are to look off unto Jesus, and as He becomes the object of our hearts, as we contemplate His holiness, purity, love, and compassion, His devotion to the Father's will, we shall be changed, imperceptibly to ourselves, perhaps, but none the less surely, into His blessed image.

WHEN WE SHALL SEE HIM

When We shall See Him

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure ”
(John 3. 1-3).

I HAVE been trying to draw your attention to the blessedness of being transfigured by beholding the face of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was the sight of His face that won our poor, wayward souls in the beginning when we were going on in our sins. And then we met Him, and we looked upon Him, and we realised that He was the eternal Lover of our souls Who had given Himself for us ; and our hearts were won, and we were saved. We know something of what John Newton meant in that fine old hymn that told his own experience.

“In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object met my sight,
And stayed my wild career.

“I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agony and blood,
Who fixed His dying eyes on me,
As near the Cross I stood.

“Sure, never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look,
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.

“My conscience felt and owned my guilt,
And plunged me in despair,
I saw my sins His blood had spilt,
And helped to nail Him there.

“But a second look He gave, which said :
‘I freely all forgive,
This blood has for thy ransom paid,
I die that thou mayst live.”

We fell in love with Him for ever. We had seen Him bleeding, suffering, dying for us, and we were won by Divine grace.

Then we have been noticing that if we would grow in grace, and in holiness of life, it can only be as we all, “beholding as in a mirror, with unveiled face, the glory of the Lord, are changed-transfigured-into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” And, of course,

that holiness will never be absolutely perfected until we see Him as He is.

In this passage the Apostle dwells upon the present blessing : “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” The Revised Version puts in three words that are left out here, “we should be called the sons of God : *and we are.* ” It is not just that we are hoping to be, but we are here and now, we who have trusted our Lord Jesus Christ. “Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.” We need never expect the world’s approbation if we are living for God. And if we are not living for Him, and yet call ourselves Christians, we will only have the world’s contempt, because even the ungodly know what a Christian ought to be ; and if they see us professing to be Christians, and not living consistently, they will only despise us and look upon us as hypocrites. On the other hand, if we are living for God, we cannot expect their approval. “The world knoweth us not.” Oh, what a luxury it is to give up even a little for Jesus when He

gave up so much for us ! He left Heaven's glory for us. He gave all that He had to redeem us. And, surely, it is a little thing that we should give up the world for His sake. With all our hearts we cry :

“Take the world, but give me Jesus,
All earth's joys are but in name,
But His love abideth ever,
Through eternal years the same.”

I like to tell of a lady who used to live in New York, a fine, godly woman, who moved in the very highest circles of the world's society before she was saved. After her conversion she wanted to give her life in service to God ; and it occurred to her that the most neglected people in her community were the “up and out's,” We hear a lot about the “down and out's ” ; but the need of the “up and out's ” is very seldom thought of. And this lady decided to give herself to carrying the Gospel to these folk in high society who were out of Christ. And she ventured, timidly at first, but by and by people took a great delight and interest in her efforts ; and she began to hold **Bible** Readings in the homes of her wealthy

friends—those who had been her friends in her unconverted days. And these Bible Readings became a fad in society. Women gave up their card parties to come to them ; and they felt it was a great thing when this lady arranged to have a Bible Reading in one of their drawing-rooms ; and they would gather all their friends together to come and hear her, she had such a delightful way of presenting the Word of God. One day she was dwelling on the truth of Christian life, when a beautiful society matron, listening earnestly, spoke up and said : “I would give the world to have your Christian experience. ” And she looked at her, and said : “My dear, that is exactly what it cost me ; and you can have it on the same terms. I gave the world for it ; and I made a wonderful exchange—the world for Jesus.” Who would not give up the world for Him who once knows of His beauty and power ? So we are not at all concerned if the world gives us up, because we give it up. “Therefore the world knoweth us not. ”

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God (the children of God)” right here and now.

Some people say : “Oh, I do not like these folks who are so terribly sure of things !” I was preaching in California years ago, and I am afraid I made some rather unwise remarks about that verse of the old hymn :

“‘Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love my Lord, or no,
Am I His, or am I not ?”

I said some things about it which, maybe, I should not have said. We who preach, we get unwise sometimes-at least I do. And at the close a dear old lady came up to me, and she said : “You have spoiled my favourite hymn for me. ” “What was that ?” I asked. “That lovely old hymn,” she said, “that you made fun of. That has been my favourite hymn ever since I joined the Church ; and you have just spoiled it for me.” I said : “I am sorry, if you got any comfort out of it. What was it that you liked about it ?” “Why, it was so delightfully uncertain, ” she replied. “I always could sing that because I felt that it would not be in the hymn book if a Christian had not written it. And if another Christian felt

like that, maybe I was a Christian after all ; because that is the way I have always felt.” I replied : “**Then** perhaps I had better be more careful, and not say anything about it in the future, if it comforts any poor soul. You keep your hymn if it brings you joy. ” “No, I will never sing it again, ” she said. “I have got the other one now :

‘ ‘Tis done, the great transaction’s done,
I am my Lord’s, and He is mine,
He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the voice divine. “

She had moved out of Doubting Castle into Glory Manor, and her soul was rejoicing in the Lord. It is a great thing to be able to say we *know*, we *know* that we *are the* sons of God. We *know* that we have passed from death unto life. We *know* our sins are forgiven. We *know* that we have life eternal. Have you that assurance, dear friends ? If you have not, you may have it, but you can only have it on God’s terms ; and God’s terms are these, that you give up all pretension to righteousness in yourself; you take your place before Him as a repentant sinner, acknowledging that you have no

goodness to plead, that you have nothing in yourself that counts at all ; and then turn away altogether from self and sin, putting all your trust, and all your confidence in the living Christ Who once died for you on Calvary ; and then take God at His word. He says this : “That through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall have remission of sins. ” And the Apostle Paul, speaking by inspiration, says : “Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” The law of Moses was the highest expression of human effort, but that could never justify one poor sinner. But, thank God, the Lord Jesus Christ saves eternally all who put their trust in Him ; and trusting Him we become the children of God. But that is only the beginning.

“It doth not yet appear what we shall be. ” You have no idea what it is going to be like. You who are on the outside now, you are going to be on the outside for ever if you are not saved. Even we Christians

have no conception of what it is going to be like when this word is fulfilled. "We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. "

Gipsy Rodney Smith is quite a favourite in our country ; and he was preaching down in one of the Southern States where there are many coloured people. These poor people do not have much opportunity of hearing the Gospel preached. They are not welcomed in the Churches where the white folk congregate, and though they have their own Churches, they get very little Bible teaching or clear Gospel messages. There is a lot of emotion, but not much understanding of the truth. My eldest son has given his whole life to instructing them. He is the Superintendent of the coloured Bible Institute in Dallas, Texas. When Gipsy Smith was preaching, and the white people were flocking to hear him, there came to him a petition from the coloured ministers asking him if he would not hold one meeting for their folk. He was very glad to comply, and arrangements were made for the buildings to be reserved entirely for the negroes on one

particular occasion. They came in their thousands. There must have been ten thousand black people all seated there in front of him. The Gipsy could hardly hold the tears back as he looked at them, and he preached one of his best sermons ; and, of course, there was a good deal of punctuation in the way of “Hallelujahs ” and “Amens. ” At times they almost ran away with the meeting ; but the Gipsy proved to be a remarkable master of assemblies.

Suddenly an aged **coloured** woman called out : “Gipsy Smith, may I ask you a question ? ” He looked down at her, and said : “Yes, my sister. What is it ? ” “What **colour** are we going to be when we get to Heaven ? ” she asked. And the Gipsy stopped a moment, and everybody was breathlessly waiting for his answer. Then he replied : “My dear sister, we are going to be just like Jesus.” “Amen,” they shouted everywhere. They knew that all distinctions between the different races would be at an end then. We are going to be just like Him-like Him morally, like Him spiritually, like Him physically, with glorified bodies, and sinless souls, and **puri-**

fied spirits ; with an intelligence, too, like His, for then “we shall know, even as we ourselves have been known.” “We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.” We shall be changed by beholding Him. Here we move on from glory to glory, but then the work of grace will be absolutely completed. In one moment we shall be made just like Himself, when we see Him face to face.

But now what effect ought this to have on our souls ? We read : “And every man that hath this hope set on Him **purifieth** himself, even as He is pure.” Do you love to think of the near Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ ? I do not know how you feel about it, but to me sometimes I just hold my breath these days, it seems to me that I can already hear the coming of His feet. It seems to me that I can almost see the glory shining through the clouds, and I feel as though the moment must soon dawn when “the skies shall cease to sunder the one dear **blood-**bought family, ” and when I Thessalonians 4 will have its glorious fulfilment. “The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven

with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God.” I do not know how people can read their Bibles, and look out upon the world at large without realising that the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh. But you know it is a poor thing if that Blessed Hope is just a theory, just a doctrine. People say to me when I speak on that subject, as I frequently do : “Well, I was glad to hear you. I, too, hold the doctrine of the Lord’s Coming. ” I say : “That is interesting ; but may I ask you, Does it hold you ? ” It is a great thing to hold sound doctrine, but it is a greater thing to have sound doctrine hold you. And when the truth of the Lord’s Coming holds you, depend upon it, you will never be as you used to be before you knew it ; you will never be again what you were, when you once learn to live as daily waiting for the return of God’s Son from Heaven.

Have you ever noticed how the Blessed Hope is presented in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians ? In every one of its five wonderful chapters we have some very definite reference to that Hope. In the first chapter it is connected with conversion. The

Apostle says : “Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven ” (vv. g. 10) . Two things are linked up together-serving and waiting. Do not talk about waiting for the Coming of the Lord if you are not serving faithfully. There are people who talk about the Coming of the Lord, and they are living carnal lives, they are living for self, and for the world. No, no, you cannot really be waiting for God’s Son from Heaven, if you are not seeking to live for His glory. Service is connected with the hope of His Return.

My mother was left a widow when I was about two years of age, and I had a younger brother only three weeks old. Mother had a difficult time caring for two little children for a number of years. I went out to work when I was old enough to do anything. We lived in Los Angeles after we left Canada, where I was born. One time, during school vacation, I went to work with a cobbler named Dan Mackay, an Orkney man. He had a little shop, and it was papered most beautifully. Instead of any fancy paper, he had a lot of old-fashioned Bible almanacs

pasted up, and there were big bright texts ; and people who came into that shop would find the Gospel message facing them. He would put a Gospel tract in every parcel that he made up ; and he would speak to nearly all his customers about their souls. He was a preacher of the Word seated there at his cobbler's bench. I went to work for him. I must have been rather a lazy boy. I had a kind of iron across my knees. He would soak a pair of soles in water ; and with a flat hammer I had to hammer all the water out of those soles until they got hard and solid ; and then he would nail them on the shoes. I used to get very tired hammering those soles hour after hour.

On my way home I had to pass another shoe shop, and I could see the cobbler there cut a pair of soles, soak them in water, and put them right on the shoes without hammering them at all; and every time he drove a nail into them the water would fly all over the place. That interested me very much. I said to him : "You know, my boss makes me hammer all the water out of the soles ; but you put them right on damp and

soft when you get them out of the water.” The man gave me a very sly wink, and said : “They come back all the quicker this way, my boy !” **I** thought I had learned something ; **so I** went back to my boss, and I said : “Look here, I do not know why you make me hammer these soles. The man in the other shop does not do that, and he says they come back all the quicker, and he gets more jobs. ”

My boss took out his Bible, and read : “Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all to the glory of God.” Then he said : “Harry, perhaps I have been a little thoughtless. I have forgotten that you are just a lad of twelve years of age ; and it is tiresome work hammering all day. I shall do some of them myself, and I will teach you to do something else to rest you between-times. But I will not allow anything to go out of my shop that is not well done. It is different with me than it is with the other man. That man is not saved. He does not know the Lord, but I do. I would love to be a preacher of the Gospel, but God has not gifted me in that way, but He has shown me how to cobble

shoes, and He has **put** me right here to glorify Him. You know, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes again, and I stand at His Judgment Seat, I expect to find every shoe that ever went out of my shop in a big pile there ; and the Lord will take them, and look over them ; and I expect Him to examine them very carefully ; and I do not want Him to say to me : ‘ I am sorry you let them go like this, I cannot give you a reward for them.’ I want Him to be able to look over all my work, and to say, ‘ Well done, good and faithful servant ! ’ ”

Do you wonder that a man like that had power in his testimony ? People often came back to him, and said : “ Mr. Mackay, when you fixed for me that pair of soles, I found a Gospel tract in the parcel when I got home, and I have been reading it. Could you tell me how I could be sure of salvation ? ” And he would drop everything, and that cobbler’s shop would become a sanctuary. He would lead them to Christ, showing them the way of life from the Word. He had a real testimony for God. He was serving the living and true God, and waiting for His Son from

Heaven. When you speak of service do not always think of preaching and missionary endeavour. Anything that is worth doing at all can be done for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are to serve in view of His appearing.

Then you will remember in the same Epistle to the Thessalonians Paul links reward for service with the Coming of the Lord. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His Coming?" (2. 19). **What does he mean?** He has been used of God to win them for Christ. But now, he says, I am looking forward to the time when you and I together will stand in the presence of the Lord at His Coming, and you will be my glory and joy. Oh, what a delight it will be in that day to come before Him, and to say, "Lord, behold the children whom Thou hast given me!" Have you ever won anyone for Christ? Some of you have been saved a long time. Have you ever won anyone else? You remember there was a king of Israel, Jehoiachin. Do you recall what was said of

him? "Write ye this man childless." It was looked upon as a terrible curse for a king of Israel to be childless. But, oh, what will it be to meet the Lord without having one spiritual child to present to Him in that day ! You remember the story of the dying man who had been saved, and on his death-bed he was troubled ; and when his friend who had led him to Christ, said : "What is the trouble ? Are you beginning to doubt and to be fearful ? " "No," was his reply. "I have been thinking that you have led many to Christ since you were saved ; but I have not brought anybody. I must meet my Lord empty-handed. "

"Must I go, and empty-handed,
Thus my dear Redeemer meet,
Not one soul with which to greet Him,
Lay no trophy at His feet. "

Will you meet Him empty-handed ? If He were to come to-day would you go into His presence empty-handed ? Would you have to say, "Here am I ; saved myself ; but I have no one to bring with me ? " What a crown of rejoicing Paul had ! What thousands he led to Christ ! If you have never

yet led one to His feet, begin with the one nearest to you who needs Christ. Mark someone out for prayer, and then seek to live the Gospel before them. And, oh, what joy will be yours when you win your first soul. You will get such an appetite for **soul-winning**, that you will want to keep right on at it.

In the third chapter of Thessalonians you will notice that Christian fellowship and holiness of life are linked with the Lord's Coming. "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you : to the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints " (1 Thess. 3. 12, 13). You see, day by day you are looking for Him to return, and you say in your heart, "Oh, I want to be found doing His bidding ! I want to be found living for His glory. I do not want to come under the power of any unholy thing, any evil habit, any worldly manner of living. I want to be unblameable in holiness. " Notice : **blame-**

lessness is not exactly the same thing as sinlessness. We may be sinning often when we are not even conscious of it. To be without blame means this-that the motive is right. Take the little children ; we tell them to do certain things, and oftentimes they fail fully to understand us. But when they are ready to obey, so far as they understand, we give them credit for it ; we know that they mean to do the right thing ; we do not blame them ; we do not find fault with them because they fail here and there.

Years ago I had been away from home, and I came back, and I found a lot of spring flowers that I had planted were just coming up. They were all coming up nicely ; but, on the other hand, there was a lot of grass coming up too. And I called my eldest boy, and said : "Look here, I am going away, you weed that little plot while I am away. Take out the grass and the weeds, but don't take out the fresias. " He promised he would. So I went away, and when I returned he came running to me. "Come and see," he said, "I have weeded the garden." So I hurried off with him. I knew he had a good

conscience, that he had done his best so far as he knew. So I went over to look. He said : "I have got all the weeds cleared out." "You surely have," I said. "You've done it fine." I saw that the fresias were not there ; he had not been able to distinguish between them and the weeds ; and I asked him where they were. "I threw them all over the wall," he said. "That's nice." And I gave him a little reward. That night after he had gone to bed, I took a torch and I climbed over the wall, and I found the fresias that I had planted, and I put them in the ground again, and mother got her fresias, after all. He never knew, until one day I happened to use this illustration at a meeting, and he was sitting there ; he was then a man of nearly forty ; I had forgotten he was there. He said to me afterwards : "I didn't know that I did that." "No," I said, "and I never meant you to know. I forgot you were here. I was perfectly satisfied. You were blameless ; you did the very best you knew." So as we seek to labour on, looking for the Coming of the Lord, He is very gracious, and while there must be much about our work that is very

imperfect, yet He says : “Thou didst well that it was in thine heart. ” He is so gracious to us.

I do want to say just one other word. I can say it, for I am so far away from home that no one could say that I was personal about it, or that I was trying to raise money for my own work. What about your money in connection with the Lord’s Coming ? Do you remember that parable which our Lord told of the man who went into the far country, and before he went he committed his treasure to his servants ; and one of them said : “I hid your money in the ground ; I wrapped it in a napkin ; and here it is. ” And he said : “You wicked servant, you should have put my money in the bank, and when I came I would have required it with the interest. ” What about us ? He has trusted money to some of us. And, oh, the need of the world at the present day ! Oh, the need of the Mission Field ! Oh, the poverty all around us, the need in so many Christian institutions ! I wonder if the Lord is going to say to some of us in that day : “What about that money of Mine?” You thought that

only a tenth of it was His. It is not just a tenth, but all is His.

“Naught that I have, my own I call,
I hold it for the Giver,
My heart, my strength, my life, my all,
Are His, and His for ever.”

Let us be very practical. Jesus is coming again. We are soon going to stand before Him. Oh, to be found without blame before Him in that Day ! And if that is going to be so, we must know what it is to be wholly yielded to Him here and now.

Saved by His Life

“We shall be saved by His life.” (Rom. 5.10).

I AM thinking specially of these words, but in order to lead up to them, I want to ask you to look at the first ten verses of this 5th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans as a whole. The opening word “therefore” naturally connects with what has gone before, and tells us that if we are going to understand the words which follow we must have in mind something of that which has been presented in the previous chapter. We are told in verse 24 of the 4th chapter that if we believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, righteousness is imputed to us. All through the earlier part of this Epistle the Apostle has been building up the case against man. He has brought the whole world, as it were, into the court room, and has proven from direct Scripture testimony, and from the evidence of the lives that men

and women live, that “there is none righteous, no, not one.” What a solemn thing that is ! How many righteous ? “None righteous, no, not one. ” Not even I ? No, not even I. Not even you ? No, not even you. All our fancied righteousnesses are but as filthy rags in the sight of God. And the Apostle says : We have proven that Jew and Gentile are all under sin ; **they** have all gone out of the way ; they have altogether become unprofitable. “There is none that doeth good, no, not one. ” He concludes that terrible indictment of the human race with these words, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law ; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight ; for by the law is the knowledge of sin” (3. 19,20). So far as man’s condition is concerned, and his ability, it is utterly hopeless. That is a great thing to learn.

I mentioned the other day that my eldest **son is** Superintendent of a coloured Bible Institute in Dallas, Texas. Singularly enough

almost all his men students who come to that Institute are already ministers. You know it is a queer thing that down in our Southern States, if you see a dozen coloured men together in a street, you can be pretty sure that about nine of them are preachers. They have a wonderful gift of natural eloquence, and they readily take up preaching in one way or another. So most of these young men who attend this Institute are already preachers. One of the most interesting things is to see these young men **recognised** by their people as preachers, and then, as the Word of God is opened to them, all their previous professions of religion begin to melt away. I remember hearing one tell a little of his own experience. He said, "When I came to this school it was my desire that I might improve myself and become a better preacher. I had already been in the ministry some four years. In the first class in which I sat, the teacher was taking up the Epistle to the Romans, and he was opening up these early chapters. And as I sat there, little by little he took all my religion away from me. By the time I had got through that session

I had not any religion left ; everything was gone. I came day after day, and at the end of that time I was absolutely stripped. I had not a rag of righteousness left to cover me. I was in the most awful distress. But I shall never forget the joy that came to me when at a later session the teacher began with this : ‘ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets ’ (3. 21). I found out that day that God had a righteousness for those who had none of their own, and who were willing to admit that they had none of their own. I realised that in all the years of my religious profession I had been trying to build up a righteousness of my own ; but God stripped me of it all. I found that day that Christ Himself was set forth as wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption ; I found everything in Him. ”

I sincerely hope we can all say that to-day, but I am afraid that even in this audience, made up mainly of Christian people, we may not all be able to do so. Some are going about to establish their own righteousness,

who have an idea that the way to fit themselves for the presence of God is by doing their very best to please **Him**, and to live a holy, righteous life. Oh, dear friends, would that God might teach you that your best is altogether too poor for Him ; it will never do for Him ! “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.”

Now see the matchless grace of God. **Recognising** our lost, ruined condition, He has sent His only begotten Son to die for us, to bear our sins in His own body on the tree. We read that **He** “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (4. 25). What does that tell ? It tells me that my sins took the Lord Jesus Christ to the Cross, and that upon that Cross He settled for them all ; He settled the sin question to the Divine satisfaction. And now God has raised Him from the dead in token of His perfect satisfaction in the work that His blessed Son has done. He sets Him forth a Prince and a Saviour, and He shuts every man up to Him. “There is none other Name under Heaven whereby we must be saved.”

You remember away back in Egypt when the land was stricken with famine, and the people were in great distress, they came crying to Pharaoh for relief, and Pharaoh said, "Go to Joseph !" He was the custodian of all the corn in Egypt, and anyone who would find relief and help must find it through Joseph, And to-day you go to God, and you cry to Him, "Oh, God, save my guilty soul ! Give me the assurance of Thy salvation. Give me to know that my sins are put away. " And He says, "Go to Jesus ! Put your trust in Him." There is life in a look.

"There is life for a look at the Crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee,
Then look, sinner, look unto Him, and be saved,
Unto Him that was nailed to the tree. "

The Old Testament message is, "Look unto Me and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else. " God has now been revealed in Jesus Christ. Oh, is there some weary soul here who says, "I would like to look to Him, but I do not see how I can ; if He were only here as He was in the days of His flesh ; if He stood amongst us in His physical body, and opened His arms as He

did in that day, and said, ‘ Come unto Me, and I will give you rest ’; I would be so glad to go to Him ; it would be so simple. I could understand then what it meant to look to Him. I could easily run to His feet, and tell Him I would trust Him. But I do not see how I can look to Him if my eyes do not behold Him. He has gone back to Heaven and I cannot see Him. ”

Imagine a man, the head of a household, who is involved in grave financial difficulties, and because he is about to lose his little home he is in great trouble, and his wife and children are greatly distressed. The man, maybe, has done his best. He has tried to get some extension of the loan, or he has tried to get a new loan, hoping some day to be able to settle, but he has tried in vain ; no one will help him. Now he has received notice that the debt must be paid on a certain date, say, to-morrow at twelve o’clock, otherwise he loses everything. How distressed he is ! And as he is walking down the street looking very disconsolate, he meets an old friend, maybe a school chum, one who has prospered in life, and got on well. Possibly

he has not seen him for a long time. His friend says to him, "I am glad to meet you, but you look very gloomy. " "Yes, I am gloomy, I am in real trouble. " "What's the trouble," his friend asks him, "if you do not mind telling me ? " "I am involved in financial difficulties, and unless I can raise a certain sum by twelve o'clock to-morrow, I shall lose my little home." "Is that all the trouble ?" says his friend. "You know me, George, I am a man of my word, I am in a position to help you. You just *look to me* for that. Meet me at the bank at twelve o'clock to-morrow. " And before the other man could give him thanks, he is away. And the one so troubled a moment before, finds everything different now. His face brightens up, his heart is light. And as he enters the door his wife meets him, and he tells her that it is all right. "Have you got the money to pay ?" she asks him. "No, I haven't a shilling!" "What do you mean then by saying that it is all right ?" "It is all right," he says, "we are not going to lose our little home. I met So-and-So in the street. You know how well-off he is ; and he said to me,

‘Look to me and I will settle everything.’ And the poor wife says, “You had me all worked up with hope. But I do not understand. You say we are to look to him, but we cannot see him. How can we look to one whom we cannot see ? **I** do not know what you mean.” No, she would not say that ; she would know that “look to me” means to trust in me, to depend upon me, to confide in me.

So God says, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. ” “Look to Jesus, weary one, look and live. ” Someone sent me up a little note, and said, “I have come a long way hoping to find Jesus as my personal Saviour, but I have not found Him yet. ” You are trying to find Him, my friend ; bless you, He is seeking for you. You just stand still, and stop your seeking. Do you remember the little boy. Someone said to him, “**Sonny**, have you found Jesus yet ? ” He looked up rather startled, “Why, ” he said, “ please sir, I didn’t know He was lost ! But I was, and He found me.” You stop your seeking ; stand still where you are ; lift your heart, and say, “Lord Jesus, **I am**

a sinner, You died for me ; You shed your Blood for me ; You bore my sins in your own Body on the tree. I trust You, I take You now as my Saviour.” That is all you need to do. And He never turns anyone away who trusts Him like that. He “was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. ”

“*Therefore*” (now you see the connection), “*being justified.*” Being cleared of every charge, because we put our trust in Him, that is what it means to be justified ; acquitted, set free. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ” All that had come in between our souls and God has been cleared away because Christ Jesus was “made sin for us” on Calvary. And God has raised Him from the dead because He is perfectly satisfied with the work His Son has accomplished. Now He Who died on the Cross lives in the glory. Again and again in this Convention our attention has been directed to the fact that we do not worship a dead Christ ; **we** do not have to go back to the Cross continually. We begin at the Cross, but we go on, for we are **occu-**

pied with a Christ Who has gone up into glory. He Who died lives again, and “by Him we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.” We begin at the Cross. It was Christ Who met us in our deep need ; it was Christ Who saved us. But now we stand in grace ; it is not a question of beginning in the spirit, and continuing in the flesh. “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” It is to us an absolute certainty. “Whom He justified, them He also glorified. ” We do not see all things yet accomplished, but God has given us His Word ; **we** believe Him ; we have this sure and certain hope ; and because of this we are enabled to go through the trials of life with a glad countenance, even though at times there are things that distress and trouble our poor hearts, but we glory in tribulation.

You know Sophie, the woman who was called to scrub and preach ; you have probably read that little tract about her. She went one day to see Gibbud, the evangelist. He was having a blue Monday. Some preachers, you know, get all keyed up on Sunday, and down they go on Monday. One

day in New York, Sophie went up to a poor young missionary ; he had tried **all the** Boards and they had turned him down, and his heart was burning with love for Christ ; and she heard him tell the story. He said : “I came here expecting to leave for Africa, but they have turned me down. ” “Brother, ” she said, “have the Boards all turned you down ? ” “Yes, ” he said. “Well, ” she said, “you get ready and I’ll send you with my wash-board ! ” And she did. She paid his way with her wash-board, and he became one of God’s mightiest and most devoted missionaries. Well, Sophie found Gibbud the evangelist in the depths of gloom, and she said : “The Lord said to me, You go down and preach to Brother Gibbud. So I have come to preach to you. I scrub and I wash, but now I have come to preach, and my text is this, ‘ We glory in tribulation.’ Brother Gibbud, g-l-o-r-y does not spell ‘growl.’ ”

Now just you think of that the next time that hard and **difficult** experiences come your way. You “glory in tribulation. ” The **latin** word “*tribulum*, ” which we have taken over into the English language, means

a flail by which they threshed out the wheat. So we might put it like this, "We glory in being put into the threshing-machine, " where the wheat is separated from the chaff. That is why trials and troubles, and afflictions come, it is in order that the wheat may be separated from the chaff in our lives. So "we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience." Oh, how we need patience! "And patience, experience," as we go on to learn what God can do for the one who trusts Him. "And experience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Some of us have tried for so long to love God, and to love our brother ; and we just pump and pump ; and we try to pump up love, and all the rime we are pumping from a dry well. We see the *infinite* love of God manifested in the Cross of Christ. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins " (1 John 4. 10).

This then is what broke our hearts, and won us to be His for ever ; and the Holy

Spirit came to seal us as His own as we put our trust in Him, to dwell within us, and He is in us, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." He is the spirit of love, as well as the spirit of truth. Have you found it hard to love your brother, and perhaps harder still to love your sister ? If so, get into the presence of the Risen Christ, and say, "Lord, give me such a realisation of the indwelling power of Thy Holy Spirit that all the petty things, all the malice, and the ill-will, and all these other hateful things may disappear." You can go on loving, in spite of all the unpleasant things in others, when the Holy Spirit is dominating and controlling you. Think of how undeserving we are ourselves. We have deserved nothing but judgment, yet God loved us. What could we do to earn salvation ? We could do nothing.

"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die ; yet peradventure for a good man some would

even dare to die.” You admire a righteous man, but you do not particularly love him, Here is a righteous man, and you owe him £100, and it is due on a certain date. He is a righteous man, and he is not going to let you off. YOU say to him, “Can’t you take £99 for cash now ?” “No,” he says. “You owe me £100, and you must pay. I am a business man, and business is business.” You have entered into a certain obligation and he expects you to meet it. If he owed money, he would pay to the last farthing. Yes, he is a righteous man, but you do not feel particularly like dying for him ! But you owe a benevolent man, a kindly man, £100, and you have to pay it back by a certain date. You have done your best, and then you have to go to him, and say, “I am ashamed to come to you, but I have struggled so hard ; all I have is £98, if you will just accept that now, I think I shall be able to get the other two pounds soon.” And he says, “What’s a couple of pounds between you and me ? I will give you a receipt for £100. And perhaps you ought to have £5 to start again.” Why, you could almost die

for a man like that. He is a wonderful man, you say. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die."

Oh, the wonder of it ! When we were neither righteous nor good, "God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Poor, lost, guilty men and women ; and yet Jesus gives Himself for us. "Much more then, being now justified by His Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Look at the certainty of that. I meet so many people, and often put the question, "Are you saved ?" They reply, "I hope to be." "Are you justified." "Well I would not dare say that, but I trust I shall be some day if I just go on." No ! No ! "Being now justified by His Blood." The precious Blood of Christ is the answer for all my sins ; and God justifies fully and completely every one who trusts in His blessed Son ; and being justified by His Blood, we have no dread of the future ; we shall be saved from the wrath through Him. In that day of God's red heavens we shall have

nothing to fear, because He Who died for us now lives to keep us.

So we read in the next verse, the one that I have been wanting to get to : “For, if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we ***shall be saved by His life.***” Oh, let these words sink into your heart !Do not misunderstand them. They do not mean that we are saved from the guilt of our sins by the beautiful life that Jesus lived here on this earth. That truly wonderful life of Jesus, perfect, holy, sinless as it was, that wonderful life, apart from His atoning death, would not save one poor sinner. He had to be who He was in order to do what He did. He had to be the holy, spotless, unblemished Lamb of God in order that He might die for our sins upon the Cross.

It is not Christ’s life, but His death that saves us. We are saved through the shedding of His precious Blood. When it says that “we are saved by His life,” it does not mean that we are saved by imitating the life of Jesus, by trying to follow Him. Let me say it very carefully and thoughtfully, though

some may call me a heretic for saying it—No one ever got to Heaven by following Jesus. You say, “Why, brother, I thought that was the only way any of us could get there.” But if you could only get to Heaven on the ground of your ability to follow Jesus you would never get there at all. “Oh,” you say, “did not Jesus say, ‘Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple’?” Well, when you talk about following Jesus, what do you mean?” People talk about following Jesus, and they seem to think this, that they can follow Him from earth to Heaven in their own strength. They think that we will get to Heaven if we put our feet in His footprints. That is all of works from beginning to end, and salvation is not of works. What do you mean by following Jesus? Following Him into Heaven? That is not what the Bible means. The Bible means following Him out of Heaven down into this world of sin and misery to carry His Gospel to those in need of it. When Jesus says, “Follow Me,” He does not mean we are to follow Him up to the glory. No, it may mean for some to

follow Him to China ; or to India. To some it may mean to follow Him into the slums to tell people of His love and grace. To some it may mean to follow Him in the home, to live for Him there in such a way that those about you will realise His saving power. That is what is meant by following Jesus. We are not saved by following Him ; we are saved by trusting Him, and when we have trusted, then we follow. To be saved by His life does not mean that we are saved by our own self-efforts. You say, “Do we not read, ‘ He left us an example that we should follow in His steps ’ ” ? Yes, but who are the “us” ? Those who have already been redeemed to God by the precious Blood of His Son.

What does it mean then, when it says that we “are saved by His life ” ? It means this, that He Who died for us on the Cross now lives to carry us through to the glory. He lives to maintain us, to sustain us, He lives to give us all the grace and strength we need from day to day that we may glorify Him in this scene. He lives to make us exactly like Himself in that day when He returns in

power and glory. "Because I live, ye shall live also." We have been justified from all things ; now we can draw on His omnipotent power as the living Christ that we may have the needed strength to glorify Him, as we tread the pilgrim way. "We are saved by His life. "

You remember in John 17, that wonderful prayer of His as He knelt there before His disciples, and as He lifted up His eyes to Heaven. Seven times over He speaks of "those that Thou gavest Me." Oh, how dear they were to Him ! He asks the Father regarding them. In verse 17, He says, "Sanctify them through Thy truth ; Thy word is truth." To be sanctified is to be set apart for Christ's own possession and for His use. The Lord Jesus Christ says of Himself, "Say ye of Him, Whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; because I said, I am the Son of God ?" One Person of the eternal Trinity was set apart to come down into the world and to accomplish the work of salvation, That work accomplished, now He says, "I sanctify Myself"-I set Myself apart.

He has taken His place at God's right hand in order that He might undertake for His people that we might be sanctified through the truth. And there in the glory He is representing us before God. He has sent His Holy Spirit as His representative down into this world in order to apply His word to our hearts and consciences, that we may be separated from everything that is unclean and unholy, and thus live entirely to His glory in this present evil world. It is in this sense that we are saved by His life. How much do we enter into the reality of it ? I am afraid some of us are content to stop at the Cross. We must begin there. There is no other way of approach to God. But as we go on we are to be occupied with the Risen One, at God's right hand.

Now we want to be like Him ; we want to be used of Him in this sin-stained world. But in order that this may be so He has set Himself apart that our hearts may be fully taken up with Him, and we are changed as we behold Him. He would have us yield to Him, as those who are alive from the dead, that His Risen life may be manifested in us.

“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also or Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (2 Cor. 4. 10, 11). Think of it, that through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, sent from the Father, the Risen life of Jesus is manifested in the surrendered believer, as in this sense he seeks to bear witness to the One Who died for him, and now lives to keep him. “The life also of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh. ”

Some years ago I was working among the Indians in Arizona. The Presbyterians have a splendid work established at a place called Ganado on Arizona Desert, among the Navaho Indians. I went out there for some meetings, and they took me the first day through the buildings. We went into the Hospital, and in one ward there was a Navaho woman lying upon a cot ; she could not speak a word of English, and I could only speak three words of Navaho, so we could not have any conversation. The missionary

told me something about her. It seems that nine weeks before the missionary doctor had received a call to go out over the desert to a hogan, little Navaho hut, where a boy was lying ill. He got into his Ford car, and rattled across the desert (I always hope that Henry Ford will get to Heaven. His little cars have gone to so many places carrying the Gospel. If he does not, it will be like Noah's carpenters helping to build the Ark, and never getting inside themselves). As the doctor was on his way, he came to a clump of bushes rising up from the desert land, and he heard as he drew near, a terrible scream ; it was a scream that did not sound human at all. He thought it was the cry of a wild beast. He had the idea that perhaps one of the Indians had set one of those cruel steel traps, and that a cougar, or a prairie wolf, or some other creature, had been caught by the leg, and had twisted or dragged itself away with a torn limb, and was screaming in anguish somewhere. That thing does happen. (It costs a lot to get those furs that some of you ladies wear.) The doctor thought it was some such creature in pain, and he

took a gun and began to work his way through the bush in order to get to the other side, and all the time this awful screaming was ringing in his ears. When he got to the other side of the bush he found it was not a wild beast at all, and there was no steel trap. There lay a Navaho woman on the ground, and the doctor soon saw that she was **para-**lysed, and she was suffering unspeakable anguish. He made certain examinations, and decided that there was no hope for her. Gangrene had already set in, and it looked as if she must die. But he thought, Well, I won't have her die out here. And he gave her some morphia to quieten her ; and he wrapped her filthy body in a blanket, and took her to the Mission Hospital.

It transpired that she had been terribly ill, and the Indian doctor pow-wowed over her, and as he could not get the devil out of her, he said, "She is going to die." And so they took her, and threw her out to die. For four days she had lain there paralysed, without a bite of food to eat, or a drop of water to drink, with the fierce burning sun pouring down upon her by day, and suffering

intense cold at night (for it was about 7000 feet above sea level). He took her to the Hospital, and after some prayer, he operated. The doctor never left her bedside for nine days and nights. He had a big chair put beside her, and he was ready at the moment she stirred to minister, to her. At the end of the ninth day the fever had gone, and it was evident that she was going to recover. She had been unconscious all the time, and when she recovered consciousness, she looked about her, and saw where she was, and the Indian nurse told her of what had happened. ‘Why did he do it ?’ she asked. “He is nothing to me, I am an Indian, he is a white man. My own people threw me out, and he brought me here, and made me to live. Why was it ?” And Mary, the little Indian nurse, said, “It is the love of Christ in his heart.” “The love of Christ, ” said the woman, “What is the love of Christ ? I have never heard of the love of Christ. What do you mean ?” And the little Indian nurse could not explain it to her all at once, for this woman’s mind was so dark. It would have taken days to tell her, You would have to go

back to the Creation, and then go on right through the Bible, in order to show how God's love was revealed. And it took two or three days before they could even get thus far.

Some days passed, and they told her more and more ; and now they thought the time had come when she ought to be able to decide for Christ. So they knelt beside her, and Mr. Mitchell, the missionary, said, "My sister, have you not come to see the love of Christ, and cannot you trust your soul to Jesus ? Turn to Him from all your heathen idolatry. Take Him as your Saviour." And she just looked at him. The Indian can keep quiet in more languages than any other person I know. You can talk, and talk, and they just look and look with those big eyes of theirs. And they waited for a little while, but there was no answer. And then the door at the end of the ward opened, and the doctor looked in to see how his patient was, and seeing the missionary there, he went out again. The face of the Indian woman lit up, and then she said to my friend, Mr. Mitchell, "If Jesus is anything like the doctor

NESTS IN THE ALTAR

Nests in the Altar

"Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God" (Psalm 84. 3).

YOU will notice the heading to this Psalm, the words : "To the chief Musician : A Psalm for the sons of Korah."

There is a critical question as to where these headings properly belong in the original Hebrew, at the beginning of the Psalm that follows them, or whether they should follow the previous Psalm. There is nothing to indicate either way : in the Hebrew the one Psalm is so closely linked with the other. The late Dr. Thirtle has suggested that there seems good reason to believe these titles really belong to the preceding Psalm. If that is the case, it does not interfere with something I want to point out here. The heading of the next Psalm is practically the same, so we can transfer it to this Psalm if we give that of Psalm 84 to Psalm 83.

“To the chief Musician, ” the One Who said as He came forth from resurrection : “In the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto Thee. ” He is the chief Musician, the One Who leads the praises of His people. Therefore these **Psalms** are very definitely dedicated to our blessed Lord Jesus Himself, the great Leader of the choir of the redeemed.

Then you have the words : “A Psalm for the sons of Korah.” That to my mind is very interesting. Who were the sons of Korah ? Well, they constituted part of the sanctuary choir at Jerusalem after David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Mount Zion and pitched a tent for it, and later on, when King Solomon built that glorious Temple every whit of which uttered the glory of our Blessed Saviour. These sons of Korah led the people in their worship.

But who were they actually ? Well, if you turn to those early chapters of the First Book of Chronicles that some of you never read, you will find by careful investigation that these sons of Korah were the lineal descendants of that Korah who, with Dathan and Abiram, led in the apostasy in the wil-

derness, that very Korah, who with his ungodly associates, withstood Moses the mediator and Aaron the High Priest, and said : “You take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi ; all the Lord’s people are holy.” It is as though they said : “We do not need a mediator, we do not need a High Priest, we do not need anybody to represent us before God. Neither do we need an atoning sacrifice. We are good enough for God as we are.” That is the same as the apostasy to-day. We read of those who, having gone in the way of Cain, following the error of Balaam, shall perish in the gainsaying of Korah. You remember how the judgment fell upon Korah, how Moses said : “If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up ... then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.” Then Moses gave the cry : “Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men” ; and those who feared God left the

companionship of Korah, Datlan and Abiram, and went over towards the sanctuary that Moses had pitched. But those who did not fear Him remained with the apostates, and the judgment took place exactly as Moses had intimated, and Korah and all his company, we are told, went down alive into the pit,

Here is a singular thing ; here are the sons of Korah, centuries afterwards, leading the praise of the people of God. If Korah and all his company went down alive into the pit, how is it there were any sons of Korah to bear testimony to the grace of God in later days ?

Well, we get the fullest account of this event in the 16th chapter of Numbers, but we have a supplementary account in the 26th chapter, where we have these added words : “Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not. ” I take it to imply this, that when the sons of Korah were put to the test, when they had to choose between loyalty to God or fealty to their own father, they said ; “God must be first ; we dare not put father’s will first, if it is in opposition to the will of God. ”

It is a solemn thing when children are put in a position like that. I don't suppose many of you here were ever in a place like that. I hope all here have made the great decision. I hope we have all come to the place where we can say :

“My heart is fixed, Eternal God,
Fixed on Thee ;
And my unchanging choice is made,
Christ for me.
He is my Prophet, Priest and King,
Who did for me salvation bring ;
And while I've breath I still will sing,
Christ for me. ”

But if you made that decision, some of you in your childhood, some in young manhood or young womanhood, in most cases I am sure it brought real joy to father and mother, for most of us have had the great privilege of a Christian training.

But it is very different for some people. I remember one night walking the streets of San Francisco from 9.30 till 2 with a young Jew, who was greatly agitated and much concerned. It was my custom to preach once a month on a Thursday night in a Mission to Israel established in that city. This particular night, after the meeting

-I can remember the text-"Wake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad"—this young man came to me and said: "I was greatly stirred to-night; your sermon started so many questions in my mind. I wish you had time to let me talk with you a bit." I said: "I have plenty of time." It happened that my family were away in the country, so it did not make any particular difference what time I got home; it was a lovely summer night, and I said: "We will go for a walk." Up and down the streets we trod for all those hours. He brought up question after question, and I tried to answer everything right from the Book itself. Finally, at two in the morning, we stood at a corner, and he looked at me, and said: "Well, sir, you have answered all my questions satisfactorily and frankly. I am absolutely convinced now that Jesus Christ was the Messiah of Israel, and our people made a terrible mistake when they crucified Him so long ago." I said: "I am glad to hear that. Now I trust you will come

right out for Him, and by baptism confess His Name.” He said : “Oh, I couldn’t do that. If I were to confess Jesus Christ as Saviour and Messiah, I would break my dear old Jewish mother’s heart ; my stern Jewish father would disown me. He would call in an orthodox Rabbi and have a funeral service for me, and I would never again be **recognised** as in the land of the living. My business associates would disown me, and all my business prospects would fall away. Intellectually I am convinced, but give Him my heart I cannot. ” I pleaded with him, but he turned away. I never saw him again. Before the next occasion when I would have visited San Francisco the disastrous earthquake of 1906 had taken place, and our Mission had been swept out of existence. It was many years before we had a testimony again in that city.

But think of his position ; he had to choose between God and his parents. Jesus demands just such a choice, and if our parents stand in the way He says : “Who-soever loveth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. ”

Do you want a proof of the Deity of Christ ? You have it right here. Imagine any man, no matter how good, standing up before a congregation, and saying : “Look here, if you love your father and mother more than me, you are not worthy of me.” If it were only a man who said something like that, you would say : “Who does he think he is ? He imagines he has more right to my love and allegiance than my own parents : the man is insane.” But Christ has more right, for He is “God over all, blessed for evermore.”

I have tried to visualise this. I have thought at times I could see those sons of Korah go up to their father, put their arms on his shoulders and say : “Father, don’t set yourself against God. Whoever hardened himself against Him and prospered ? Listen to the voice of His servant and yield, surrender to Him while there is time.” I think I see that stern old man say : “No, I will never own that I need a mediator or a saviour. I am good enough for God as I am, and I shall not listen to Moses and Aaron.” Then came the call : “Come away from the

tents of these wicked man.” I think I see those sons of Korah say : “Father, if you won’t change, we **shall** have to leave you. We cannot go on with you. We must be true to God at all costs.” I think I see them wending their way across the plain to yonder sanctuary, perhaps even then singing as they go : “I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

Well, the years went by, and the descendants of the sons of Korah were the Temple choir. Isn’t that wonderfully in keeping ? When I read some of these songs dedicated to the sons of Korah, I say : This is of special interest to me, because, you know, I am one of the sons of Korah. The sons of Korah were saved from going down to the pit, and I have been saved from going down to the pit. So I read them with special interest, because I am a debtor to mercy : mercy that saved me, that turned my wayward feet from the path that leads to the pit.

Now God puts a song into the mouths of His redeemed. All whom He saves from going down to the pit belong to His heavenly

choir. Some of us are not very good singers down here. They have to be pretty familiar hymns for me to be able to join in at all. My wife sometimes nudges me when I do get going, and says : “Do keep on the key.” But one of these days if you want to hear singing, you slip around to my mansion in the glory. Every one of the sons of Korah will belong to the choir eventually. “Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth Me.” We shall all do that by and by.

As these sons of Korah were linked up with the worship of the Temple and looked about them, they saw something the bulk of the people could not see. It was customary in those oriental sanctuaries never to drive the birds out. They were permitted to flit about at will. I saw the same thing in Jerusalem when I was there several years ago. We went out to that abomination of desolation, the Mosque of the Dome of the Rock that covers the site of the Temple. There were birds inside that great Mosque, singing beautifully. That is the kind of thing the sons of Korah noticed, of which they sang in this Psalm. “The sparrow hath

found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.”

The Jews never drove the birds out of the Temple. They allowed them to make their nests there. On some occasions, even when the priest was offering sacrifice at the altar, you could see, underneath, the swallow's nest and the mother bird sitting upon it, or the nest of the sparrow, with the mother sparrow resting there in perfect quiet. They were not afraid, because no hand was ever raised against them. The priests said : “They have put their trust in Jehovah by entering into His house : we must not make them afraid. ” They had a beautiful name for them ; they called them “God's pensioners.” They had shown their confidence in Him, and they fed upon scraps of the shewbread and one thing and another, and were at home in the house of God. The sons of Korah realised that would be a lovely theme for a hymn, and we have been singing about the sparrows ever since. “The sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest

for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.”

The sparrow and the swallow. I suppose we are right in saying that the sparrow is the most worthless of birds. Jesus said : “Are not two sparrows sold for a **farthing** ?” and that **farthing** was a coin of much less value than a British farthing. I have been carrying a British **farthing** around for six weeks, and I cannot get anyone to give me anything for it. But Jesus said, referring to the infinitesimal **farthing** of His day : “Are not two sparrows sold for a **farthing** ?” **You** could go into the market and see two sparrows, cleaned, with a skewer through them, lying offered for sale, and the poorest people bought them to make a sort of sparrow pie. Then, the Lord elsewhere says : “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings ?” Dr. James H. Brookes, one of our great American preachers, used to say : “I think that is how I got in. The Lord was saving four others, and I was thrown in for good measure.”

What does the Book say about us in our sinful state ? It says we are “altogether

unprofitable. ” “I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good **thing** “-no goodness or worth, yet God in His **infinite** grace looked upon me and loved me. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Father’s knowledge. As someone once said : “The One Who created the heavens and the earth attends every sparrow’s funeral. ” “If He cares for the little birds, ” Jesus says, “remember you are of more value in His sight than many sparrows.” Utterly worthless in ourselves, but of such value to Christ that He came from off the Throne eternal down to Calvary’s depth of woe to redeem us to Himself; of such value to God the Father that He sent His only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him ; of such value to God the Holy Spirit that He has come to convince of sin, in order to draw our wayward hearts to Christ. Poor, worthless sparrows-yet the object of wondrous grace !

There is not only the sparrow, but the swallow. If we say the sparrow is the most worthless of birds, what shall we say of the swallow? Surely it is the most restless.

Did you ever see a swallow still ?-always on the wing, going all the time. Isn't that like us ?-trying this thing and that thing, going into this, that, and the other, always restless, always discontented, always unhappy as long as we are away from God. "O God," said Augustine, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our souls will ever be restless until they rest in Thee." Some of us have tried hard to find rest, we have tested so many things, tried one thing after another, and still our hearts are just as restless as ever because we have not come to Christ Himself, Who says: "**Come** unto Me, all ye that **labour** and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"I heard the Voice of Jesus say,
' Come unto Me and rest ;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast.'

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad ;
I found in Him a resting place,
And He has made me glad. "

So we read : "The sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even **Thine**

altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God. ”

Notice the plural, not “Thine altar, ” but “Thine altars. ” There were two of them. Those two altars give us the two aspects of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, the work He did on earth and the work He is doing in Heaven. We need both to get perfect rest. The brazen altar, the altar out in the courtyard, the birds are nesting there ; that altar speaks of the Cross work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Upon that altar on which the fire was ever burning, they placed the parts of the victim which went up in flame to God. All those sacrifices speak to us of the one supreme Offering, the Perfect Offering, the Complete Offering of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you found rest in the brazen altar ?
Can you look back to an experience in your life in accord with the words of the hymn ?

“Near the Cross, a trembling soul,
Love and Mercy found me ;
There the Bright and Morning Star
Shed its beams around me ;
In the Cross, in the Cross
Be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river. ”

That brazen altar says : “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It tells of satisfaction made for sin, of an acceptable propitiation, on the basis of which every poor sinner may come to God through Christ, and may find rest of conscience. “Christ for my sins ” is the message of the brazen altar.

In the House itself, in the inner sanctuary, representing Heaven itself, where Christ is now ministering, stood the golden altar. No sacrificial victim was ever offered on that altar, but instead there was the constantly ascending sweet smoke of the incense before God. “Let my prayer come before Thee as incense,” said David, and that sweet fragrant incense rising before God speaks of the constant intercession of the risen Christ in glory. “Wherefore He is able to save to the uttermost all those who come to God through faith by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us. ”

O Christians, there is a living Christ in Heaven deeply concerned about everything that exercises you, constantly bearing you

up before God. He has abundant stores of grace to minister to you and to help you in every time of need. That golden altar says : "Christ for my cares." It tells me that the same Blessed One Who died for me now lives for me, lives to sustain and keep me, and to make me victorious *as I go through* this scene of trial and testing.

In the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, we read : "Be careful for nothing (be not anxious for anything), but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Some of us came as troubled, guilty sinners to the brazen altar, and found rest for our consciences, but have we turned to the golden altar and found rest for our souls ?

Do we know what it is to walk in holy, happy fellowship with a risen Christ, committing our way to Him in accordance with the Word, "casting all your care upon Him, for He *careth* for you " ?

There are Christians who find it easier to

trust the Lord for the salvation of their immortal souls than for the rent money next month, or for food or raiment day by day. Yet the Lord Jesus Christ says : “Seek ye first the kingdom of Cod and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Who said that ? I like **Livingstone**’s remark in another connection : “It is the word, ” he said, “of a gentleman, who will never go back on His word, and there’s an end of it. ” He will see you through.

I have been reminded, and have reminded myself many times, of a couple of cartoons I saw years ago that made an indelible impression on my mind. One represented a farmer riding along a road, and on the roadside was a man bowed down beneath a heavy load, a sack of potatoes or something, on his back. The **farmer** was beckoning him to get up and ride with him. The second picture represented the man in the wagon on the back seat. The farmer on the front seat was looking round, and there was the man, bowed down under his load. The farmer was saying : “Why don’t you cast your load in the bottom of the wagon instead

of carrying it ? ” “Oh sir, ” the man was replying, “it is good enough for you to give me a ride, without making your horse draw my load as well.”

We are carried by our blessed Lord, and yet we are carrying our own burdens ! He wants to bear them for us. He longs to deliver us. He says : “Roll thy burden on the Lord, ” if you cannot cast it because it is so big, “and He shall sustain thee.”

“You have carried your burden,
 You’ve carried it long ;
 Bring it to Jesus,
 He is loving and strong ;
 He will take it away,
 And your sorrow shall cease ;
 He will send you rejoicing
 With His heavenly peace.”

Millions of Christians could testify to the fact that He has never failed one who commits all things into His hands. If we have never done it before, if we have never yielded ourselves and all our affairs, oh, that we might do it to-day ! He is waiting to have us **do that very thing**. He **longs to undertake for us, and then indeed we shall know the** meaning of these words : “The sparrow

hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young, even Thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.” Then, too, we shall enter into and understand the next verse : “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house ; they will be still praising Thee.”

“Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin ?
The Blood of Jesus whispers peace within.”