

The One Great Reality

Louisa Clayton

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Title: The One Great Reality

Author: Louisa Clayton

Release Date: March, 2005 [EBook #7786]
[This file was first posted on May 16, 2003]

Edition: 10

Language: English

Character set encoding: US-ASCII

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THE ONE GREAT REALITY

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LOUISA CLAYTON

Author of "Heart Lessons", "Loving Messages",
"Winning and Warning", "Wilderness Lessons", etc.

"I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NONE ELSE"--
Isa. xiv. 22.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
to all my friends in Rusthall,
in loving remembrance
of our happy fellowship in the gospel
during the past thirty years,
with the earnest prayer
that the messages may be stored up
in their hearts
and bring forth fruit in their lives
when the voice
which delivered them is still.

3, Somerville Gardens,
Tunbridge Wells.

FOREWORD

In response to the request of an old and esteemed friend I gladly add a
Foreword to the collection of Addresses embodied in this volume.

I do so in recognition of the supreme importance of the great topics that
have been chosen, and also in appreciation of the clear and attractive way
in which the truth is set forth. May the messages find attentive and
receptive readers, and be followed by deep and abiding spiritual blessing.

EVAN H. HOPKINS.

Woburn Chase,
Addlestone, Surrey.

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ADDRESS I

GOD, THE GREAT REALITY

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--Hebrews xi. 1-6.

God is the one great Reality. Will you close your eyes for a moment and say those words over again very slowly so as to let them burn into your inmost heart and soul. The Word of God tells us that "The Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true": this means that we may personally know Him that is Reality. In the wonder of that moment when we first know that God is real and that God is near, then we cry out, "My God, how wonderful Thou art." To have personal knowledge of God is the secret of assurance and happiness, and to put real trust in Him changes our whole life, for then we can say, "I have a wonderful God."

To know God is Eternal life; to know Him fully, brings "life more abundantly"; to know Him with no veil between, is glory--life.

If you look again at the 6th verse of the 11th chapter of Hebrews you will notice a very clear statement: it says, "He that cometh to God must believe that He is," or to put it in other words, "the man who draws near to God must believe that there is a God."

Do you believe in God? Is He real to you? Here is one test. When you pray do you realise His Presence? Is He so close to you that it is like speaking into His ear?

It was this text, "He that cometh to God must believe that He is," which first awakened a worldly gentleman named Brownlow North to think about his soul. God's Spirit showed him that he had never really believed in God and that all his former religion was worthless, "for without faith it is impossible to please God." As soon as he had really learnt to know God, he devoted all his life to preaching the Gospel. He told every one that the first thing we need is _to believe there is a God_. Many of his friends who were rich and well educated were thus brought to a personal knowledge of God for the first time. He that cometh to God must believe that He is really there. Have you ever been conscious of the Presence of the living God? You must make sure that He is near before you can really pray.

We have an illustration of this in the telephone. You first put the speaking tube to your mouth and then you say "Are you there?" In any case you make sure that the person to whom you wish to speak, is listening at the other end. Although you cannot see any one, you know he is holding the receiver so as to hear what you say.

When you begin to pray always pause for a moment and remember that you are speaking to God. Do not say a word until the Holy Spirit puts you into direct communication with God. The Psalmist was quite sure that God was

really listening to his prayer, for he says, "I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live." [Footnote: Ps. cxvi. 1, 2.] And again, "I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice, and He gave ear unto me." [Footnote: Ps. lxxvii. 1.] It is in this way we realise that there is a God, a personal living God.

I asked a Christian man one day if he had prayed about some work which was offered to him, and his reply was, "Yes: I am on the telephone." Can you say the same? As soon as you have spoken through the telephone you put the receiver to your ear to listen for the answer. Many people pray without expecting to get an answer. They are like children who knock at a door and then run away before it is opened. The prophet Micah says, "I will wait for God, my God will answer me." [Footnote: Mic. vii. 7.] Yes, he expected to get an answer.

The Lord Jesus says, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." [Footnote: St. Matt. vi. 6.] When a child wants to tell his father something very private he whispers it in his ear. I daresay you have noticed that the telephone at the General Post Office is enclosed in a box, so that no one can overhear what is said. There are many things we say into God's ear which we could not tell to any one else. It makes Him very real to us, if we can say in our inmost hearts, "O God, Thou art my God, my very own Father."

When we speak through the telephone we never say useless words, and our Lord tells us to avoid needless repetitions when we pray, and He adds, "for your Father knows what things you need before ever you ask Him." Just as an earthly father delights to hear his children's voices, so our heavenly Father loves to hear us speaking to Him, for He says, "Put Me in remembrance, let us plead together." [Footnote: Isa. xliii. 26.]

A child's intercourse with his father is quite simple and natural, he talks freely about everything. When you speak to God, is it an effort, or do you look up into His face with confidence and tell Him all? A child expects his father to supply all his wants and to be equal to every emergency, but we seem to have lost sight of the Father in heaven who is pledged to "supply all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." [Footnote: Phil. iv. 13.]

We must not be disappointed if we do not get all we want, because God's promise is to supply what we need. We often wish for things which we do not really need.

If ever you lose sight of God, think of the wonderful lesson which Jesus teaches when He says, "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children," and you, fathers, always get the best you can for them, "how much more" (wonderful words), "how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him." [Footnote: St. Matt. vii. 11.] Have you ever heard God's voice saying to you, I am your Father; love Me, look to Me, trust Me, worship Me: "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." [Footnote: Ps. lxxxi. 10.]

A godly man who was a servant used to say, "There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful than that of a continual conversation with God." He felt that God was nearer and dearer to him than any one else. This is what makes God real to us when we feel that He is near and dear.

"Only to sit and think of God,
Oh! what a joy it is!"

It is just the same with your children if you are a really good, loving father, they are quite happy if they can sit close to you. Your very presence makes a great impression on them, even if you do not say a word. Is God's presence so real to you that it makes you control your temper and keeps you from saying unkind things?

A boy may be troublesome sometimes, but he never really doubts his father's love for him. Do you ever doubt God's love? Oh, yes: you say, I often murmur. Then this shows that in a sense you have never really known God. People would not speak as they do about God, I mean even Christians would not talk as they do if they really knew God. We often hear people say, "I hope God will be good to us," or, "I think it very hard God does not answer my prayer." This shows they have never personally known Him. Their thoughts about God are so contrary to what they sing. For example, how much do we really mean of that sweet hymn--

"Precious thought--my Father knoweth,
In His love I rest;
For whate'er my Father doeth.
Must be always best.
Well I know the heart that planneth
Nought but good for me;
Joy and sorrow interwoven,
Love in all I see."

Do you ever doubt His wisdom and think you might have been treated better? When we really know our Father-God, then we see His wisdom even in the things that are against us. We know and we feel that they have all been working together for our good, "for He knows all."

This Book in my hand is The Word of God. It is a revelation of God, and the glory of God Himself shines in every page. The first word in it is, In the beginning _God_. Perhaps you ask me, "Who is God?" I will tell you. "He is my Father." But you say, I am so sinful, I am not worthy to be called His son. That is just what I felt, so sinful, and then He revealed Himself to me as my Saviour. Ah! you say, but I am so far off, how can I find my way to Him? And that was just like me till the Holy Spirit led me to Him. When God reveals Himself to you as Father, Saviour, Comforter, then you will know that _God_ Himself is dwelling in your heart. Perhaps you ask, Will God really come and dwell in me for I am so unworthy? God Himself answers that question; "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." [Footnote: Isa. lvii. 15.] Every one is standing now in view of God and Eternity.

A very long time ago the question was asked, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" [Footnote: Job xi. 7.] The only way we can find Him is by our spiritual necessities. If your soul needs life, you will find Him. If your spirit needs reviving, you will find Him. As this text says, I come "to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

When your children talk about their Father, he is a real Person to them; that is what God wants to be to us, a real personal God. He says, "I will

be to them a God." [Footnote: Heb. viii. 10.] I know a little boy who whispered to his aunt one night when she was giving him the goodnight kiss, "Oh, Auntie, I sometimes wonder whether there is a God. Are you quite sure?" "Yes," said the aunt very earnestly, "I am quite sure. You see, I have known Him so long and He is so much to me, I am quite sure." The child was satisfied.

If you will turn again to Psalm cxvi. you will see a wonderful unfolding of the secret feelings of David's heart, and as we read it we cannot help saying to ourselves, the man who wrote this experience had very close dealings with some One about his soul. Who is this Some One? Do you know? Perhaps you think your religion is good enough to take you to heaven when you die, but alas! it begins and ends with the "Unknown God." How different to David's experience when he says out of a full heart, "I love the Lord," or as the word means, "I am full of love," and then he tells of his confidence in God; "I believed, therefore I have spoken," as if he had said, "God is so real to me now, I must tell others"; and he adds, "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." We can walk with God in our daily life just as Enoch did.

A good man said a short time ago, If ever I pass any one in the street with a careworn, anxious face, I long to say to them, "There is _God_," "Have faith in God." St. John said, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us and in us--God is love." [Footnote: 1 John iv. 16.] This is the central fact, the one great reality in life, and when once it is grasped there is nothing to compare with it. Why is there so much unrest, so much ungodliness, and lawlessness in our midst? We are forgetting God. The only remedy is coming back to God.

A poor woman who has been a Christian for many years was telling me about her mother's sudden death the week before, and then she added, "I have never known God as I do now. The future used to look so dark, but now that I know Him as the Living God, I can only see _life_. I cannot tell you what He is to me." Her face, which bore traces of her recent sorrow, shone with a new peace and a new joy, which made me rejoice. I was sure that God had revealed Himself to her in her time of need. Those precious words had come true in her case, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight." [Footnote: St. Luke x. 21.]

Are you saying, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God"? Then you will have a Personal revelation of God Himself, for that is the only way the life of God can enter into your soul and mine. Are you longing to find God? It is not that we find Him, but that He finds us, making Himself to us the great Reality. We may know wonderful things _about_ Him, but that is not enough. We must really know Him in our hearts!

The very longing which you have for this personal revelation of God comes from the loving Father Himself, and He says, "I will give them a heart to know Me": [Footnote: Jer. xxiv. 7.] so we need never think, ah! it is beyond me, for He promises to _give_ us the heart to know Him.

I had a striking instance of this some years ago. A working man who could not read or write told me that he had been converted at our meeting. He died in the Union Infirmary, and I heard afterwards that he had been a blessing to many in the ward. He said to me one day, "I want to tell you _what God is to me_." In very simple words he described how he could see

it all plainly. How in the beginning, sin came into the Garden of Eden and then God revealed Himself to the sinner so as to bring him back to Himself. Again and again his simple testimony was, I must tell every one _what God is to me_. This man had learnt to know God personally through his own need as a sinner, so it is not by earthly education that we find God, but through the Holy Spirit's teaching, and then in the Word He reveals Himself more fully.

It is "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord that grace and peace are multiplied to us," [Footnote: 2 Pet. i. 2.] so if we have not more and more grace and peace coming into our souls it is because we do not really know God.

It makes all the difference in our life when we can say, God is now my living Father; for it means God in His infinite love has taken my life into His, and by this personal link of love I take His life into mine. When He assures us that He is the Living God, it means that He lives and cares for us. All things, great and small, are under His control. We have an illustration of this in the present war. Think of our Navy, scattered over seven oceans, yet all under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Jellicoe. Not one vessel can move without his orders, no ship can be attacked without his knowledge; the wireless apparatus is at work night and day communicating every detail. It brings Sir John word of any submarine sighted, or of any movement in all the seas round our country, and it carries his orders far and near.

When God tells us that He is the living God, we know that He cares for us in the same way as a mother cares for her children. We had a touching illustration of this about a year ago.

Do you remember how we were thrilled with horror when the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria, was shot while driving through the city? He expired in a few minutes, leaving three children. In those few moments he turned to his wife who was seated by his side and said these pathetic words, "Sophie, live for our children." He did not know that she too had been mortally wounded and would be powerless to care for their orphan children.

It is because our Father-God is the living God, that He can say to us to-day just as He said to the Old Testament saints, "I am living for you, caring for you, protecting you." "Even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you." [Footnote: Isa. xlv. 4.] When He says to you, "I am God and there is none else," [Footnote 2: Isa. xlv. 22.] does your heart answer, Yes: "Even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." [Footnote 3: Ps. xc. 2.]

ADDRESS II

GOD OUR FATHER

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--Matthew vii 24-34.

In the chapter we have just read there is a great deal about our daily home life, and the word "Father" is mentioned twelve times, so it shows that God knows all about the everyday work. It is a grand thing when we

find this out.

A poor woman in China was converted, and very soon the lady missionary who visited her noticed that now her house was very clean and tidy, and told her how glad she was to see it.

The woman smiled, and said in her own simple way, "You see my Father God and the Lord Jesus are constantly coming in and out, so I like to keep it nice." She realised the Presence of God.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place." [Footnote: Prov. xv. 3.]
If we do not find God _everywhere_ we practically end by finding Him _nowhere_.

A busy Christian mother told me that she begins each day and lives all the day long saying in her heart, "In Thy Presence and by Thy Power." We must not only _say_ it, but act upon it as a _reality_, and then it will be our daily experience to be in touch with God.

There was one word which was very precious to Christ and which was often on His lips, and that was "Father." You remember how He stood one day at the grave of His friend Lazarus. All the mourners were standing round Him. Lazarus had been dead four days. It seemed utterly impossible that he could be restored to life again. No one expected it.

What did Jesus do? "Jesus lifted up His eyes and said ' _Father_.'" [Footnote: St. John xi. 41.] Those eyes were still wet with tears, for a few verses before we read "Jesus wept." Then He lifted up His eyes and said " _Father_": that was enough. There is _everything_ in that word. It just meant, "I have told Father all about it." He knows, He loves, He cares, and all things are possible with Him. There is no limit to His power and His love.

Then the command was given to those standing near--"Take ye away the stone." Was Christ going into the cave? No, the dead man was to _come out_. So we have first the wondrous name "Father," and then the loud cry, "Lazarus, come forth," and he that was dead came out of the cold grave', out of the region of death into the land of the living.

All through His life on earth our Lord always speaks to God as Father. One verse especially brings out the perfect intimacy, the perfect confidence, the perfect love between the Lord Jesus and the Father. Jesus says, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." [Footnote: St. Matt. xi 27.] The last words of this verse are very precious, for they show that not only has the Son perfect knowledge of the Father, but He reveals or makes known the Father so that you and I may know Him as our Father.

You remember Philip prayed, "Lord, show us the Father, that is what we want," [Footnote: St. John xiv. 8.] and Christ answered, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." Yes, "He is the image of the invisible God." God said to Moses, "Thou canst not see My Face and live for there shall no man see me and live," [Footnote: Exod. xxxiii. 20.] and for hundreds of years no one saw God. Then came the wondrous gift and the wondrous revelation. God gave His only Begotten Son, and _in Him_ we see the Father. Praise the Lord! the glorious light has come to us in our darkness. For "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God _in the face of Jesus

Christ." [Footnote: Cor. iv. 6.] The Apostle John says, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

"No man hath seen God at any time," [Footnote: St. John i. 18.] and before Christ came the verse stopped there; but after He came, then God was fully revealed; so the verse finishes with the words "the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Will you look up now, and say, "Lord, show _me_ the Father," and He will reveal Him to you, because this is what He promises to do. Look at the last line of the 27th verse of Matthew xi. where Christ says, "He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him," and without a pause He adds the wonderful invitation, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is to the weary and heavy laden that He reveals the Father. He invites them to share the fellowship He has with the Father, the peace and joy and rest of knowing the Father.

Why does He invite the weary ones to come to Him? because He felt in Himself such joy in this close fellowship with God, He wanted every one to have it too. He felt that His experience of what the Father was to Him was so rich, He longed for them to come and share it, "I will give you rest." It is as if He said, "I will give you the same rest I have when I am tired and hungry and thirsty; the same comfort that I have when I am misunderstood and reviled; the rest, the comfort, the peace I have in My Father."

We have the same assurance when the Holy Ghost says in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians, "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort." [Footnote: 2 Cor. i, 2, 3.]

How can you and I know what the Lord Jesus found in His Father's love? He has graciously made it known to us in the four Gospels. There the veil is drawn aside and we see how all through His life He was in close fellowship with the Father.

We can hear the very words which the Son spoke to His Father in the hour of deep agony: "O My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." [Footnote: St. Matt. xxvi. 39.] The last words on His lips when He was dying on the Cross were, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." [Footnote: St. Luke xxiii. 46.] He said to His disciples the last night, "You will leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." All through His life He spoke of His oneness with the Father and the joy of doing and finishing the work which He gave Him to do.

We too can have the sense of God's Presence in our souls at all times. A Christian woman who was suffering from neuralgia told me that one night when she could not sleep, a voice seemed to whisper softly to her, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him, for He knoweth our frame, He knows all about our poor bodies, for He made them," [Footnote: Ps. ciii. 13, 14.] and with those words of comfort in her mind she fell into a refreshing sleep.

If you will turn to the 6th chapter of St. Matthew again you will see in the 8th verse that our Heavenly Father knows about something else. "He knows what things we have need of before we ask Him."

The secret of what it is to have God as our Father, and the sweetness of it, comes out in these three homely questions, What shall we eat, what shall we drink, what shall we wear? And Christ says, [Footnote: St. Matt, vi. 31, 32.] Take no thought, that means, do not be anxious about these things, for your Heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Yes, if He knows, that is enough, and then we have only to trust Him for all.

Do you find your faith failing sometimes? It is one thing to trust God when the wages are coming in regularly, and quite another thing to trust Him when times are bad. It is just _then_ we learn to look less at our faith and more at God's Faithfulness.

A minister once gave a little bit of his experience about this. He said, "It is only as we really take God's promises and plant our feet upon them that we shall find faith abiding in times of testing. The last penny may be gone but GOD is there. I know this to be true.

"I have often said when preaching, 'It takes real faith in God to be able to put your head into an empty flour barrel and sing the doxology.' My wife had heard me say this, and one morning she called me to come into the kitchen. I said, 'What do you want me for?' She replied, 'I want you to come out here and sing.' I thought this queer, so I went to see what it all meant.

"In the middle of the kitchen was an empty flour barrel that she had just dusted out. 'Now, my dear,' she said, 'I have often heard you say one could put his head into an empty flour barrel and sing, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow," if he believed what God says. Now here is your chance, practise what you preach.'

"There was the empty flour barrel staring at me with open mouth, and my purse was empty too. I looked for my faith, but could not find it; I looked for a way of escape, but could not find one, for my wife blocked the doorway with the dust brush covered with flour.

"I said, 'I will put my head in and sing on one condition.'

""What's that?" asked my wife.

""On condition that you will put your head in and sing too. You know you promised to share all my joys and sorrows.'

"She consented, so we put our heads in and sang the doxology, and we told our heavenly Father 'all about our need.' Yes, we had a good time, and when we got our heads out we were a good bit powdered up, which we took as a token that there was more flour to follow!

"Sure enough, though no one knew of our need, the next day a barrel of flour was sent. Where it came from or who sent it we never knew, but our heavenly Father knew that we had 'need of these things.'"

Does not this simple testimony teach us all a lesson? I wonder how many of us can say from our hearts--

Those who trust do not worry;
Those who worry do not trust.

Which are you doing, dear friends? Trusting or worrying? Count on God. He

never fails, and He knows just what to do. The moment a difficulty comes, look up and say "Father," and at once the burden will roll off, He will undertake all for you.

I had an illustration of this one day when I was going across the Common. It was very windy, and two little girls lost their hats; they were quite at their wits' end, till they caught sight of their father in the distance, and at once they called to him, "Father, father." That was enough, in a minute he ran to help them.

I have often found great help in looking up again and again during the day and just saying "Father." Try it. You, fathers, often say to your children, "If you want me just call me." That is what our heavenly Father tells us to do.

To know God means not only to trust Him, but also to treat Him as a Father. If you will read the 6th chapter of St. Matthew carefully when you are at home, you will see that it gives the experience of the child of God with the Father for one whole day. It includes all that we need during the day:--food, clothing, forgiveness, victory over temptation, grace to do God's will, and grace in dealing with others.

This experience is so deep, so real, so entirely something between Father and child, that in this chapter we find the words "in secret" no less than six times. When the little child is looking up into a loving father's face and talking to him, it never thinks of those around. "In secret" means a sweet sense of His Presence in the soul and of close communion with Him. "I write unto you, little children, because you have known the Father." [Footnote: I St. John ii. 13.]

God is our Father, because He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: this is one of the greatest treasures of Redeeming Grace. All the teaching about God as Father comes from the lips of Jesus, and it is in this way He reveals the Father to us; so if we would know Him, we must drink in His teaching and watch His life of communion with God. By His life He reveals to us the reality of the experience into which He calls us to enter. He also shows us the way. He not only says "Come to Me," but also Come through Me. "I am the Way: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." [Footnote: St. John xiv. 6.] It was by dying for us He opened the Way. "God sent forth His Son to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father." [Footnote: Gal. iv. 6, 7] So we are not only received into God's family, but we have also all the privileges of sonship. We are made "heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ."

Perhaps you are thinking of your unworthiness; like the Prodigal Son you are ready to say "Father, I have sinned again and again, I am not worthy to be called Thy son." God knows just what you are and what you have been, and He Himself has asked the question, "How shall I put you among the children?" It is a question which none but the Lord would ever have thought of, and it would never have been answered if He Himself had not answered it. It is a wonderful answer: for He says, "Thou shalt call Me, My Father." [Footnote: Jer. iii. 19.] God Himself puts us sinners among His children, and no one else can do it, and He keeps us; for He says, "Thou shalt not turn away from Me." How does He do it? By creating a new life in us, we are "born again." The old nature is not improved, but a new heart is given. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you." [Footnote: Ezek. xxxvi. 26.]

Can you say, "God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into my heart," and now I can call Him my Father? Being made the children of God by adoption and grace, let us enjoy the privileges which are secured to us; let us act as loving children should do.

Does it all seem too good to be true? Trust His Word, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name." [Footnote: St. John i. 12]

Some of you remember the joy which thrilled you when you first received Him as your Saviour, but perhaps it was not until afterwards that you realised the blessedness of your new position as sons of God.

The Holy Spirit leads us on step by step. First, He assures us that "there is no condemnation," then He sets us free from the bondage of sin and death. [Footnote: Rom. viii. i, 2.] All is changed now, we feel the confidence of a child who has free access to his father at all times. There are three things which mark the children of God, the spiritual mind, the spiritual walk, and the spiritual talk. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." [Footnote: Rom. viii. 16.] We then call out with the consciousness of sonship, "Father, Father."

The witness of the Spirit was given to me soon after my conversion and thrilled me with joyful assurance. It came to me when a Christian doctor was telling his children about the way of salvation. He drew a line on the carpet with a stick and said, "On one side there is DEATH, on the other, LIFE," and I said to myself, "I know which side of the line I am on." So it was by means of this simple remark that I found out that I was really a child of God, and my heart began from that time to cling to God as my Father. Every day since then I have experienced the blessedness of trusting Him and knowing Him as my Father. Is this your happy portion? If not, why not?

ADDRESS III

THE SON OF GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--St. John i. 1-18, 29-34.

"THIS IS THE SON OF GOD." These are the closing words of John the Baptist's striking testimony, What a grand message! How it thrills us through and through! On and on the glorious words ring out, "_The Son of God is come_." Many years after, when the Apostle John was a very old man, he wrote in one of his letters, "We know that the Son of God is come." [Footnote: I John v. 20.]

Now look back to the first words of our chapter. "In the beginning was the Word." Who is the Word? It is "the Son of God." When was the beginning? Long, long ago in Eternity that is past "the Son of God was the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image," [Footnote: Heb. i. 3.] or exact representation, "of His Person." In His last prayer with His disciples our Lord speaks of "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was." [Footnote: St. John xvii. 5.]

The first verse of this Gospel takes us back long before this world was created. Then we come to the creation in verse 3: "All things were made by Him." This is exactly what is said in the first verse of the Bible of another beginning, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Long before this world was created we read of God's dear Son as "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature." All things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, the Eternal Son of God. [Footnote: Col. i. 15-17.]

He says, "I was set up from everlasting from the beginning, before ever the earth was. When He appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by Him as one brought up with Him; I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him: rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and My delights were with the sons of men." [Footnote: Gen. i. 26.]

How wonderful it is to think that in the Eternity that is past, and long before the world was made, God had two grand purposes. One was to create man to be the head of the whole human race. So, when the moment came that the earthly home was ready, then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." [Footnote: Prov. viii. 23, 29, 30, 31.]

The other grand purpose in the Eternal counsel between the Father and His Son was to redeem man after he had fallen through sin. The Redeemer is the Son of God Himself, so He was foreordained to this work of redemption before the Creation of the world--"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." [Footnote: Rev. xiii. 8.] Hundreds of years rolled on, and then the glorious message from heaven was sounded forth over the plains of Bethlehem:--"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy ... for unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." [Footnote: St. Luke ii. 10, 11.]

THE SON OF GOD IS COME

Where did He come from? When did He come? Why did He come? These are some of the questions we must try to answer.

First, where did He come from? He came forth from God. He was in the bosom of the Father from all Eternity. He said to the disciples, "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world." [Footnote: St. John xvi. 28.]

We have read of two beginnings, now we will look at another beginning. In the first chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, and the first verse, we read, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Here we have the beginning of all that grand and glorious work of Salvation which is still being carried on by our Lord at the Father's right hand in heaven.

So we read of three beginnings, and these three are all of God. There is one more which is also of God.

It is the beginning of the life of Christ in the soul. When we read about "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ," we know it means the beginning of His life on earth. Have you ever asked whether there has been a beginning of His life in your heart? Is it only what you read about, or is it a personal experience in your soul? Alas! many join in singing the chorus, "What a wonderful Saviour," who cannot say, "He is my own dear Saviour." They have never been able to say "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

What is this personal experience of the life of Christ in the soul? It is what the Apostle Paul describes when he says, "I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ _liveth in me_." [Footnote: Gal. ii. 20.]

"Once far from God and dead in sin,
No light my heart could see:
But in God's Word the light I found,
Now Christ liveth in me."

In writing to the Galatians he says, "My little children, you for whom I am again undergoing, as it were, the pains of child-birth, until Christ is fully formed within you" [Footnote: Gal. iv. 19.] (Weymouth's translation).

THE SON OF GOD IS COME.

Secondly, When did He come? "It was when the fulness of the time was come," [Footnote: Gal. iv. 4.] that is when the time was ripe for it. God's clock is never too fast or too slow: so at the exact moment "when the fulness of time was come God sent forth _His Son_." Still and always His Son, but now "made of a woman," "God, manifest in the flesh"--the God-man.

THE SON OF GOD IS COME.

What is His Name? God Himself gave the Name. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus." [Footnote: St. Matt. i. 21.] No other name was to be given: it is a command, "_thou shalt_ call His name Jesus, for He shall save": that is why He is _come_. "He is come to seek and to save that which was lost." "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He Himself shall save His people from their sins." He is presented to us as a living personal Saviour. The promise is, "He, _Himself_ shall save." It means that He will abide in each believing soul for ever. Yes, moment by moment and for ever. He abides in us as the Deliverer from all sin. What a glorious promise! Are you living in the reality of it?

"Jesus! Name of wondrous love,
Human Name of God above."

It is the God-given Name. "The Name which is above every name." Is it precious to you?

THE SON OF GOD IS COME.

Thirdly, Why did He come? The King sends ambassadors to represent him in foreign countries, but God sent "His own dearly loved Son." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." [Footnote: St. John iii. 16.] The little word "_so_" means love in its unutterable fulness, and God is the source of it. Have you ever thanked Him for the unspeakable gift of His dear Son? Link the two words together, _God--the world_: it means God and you: God and me. Then link together _loved_ and _gave_. It will take Eternity to get to the bottom of those two words. Now add that other precious text, "He loved me: He gave Himself for me," [Footnote: Gal. ii. 20.] and you have "the grace of God bringing salvation."

Six times in the Epistles we find the words "He gave Himself," and in I Peter ii. 24, it says, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." This is why the Son of God is come, and it is this which makes

Him so personally real to us when earthly things are fading away.

I knew a working man who had a long, painful illness which lasted three years. I rejoice to say that soon after it began he was converted. He was so earnest that his one thought was to tell others what a dear Saviour he had found, and many were led to Christ through his example and testimony. His mother was converted through him and she is now carrying on the Christian work which he began. What was it that changed this man? It was the Holy Spirit revealing Christ to him as a living personal Saviour. The day before he died he said to his sister, "I had such a lovely time with the Master this morning in between the pain. Oh! it was like healing balm to me and He gave me a little hymn--

"Jesus loves me, He who died
Heaven's gate to open wide:
He will wash away my sin,
Let His little child come in."

How wonderful that a man nearly 40 years of age should find such comfort in a simple little hymn. But it is thus the Lord reveals Himself.

Do you feel that you are like a lost sheep? "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." [Footnote: St. Luke xix. 10.]

THE SON OF GOD IS COME!

It is a fact, a certainty. A great reality. Nothing can take it from us. It is a living experience in our inmost hearts. "And we know," says the Apostle John, "that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." [Footnote: I John v. 20.]

The Son of God is come and God presents Him to us as His Perfect Son and our Perfect Saviour. Twice during His earthly ministry there was a voice from heaven which said, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased": "In whom I have perfect delight now and for ever." Can you reply, "This is my Beloved Saviour and He is everything to me"? [Footnote: St. Matt. iii. 17 and xvii. 5.] He is either everything or nothing.

Are you like the merchant in the parable, "seeking goodly pearls, who when he had found one pearl of great price went and sold all that he had and bought it"? Is your heart singing

"I've found the pearl of greatest price,
My heart doth sing for joy;
And sing I must for Christ is mine!
Christ shall my song employ!"

A Chinese convert told one of the missionaries that he happened to take up a Testament which had been sold to the people of the house by a colporteur, but they could not see the meaning of it, so they laid it on one side. "But," he went on to say, "from the moment my eyes lighted upon it, I was greatly attracted by it. So I read and kept on reading till the meaning dawned upon me, and then," he added with a beaming face, "I found the Pearl of Great Price."

This reminds me of that strange story of a very valuable pearl necklace worth L117,000 which was lost about a year ago. It was sent by post from

Paris to London when it suddenly disappeared and no one knew what had become of it. A very large reward was offered to any one who found it.

But now comes the wonderful part of the story. One morning, a man of the name of Horne was on his way to the factory where he was employed when he saw a large match-box lying in the gutter in St. Paul's Road, near London. He picked it up and put it in his pocket. Presently he went into a public-house to have a glass of beer and there he met two of his mates. He took the match-box out of his pocket, pushed it open, and seeing it was filled with what he thought were white beads or marbles, he said to them, "What do you think of these, I've just picked them up?" "Oh! they're no good," replied one of the men, "throw them away." However, Horne decided to take them to the Police Station. The officers looked at them and said they were worth nothing, but gave him a receipt for them.

On their way to the factory they turned into another public-house for a drink, and while there Horne found one of the marbles loose in his coat pocket. "Oh!" he said, "I've got one of them left." Holding it up in his fingers, he looked round and asked, "Will any one give me a penny for it?" But no one would have it.

In another public-house where they stopped, he offered the pearl for a glass of beer, but no one accepted the offer. The pearl which was worth many hundreds of pounds was despised by one and all. Then Horne offered it for a packet of cigarettes, but again it was handed back with the remark, "That's no good to me." So one of his friends suggested that he should crush it under the heel of his boot as it was no good.

Later on when some one asked him what he had done with it he said he had thrown it away.

It is a wonderful story and quite true. "Oh!" you say, "what a thousand pities, if that man Horne had only known its value, it would have made him a rich man in one day."

Are you not surprised that none of these men ever thought of finding out the real value of that pearl? But is it not stranger still that scarcely any one ever stops to inquire who Jesus Christ really is, and the meaning of His death on the Cross? You listened just now with astonishment to the questions and answers about this valuable pearl, and yet the same questions are being asked every day about another Pearl, God's Pearl of great price, and people are treating it with the same indifference. How the angels must look on and wonder!

There are two questions which you have to answer now. First, What think ye of Christ, whose Son is He? Can you say, "He is the Son of God"? Think of the Glory of His Person: it is "the glory of the only begotten of the Father." Think of His Divine Mission: sent by God to be the Saviour now and the Judge by and by. Think of Him as God's great Gift to a perishing world. Have you received Him?

The other question which you have to answer is, "What shall I do with Jesus?" Remember God hath given to us Eternal Life and this life is in His Son. "He who has the Son has life, and he who has not the Son of God has not life." [Footnote: I John v. 12.] Jesus is pleading with you, saying, "Ye will not come," that means, you are unwilling to come to Me "that you may have Life." [Footnote: St. John v. 40.] By and by you will have to face another question, "What will He do with me?"

"The Son of God is come." It is God Himself who presents Him to us: "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." [Footnote: St. John i. 29.] He is the One whom God Himself has provided and set apart: and "now He has appeared once for all to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." [Footnote: Heb. ix. 26.] There on Calvary's Cross before the eyes of crowds of people "who came together to see that sight," He is set forth as the spotless Son of God who was made an offering for sin. He it is "whom God now sets forth to us as a propitiation." [Footnote: Rom. iii. 25.] He it is, and no other, whom God sets forth as a Mercy seat, the Blood-sprinkled Mercy Seat. God's eye rests on Christ and His finished work, and because it is a full, perfect and sufficient satisfaction for all our sins, "God sets Him forth in order to demonstrate His righteousness that He may be shown to be righteous Himself and the giver of righteousness to those who believe in Jesus." Oh, what a comfort it is to me to know that He is always there standing before God as the Righteous One, and therefore when God looks at me in all my unworthiness He does not see me, He only sees His dear Son.

When that godly physician Sir James Simpson was dying, the minister who was by his bedside asked if he had any doubts. He looked up and said, "I have no doubts; when I stand before God I shall just _hold up Christ to God." _

This is why Jesus is come, and this is why Jesus died, that the believing soul may hold Him up to God as "the One who has been made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption," [Footnote: I Cor. i. 30.] and it is all God's doing, from first to last. I love to say to myself,--

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all in all."

Our salvation depends on believing God's Word, that He has accepted our Surety. When God raised Him from the dead, it was a proof that all the claims of His holiness and justice had been fully met and satisfied. The debt is paid because Jesus paid it all. He gave Himself as a ransom-- the redemption price for all.

So now God sets Him forth in all His untold preciousness and proclaims the glorious message, "_Deliver him_", that poor helpless sinner, from going down into the pit. I have found a ransom." [Footnote: Job xxxiii. 24.]

What was the price to be paid? "The Son of man is come to give His life a ransom for many." "We are redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." Who can tell how precious? "More precious far than gold." Think what it _cost_ the Father: He gave His only Son. "Having yet one son, His well-beloved, He said, I will send Him."

Think what it cost the Son of God. Think of His agony in the garden, and then the hiding of His Father's face, and last of all the pouring out His soul unto death on the cross. Our redemption is doubly precious, not only because of the price paid, but because of the Divine and Holy One who paid it, the Lord of glory, even the Son of God Himself, "Which things even the _angels_ desire to look into." [Footnote: 1 Pet. i. 12.] They long to see into the depths of this wondrous redeeming love.

Can you sing this chorus from your heart--

"Precious, precious,
Precious is my Lord to me;

Precious, precious,
Everything in Him I see."

Think of what we have been rescued from! Christ has redeemed us from sin,
and death and hell.

Think of the cost of this great salvation, and then ask yourself, how much
is it worth to me? We shall only be able to answer that question when we
are safe home in the glory. Then we shall be looking back on death,
looking back on the Judgment of the great White Throne, as never having
come into it: looking back on the old world which has passed away.

"When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glorious sun,
When I go to Christ in glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know
Not till then--how much I owe."

Think of the last plague which God sent upon Egypt. It was not till the
midnight cry, that exceeding great and bitter cry had resounded through
the land of Egypt showing that the destroying angel had entered the houses
of the Egyptians, leaving death and desolation there; it was not till _the
judgment had actually come_ that the Israelites realised the delivering
power of the blood which they had sprinkled on their doorposts. Think of
their wonder and of their thankfulness. They had believed and obeyed
before, but _now_ their hearts are filled with gratitude and praise. If
you have really cast yourself and all your sins on Christ, then you too
will join in the new song, saying, "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain
and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood." [Footnote: Rev. v. 9.]

To _receive_ Christ now into our hearts by faith is to be born of God:
[Footnote: St. John. i. 12, 13.] spiritual life is imparted to the
believer.

To _feed_ upon Christ day by day is to live by Him: [Footnote: St. John
vi. 57.] this is the evidence of life in the believer.

To see Christ by and by and to be like Him, is life perfected in glory.
[Footnote: 1 John iii. 2.]

Dear fellow sinners, let me entreat you most earnestly in the light of an
Eternity that is coming, and as you value your precious, never-dying
souls, do not trifle with God's unspeakable Gift. "How shall we escape if
we neglect so great salvation?" [Footnote: Heb. ii. 3.] No one either in
heaven or upon earth can answer that question. If the lost in hell could
speak to us they would tell us that there is _no_ escape.

THE SON OF GOD IS COME,

and oh! the wonder of it all, "He came to where I was."
The words of this beautiful hymn describe it--

"I looked and there was none to help,
'No man' could meet my case:
A weary, world-worn heart was mine,
Without a resting place.
Then One drew near, the Christ of God,
With pitying eyes He scanned,

Jesus came to me where I was,
And took me by the hand.

"He led me first to Calvary's mount,
And, oh! what sight it gave!
The agony, the life out-poured,
It cost Him there to save.
My heart fell broken at His feet,
Who could such love withstand?
The love that came to where I was,
And took me by the hand.

"He lifted me upon a rock,
Round me His light He shed;
He poured His peace into my heart,
He healed, He held, He fed.
Ah! then I knew that holy One,
The whole could understand.
The One who came to where I was,
And took me by the hand.

"And since that day, through all the days,
His love my way has planned:
He comes to bless me where I am,
He takes me by the hand.
This glorious One is all to me,
He shall my life command,
The Christ who came to where I was,
And took me by the hand."

ADDRESS IV

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--St. John iv. 1-26

God is a Spirit. Look at this poor woman standing at the well and let us try and realise what a wonderful revelation it was which Christ made known to her soul about God. He told her that God is Father, that God is Saviour, and that God is Spirit; three Persons but one God.

The Lord opened her heart and she grasped this wondrous truth.

Christ said to her, "God the Father is seeking you, He is longing for you to come to Him." Then He let her feel and see that He is the Saviour.

Was it not wonderful that she was the first to tell the good news that He is "the Saviour of the world"? [Footnote: St. John iv. 42.]

Christ said to her, "God is a Spirit," and she found that no one else but God could touch her heart.

Until the Spirit of God comes into our hearts, we cannot really know God personally or have communion with Him. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." [Footnote: 1 Cor. ii. 12.]

Although our hearts are so sinful the Holy Spirit is longing to come in. He found an entrance into the heart of this poor woman whose life was a wreck with its four great failures. Every life is a failure in God's sight, but we must never despair of any one, for "with God all things are possible," and as long as life lasts there is hope for the sinner.

"The Lord opened her heart," she heard and believed, and went home to tell others what a dear Saviour she had found. It was the beginning of a revival at Sychar, and every revival begins in the same way, God is revealed by His Spirit and men realise the nearness of God.

Until a man really finds out what God is, there can be no true spiritual worship. This is the truth Jesus came to make known to us when He says, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. Yes, the Father is seeking us, yearning for us to come close to Him and to respond to His love for us. When our Lord tells us that we must worship in spirit, He means that it is the spirit in man which responds to the Spirit of God. Do you offer Him your heart's devotion and praise, or is it only lip-worship?

True spiritual worship does not depend on forms or ceremonies or on any special place or time. I felt the point of this when a railwayman said to me, "We can be in touch with God all the day long."

God is a Spirit, just as "God is Light." [Footnote: 1 John i. 5.] And there are no limitations as to where He works or His ways and time of working.

The Holy Spirit reveals to us far more about God than we ever imagined. The Bible says, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." [Footnote: 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.]

Until the Holy Spirit opens our blind eyes to see spiritual things we cannot understand them. It is not the words of man's wisdom which can explain them, we need to use spiritual words for spiritual truths, so we can only speak as the Holy Spirit teaches us what to say. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him," [Footnote: 1 Cor. ii. 14.] he does not grasp the meaning of them.

It is because God is a Spirit that he meets our spiritual need when we feel altogether helpless and hopeless in ourselves, for He says, "I will put My Spirit within you." [Footnote: Ezek. xxxvi. 27.] God begins in the very centre of our being, in our innermost hearts. God makes Himself known to us as God, through our spiritual necessities.

The Presence of the Holy Spirit is a personal thing in each one who receives Him. There is only one way by which we can receive the Holy Spirit, and that is by faith. The Holy Ghost has been given. Will you ask yourself, Have I received Him? If not, why not?

When God puts His Spirit into our hearts He abides with us for ever. He never leaves us. Even when we grieve Him by our coldness of heart, He does not leave us.

It is God who begins the work of grace in our hearts. The Book which

reveals to us what God is, opens with the words, "In the Beginning, _God_." [Footnote: Gen. i. 1.] God is the Beginner of all things, not only of the creation of the world, but of the new creation in our souls. This Book unfolds to us how God begins and finishes the great work of redemption and salvation.

We find another marvellous beginning which is also unfolded in this Book. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." [Footnote: 1 Gen. i. 2.] It is a remarkable word; it means the Spirit of God brooded on the face of the waters. In Genesis we read, "The Spirit of God was brooding," and in the Gospels we find the Spirit of God compared to a dove. The word "brooding" is a figure of the mother dove brooding over her nest and cherishing her young. The first time the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Old Testament is in this verse, and the first emblem of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is in the 3rd chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, where it says that, after our Lord had been baptized, "The heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him." [Footnote: St. Matt. iii. 16.]

First let us look at the background of the picture. We see darkness and desolation, death and ruin. Then we see the Spirit of God, the Dove of peace, brooding over it all, and bringing light and life, love and peace out of the confusion.

So the two thoughts which are here brought to our minds are Motherhood and Peace. If you look carefully into the Word of God you will see how the thought of Motherhood is brought before us in many ways in connection with the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

When Christ is speaking of the New Birth, He says we are "born of the Spirit." [Footnote: St. John iii. 6.] Again, when the cry of the new-born soul is spoken of, we are told how it comes; for Paul says, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." [Footnote: Gal. iv. 6] Again there is the beautiful expression, "The Spirit of Adoption." "We have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father." [Footnote: Rom. viii. 15.] "Abba" means "dear Father."

When God would reveal His heart of love to us He says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." [Footnote: Isa. lxvi. 13.] Think of a mother busy with her work, and her little one playing on the floor. Presently there is a cry, it has fallen down, and in a moment the mother is by its side to soothe it. But there is something sweeter still. Even if nothing befall the child the mother is near by to help it over every difficulty and to respond to every look and sign. Even so our God who is to us our Mother Comforter, says, "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." [Footnote: Isa. lxv. 24]

The little child always turns to its mother for comfort in every trouble. There is one thing which we notice in every home, that is, the mother's tender love and constant care for her little one. Night and day her child is her one thought. So the Lord says of His people, "I the Lord do keep it, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." [Footnote: Isa. xxvii. 3.] Every child of God can say--

"Moment by moment I'm kept in His love."

Does the child need the mother's constant, watchful care? Yes, because everything around is like a new world to the little one, it is all a new experience. The mother gives herself up so entirely to the child that it

depends on her for everything. In the same way when the soul is born again it is brought into a new relation to God, it has entered into a new experience and the Holy Spirit becomes to it just what the mother is to the child and much more.

Just as the mother trains the little one to take the first steps in walking and holds it up, so it is the Holy Spirit who teaches us how to walk and to please God. The little hand is slipped into mother's hand to be led and held up. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God." [Footnote: Rom. viii. 14.]

The mother keeps the child close to her, so the Holy Spirit is the Comforter to us, by our side, for the word "Comforter" means, The one whom we call to our side to help us. Just as the mother tells her child what to say when it wants anything, so He helps us when we pray, "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought." [Footnote: Rom. viii. 26.]

"The Comforter is come." When did He come? On the day of Pentecost, for it was then that the Holy Spirit was poured out, and He has been with us ever since.

Let those words ring in your heart and in your life, "The Comforter is come." [Footnote: St. John xv. 26.] There is a beautiful hymn which illustrates the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. It begins with the words--

"Spirit Divine! attend our prayers,
And make our hearts Thy home."

Then four things are mentioned which show forth God's power in Nature. Light, fire, dew, wind. In the Bible they are all used as symbols of the Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit working in the hearts of men.

In Nature we know that human power is small compared with the power of light, fire, wind, and water. Have we learnt to depend only on the Power of the Holy Ghost? God's Voice is ever saying to us now, oh! that we may listen, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." [Footnote: Zech. iv. 6.] Just as all the marvels of the natural world are perfectly carried out by God's wisdom and power, so He has given the Holy Spirit to make Him perfectly known as a living Presence, a living Power and Reality in our hearts and lives.

In the second verse of the hymn we find the words--

"Come as the Light--to us reveal
Our emptiness and woe."

We know what the light does when it shines into a room, It reveals or shows up any dust we had not noticed before. So when the light of God shines into our hearts it reveals what we never saw before.

Have you ever watched the battleships on a dark night, anchored a little way off from the coast? Suddenly the bright dazzling searchlights are sent out from the ship. They seem to sweep over the ocean with their sparkling light and then to wrap you round, as you stand there on the shore. The sight fills you with wonder; you feel as if the eyes of all on board ship can see you.

It is the same when the Holy Spirit shines into our hearts; it is almost

overwhelming; we can only cry, "Woe is me, for I am undone."
[Footnote: Isa. vi. 5.] We stand condemned under the searching eye of God. All our self-righteous excuses are swept away. We can no longer take refuge in the fact that we are as good as others and a great deal better than some of our neighbours. The dazzling light of God's Presence has searched us through and through and turned us inside out. Is this searching necessary for every one? Yes, for it is the only way we can learn to know the evil of our hearts.

Sometimes the light of the Holy Spirit comes to us in a quiet moment and shows us what we never saw before. Sometimes it comes like a flash. It flashed out on the road when Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus. He described it when he was being tried before King Agrippa, "At midday, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me. And I fell to the ground and I heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he tells us also that he could not see for the glory of that light." [Footnote: Acts xxvi. 13, xxii 17.] Whenever the light comes it is a revelation, a moment never to be forgotten: Darkness conceals, light reveals.

The Spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters, and God said, "Let there be light and there was light." [Footnote: Gen. i. 3.]

The Holy Spirit not only shows us what we are, but He shows Christ to us; then we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." [Footnote: 2 Cor. iv. 6.] Yes, God's glory is radiant on the face of Christ and the Holy Spirit reveals it. He delights to show us His beauty and His loveliness and thus to glorify Him. He makes Him a reality in our souls--"a living bright Reality." If you have not seen Him as "altogether lovely" it is not because the Holy Spirit is not willing to show Him to you, but because you turn away and will not look.

How good it is of God to send the Holy Spirit into this world on purpose to reveal these things to us. We should never see them but for Him. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." [Footnote: I Cor. ii. 14.] What is the natural man? It is what we are by nature before the Spirit of God gives us a new life. When it says "He receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," it means that he has no power to receive them. He is groping in the dark, loving the darkness rather than the light.

A poor woman who had led a careless worldly life, sent me this message when she was dying, "Tell her the little prayer she taught me has been answered. She will understand. Tell her God has shown me myself and He has shown me Himself, so I am going to be with Him."

The little prayer which she had learnt from my lips was this--"Lord, show me myself; Lord, show me Thyself." How I thanked God that He used it for the saving of her soul.

When the Holy Spirit convinces us of sin and of our need of a Saviour, He does not leave us there. He draws aside the veil and reveals to us the secret love of God. When our eyes have been opened to know that God is Light, then we find out that God is Love. How did this love of God show itself? God sent His Son, "In this was manifested the love of God towards us because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that

we might live through Him." [Footnote: 1 John iv. 9.] It is not only the Love of God made known and shining out in the Gift of His Son, but we are told that "God commendeth His love towards us." [Footnote: Rom. v. 8.] How does God commend His love? He sets together His love for His Son and His love for the sinner, and His love for the sinner is so great that He gave His Son to die for us. Thus the words "God commendeth His love" make it quite clear that "God loves the sinner with a love which gives its best, gives everything, keeping nothing back, and gives to everybody."

"Oh, the love that gave Jesus to die,
The love that gave Jesus to die,
Praise God it is mine this love so Divine--
The love that gave Jesus to die."

"God commendeth His love towards us in that, when we were yet sinners," it makes no difference who we are or what we have been, the Holy Spirit fixes our thoughts on that little word "yet." The text says, "When we were yet sinners, still far off, still lost and undone, Christ died for us"; so the Blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, "cleanseth us from all sin." [Footnote: 1 John i. 7.] When we feel that sin is really a burden then the Holy Spirit points us to the little word "all." Then He applies the precious Blood to our guilty consciences, assuring us by the Word that the Blood of Jesus Christ does cleanse from all sin so that not a single stain is left. It is a perfect cleanser, there is nothing it cannot do. Then the Holy Spirit shows us that God has provided a perfect covering for us in the Robe of Christ's Righteousness.

It is thus that the Comforter, who is the Spirit of Truth, leading into all truth, shows us the meaning of Christ's redeeming work and enables us to understand it and to appropriate it. When we do this it is indeed a blessed experience.

A young man whom I know described it as follows: "I heard the voice of God saying to me, 'Who told thee that thou wast naked?' [Footnote: Gen. iii. 11.] I am sure that it was the work of the Holy Spirit showing me my utter helplessness and leading me to seek the covering of Christ's Righteousness. I feel I am exactly suited to Jesus as He is exactly suited to me, for I am just the one who needs His fulness, and He is the only one that can supply my emptiness."

I praised God for this clear testimony, and I have seen again and again ever since I began to work for the Lord many years ago, that the Holy Spirit delights to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ as "a full Saviour for empty sinners."

The Gospel of St. John tells us very plainly that the Holy Ghost was sent, not only to make us see the meaning of Christ's finished work, but also to prepare our hearts to receive it in all its fulness.

How does the Holy Spirit prepare our hearts? First, He opens our hearts, awakens in us a sense of our need and sinfulness, then, when He has opened our hearts, He breathes into them a new life; He creates a longing for God. We feel within us a burning desire to know God. We catch eagerly at everything we hear about God, This is quite a new experience; we used to go on year after year not troubling about it in the very least. What is this new experience, this seeking after God? It is what the Bible calls "Repentance." The word means "Change of mind." Again and again the Apostle Paul urged upon both Jews and Greeks the necessity of "repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." [Footnote: Acts xx. 21.]

A few days ago I received a touching letter from a young friend telling me how God's Spirit had led her to repentance. She wrote, "When I was a little girl and began to seek the Lord, I was very much troubled because I could not feel sorry enough for my sins. I wanted a real repentance to come to the Lord with. I thought repentance meant crying over one's sins a great deal, and I could not feel sorry enough to cry as I wanted to. I used to keep praying, 'Give me a real repentance.' Many times I dreamed I had this deep repentance and could cry over my sins, and I have awakened with my face really bathed in tears, but oh, how disappointing it was to find it only a dream and I had not got what I wanted after all. I went on like this until I was twenty, when the Lord spoke these words with great power to my soul, 'The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.' The voice seemed audible and I turned to see if anybody had spoken to me. I was able to weep enough then, but they were tears of joy and gratitude, and I well remember saying aloud, 'O Lord, why me, why one so sinful as I am?' I now see that repentance means 'a change of mind' and not a flood of tears. Had I known this when a child it would have saved me years of toiling and praying for repentance."

Dear friends, perhaps some of you are trying to get right with God. Look at the text which gave such peace to this seeking one. It begins with this question, "Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" [Footnote: Rom. ii. 4.]

We little know that all the time we are working and toiling we are really despising, turning away from the riches of His goodness. The word "riches" shows how abundant His goodness is; therefore we are "without excuse."

God's forbearance in delaying punishment, and His longsuffering in patiently waiting, show that His purpose in thus dealing with us is to lead us to repentance, which is not merely grief for sin, but a thorough inward change.

So we now know what we did not know before, that it is "the goodness of God that leads us to repentance."

Yes, we find now that instead of working our way, back to God, He is there close to us, with open arms to receive us, stretching out His loving Hand to save us. We find that instead of trying to gain God's favour by our prayers and good works, God's Righteousness is there for us all ready and provided for us. We find that we are accepted in His dear Son not for any good thing we have done, but simply by faith in Jesus. All this is shown to us by the Holy Spirit, and without Him we could not have seen it.

We were speaking just now about repentance. Have you ever noticed that when our Lord began preaching the Gospel, the first word He said was "Repent." [Footnote: St. Matt. iv. 17.] Why did He call to the crowds so earnestly to repent? Again and again that word keeps ringing out. He wanted to make them see that He condemned the way they were living and their religious professions. It was a call to stop and think, as if He said to them, "You have lost your way, you are on the wrong road, stop and turn round."

First He points to the right road. He proclaims that the Kingdom of God is come. Then He says to them, But before you can enter in you must repent. The people recognised the meaning of the call; they knew that if they obeyed the whole course of their lives would have to be changed, because

having lost the true centre of life, they were simply _drifting_. The man who is living without God is like a ship drifting on the wide ocean without a pilot or chart or compass. For three years He pleaded with them tenderly and lovingly, and at last they gave their final answer to His message. They said, "We will not submit to the Divine government, we will not have this Man to reign over us," [Footnote: St. Luke xix. 14.] _and so they crucified Him_.

When we have been led by the Holy Spirit to repentance we see sin, and we see ourselves in a new light. As soon as we really know God we cannot help being sorry for our sin. We begin to long for a Saviour, a Mediator, and it is then that the Holy Spirit points us to Jesus. Repentance, or change of mind, is the first step, and then follows conversion--a change of heart and life. The word conversion means "turning round." Jesus says, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." [Footnote: St. Matt. xviii. 3.]

Think of God's two great gifts; first, the Gift of His only begotten Son, then the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Have you received them? Perhaps you ask, "How can I know?" If you have received the Holy Spirit there will be joy and peace in your heart, and the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in your daily life.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." [Footnote: Rom. xv. 13.]

"And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost." [Footnote: Acts xiii. 52.] They were filled again and again, more and more filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

You, too, may have a Spirit-filled life. God says to you now, and He is saying it every day and every hour, "_Be filled with the Spirit._" [Footnote: Eph. v. 18.]

Remember there are different degrees in the Christian life. First, there is Everlasting Life for all who seek it. Only ask Me, Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, and I will give you _living_ water. Then he leads her on a step further. "It shall be in you a well of water." It will be an abundant life, a joyous, satisfying life. Afterwards He tells us that it will be a life "overflowing for others." [Footnote: St. John vii. 38, 39.] This is to be the experience of all believers now through the Holy Spirit. Lastly, the crowning of it all is still to come and we shall drink of "the pure river of the Water of Life." [Footnote: Rev. xxi. 1.] That will be the fulness of life through all Eternity.

ADDRESS V

THE VOICE OF GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--Genesis xxviii. 10-22.

Jacob is leaving home for the first time, to take a long journey of 450 miles. He is quite alone and he feels very lonely when he lies down the first night in a barren place, with a stone for his pillow. Jacob was like some of us, he had heard about God ever since he was a child, but God was

not real to him because he had never had any personal dealings with Him.

That night he had a wonderful dream, and it made a great difference to his whole life. The ladder which he saw in his dream was to show him that there was a gulf between him and God: and the gulf was caused by his sins. It also showed the necessity for some means of communication to be provided for him. Right down to his deep need the ladder came, right up to God Himself the ladder reached. It was set up on earth and it reached to heaven to make him understand that the gulf had been bridged over, so that now, constant, free communication was possible between his soul and God. The ladder which Jacob saw in his dream is mentioned again in St. John's Gospel. Jesus said to Nathaniel, "Because I said unto thee I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." [Footnote: St. John i. 50, 51.]

The Lord Jesus had been revealing Himself to Nathaniel and this conversation took place near Bethel, so that the reference to Jacob's ladder was very forcible and the wonderful type was made clear.

When Jesus said that heaven would be opened, He meant not only opened just once, but _remaining open_; so that ever since Christ ascended into heaven we have lived and are still living under an "open heaven," which means free intercourse between God and man, because Christ Himself is the Ladder. It also means He is the one and only means of communication between the sinner and God. It is "through Him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father." [Footnote: Eph. ii. 18.] All that we know of God comes to us through Him, and all the grace we receive from God comes through Him. So Jacob's ladder is as real to us now as it was to him then, for it connects the seen with the unseen. It is possible for us now to have Christ's Presence with us always and everywhere, for He says Lo, I am with you alway. [Footnote: Matt. xxviii. 20.]

But there was something more wonderful for Jacob to see even than the ladder. "The LORD stood above the ladder." It was the first time in his life he had realised the Presence of God. He had lived over forty years without realising that God was close to him. When he awoke from his dream he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not." He never forgot it, just as we never forget the time and place where we are converted. One hundred years after that night, when he was a very old man, he mentioned it to his son. He said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz and blessed me." [Footnote: Gen. xlviii. 3.]

But what impressed him deeply was that _there_ in that lonely place, many miles away from any human being, he heard the Voice of God speaking to him. It was then that a new life began in his soul, for God told him that from that moment He would be with him _everywhere_, blessing him and protecting him from all danger, and it was then Jacob began to trust God as his _God_.

So we see how God's glory and God's grace were shining down from the top of the ladder into poor Jacob's heart. Jacob was face to face with God for the first time, and he began to tremble with fear. If only you could realise that God is now, at this very moment, straight in front of you, you would fall down on your face before Him, and you would cry to Him as Job did, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." [Footnote: Job xlii. 5, 6.]

It is at this moment that we realise for the first time our need of a substitute, just as Job did, for he said, "He is not a man as I am that I should answer Him, neither is there any daysman betwixt us that can lay His hand upon us both." [Footnote: Job ix. 33.] How Job would have rejoiced in the glorious revelation which Christ has brought to us. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all." [Footnote: 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.] He is not only the Mediator laying His hand upon us both, but He gave Himself, that is, He gave His life as a ransom. The ransom price was His own precious blood, for the life is in the blood. It is the Blood of God's own dear Son which makes an atonement for the soul.

The sentence passed on you and me and on every sinner is the sentence of death, for death is the penalty for sin. We are all under the sentence of death, but the glorious message is sent God has found a Substitute.

"He bore on the tree the sentence for me,
And now both the Surety and sinner are free."

You and I now have what Job longed for so earnestly. The Daysman is the Son of God Himself, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation," that is an atoning sacrifice, "through faith in His Blood." [Footnote: Rom. iii. 25.]

At first Jacob trembled with fear, but after he had heard the loving words which God spoke to him from the top of that wonderful ladder, then he began to realise that he was no longer alone in that lonely place. He said, "This is the house of God, this is the gate of heaven." Earth had faded from his sight and he was surrounded by heavenly realities. And so it is now, the veil is very thin which separates earth from heaven, the temporal from the Eternal.

It was God's Voice which woke him up spiritually. God revealed Himself as the personal God to Jacob. We can recognise a friend by his voice even if we do not see him. So it is the Voice more than anything else which makes the presence of any one real to us. We have an illustration of this in the pictures of the gramophone in which we see a dog listening for the master's voice. The sheep knows the shepherd's voice; the child is quick in recognizing its mother's voice; why do we turn a deaf ear to God's Voice? How tenderly He pleads with us, saying, "But My people would not hearken to My Voice." [Footnote: Ps. lxxxix. 11.]

God wants to be very real and very personal to each one of us, so He says, "Unto you, O men, I call, and My Voice is to the sons of man." [Footnote: Prov. viii. 4.]

God has been calling us from the very beginning. Far back in the 3rd chapter of Genesis, when Adam was hiding among the trees of the garden, it was God's Voice which called him out with the searching question, Where art thou? It was as if He said, "Adam, I want you." He is seeking God still. It was God's Voice that reminded Adam of the holy, happy friendship now broken by sin. Before sin came into the world Adam never listened to any other voice, and now when God is yearning to bring us to Himself, He says, "Listen." That word Listen, or Hearken, comes again and again in the Bible. We find it very often in Isaiah and Jeremiah. When God is pleading with the sinner, that is the word He uses more than any other. In Psalm lxxxix., where God tells us how grieved He is by our waywardness, He says, "Oh that My people had listened or hearkened unto Me." And in Deuteronomy

xxviii. 45, He tells them that their troubles have been sent because they would not hearken to the Voice of the Lord their God.

I think God has chosen this special way of calling us by His Voice, because it is what we can all understand--it is so simple and so homely. When a boy is disobedient the father calls him, then he talks to him and pleads with him. The father's voice touches the boy's heart. How wonderful it is that God's Voice can reach us, however far off we may be. You have sometimes been to an Open-Air Service, and you have heard the speaker's voice a good way off, but now it has been discovered that any one's voice can travel through the air and be heard above 300 miles away by means of a new apparatus called the wireless telephone.

Some time ago a gentleman living in England put a special receiver to his ear and he actually heard a man speaking in France, more than 300 miles away.

A year or two ago when the Titanic went down among the icebergs, you remember how the wireless telegraph sent messages to other ships calling for help. This was done by special letters, flashed across the ocean, such as C.Q.D. (come quick, danger) or when the ship was sinking S.O.S. (save our souls).

But wonderful as this is, how much more wonderful it is to discover a way by which any one's voice can be heard miles and miles away. Very likely as time goes on and the wireless telephone is more used, you will be able to speak to your father or son far away in Australia or Canada, so that they will not only hear your voice distinctly, but they will answer back, and you will hear their voices just as if you were sitting together again at home. What a wonderful thing it will be to have this close link with them!

It is the same as the link which Jacob felt when he heard God's voice speaking; it seemed to bring God quite close to him and to make God so real, that he started again on his journey cheered and encouraged; for we read in the first verse of the next chapter, "Then Jacob went on his journey," and in the margin it says he lifted up his feet, showing his heart was lightened of its burden: when the heart is heavy, our feet drag. But he made a fresh start: and if only God's Voice reaches your heart now, you will go on your way rejoicing; it will be like making a fresh start.

Again and again we read of God talking to those who were willing to hear His Voice. For example, "The LORD talked with Moses face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend," [Footnote: Exod. xxxiii. 9, 11.] and at Mount Sinai "Moses spake and God answered him by a Voice."

Not only is the link of communication perfect between God and man, but the way in which we can use it and be put in touch with God is so simple: it is by faith--that is all.

We have another illustration of this when we think of the wireless messages. The world's greatest wireless station is in a little village called Nassau, in Germany. A short time ago a message was sent to a place far, far away over the ocean, 6,500 miles away. How was it started? Only by touching a key in the machine. That touch releases the lightning which carries a message for thousands of miles over vast continents and across the boundless sea.

Only a touch--is it not like the touch of faith? But we must not forget that when the message has reached its destination, when these waves of

sound talk across the world, the ear at the other end must be prepared to hear the call.

There is the hearing of faith, as well as the touch of faith. The hearing means not only listening, but being willing to obey the voice. I have been told that when a message is to be sent by wireless telephone, the other waves of sound must be quite still before the person receiving the message can hear it. The speaker has to wait till the vibrations settle down, there must be perfect stillness, and then the voice is heard. How important it is to shut out all other sounds so that our hearts may be still enough to hear God speak. We must listen with an obedient heart. Do you remember how one Sunday was set apart not long ago to make collections for the blind. At midnight on Saturday, a royal message was sent forth which encircled the whole world. It was King George's "God speed" to the appeal for the blind. It was flashed from the wireless station on a lonely cliff in Cornwall to another station in America, and it went over the seven oceans of the world. It was received by forty-five ships in the Atlantic. They were all warned it was coming and they were expecting it. The White Star liner Baltic, 810 miles away, heard it, and it travelled on to India, and it was caught up there 1,500 miles away.

This reminds me of another royal message from the King of kings which is also encircling the world and telling the good news wherever man is willing to hear it. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." [Footnote: Rev. ii. 7.] How the solemn call rings out, and rings on: To-day, To-day! How it sounds in our ears with startling urgency, and it is the Holy Ghost who says it, "To-day, if you will hear His Voice, harden not your heart." [Footnote: Heb. iii. 7.] When we are careless and indifferent to what God's Voice is saying to us then we are hardening our hearts.

Perhaps in days gone by you once listened to God's Voice. Why did you give up listening? "Ah!" you reply, "other voices came and drowned that still small Voice, and the voice of the Evil One poisoned my mind."

Let me ask you one more question, Has God's Voice ever stopped calling? No, God is still calling. Oh, that now at this very moment you may be able to say, "The Voice of God has reached my heart." If any of you turn a deaf ear to God's Voice, remember the time is coming when "all who are in the graves shall hear His Voice and shall come forth"; [Footnote: St. John. v. 25.] and to you it will be a coming forth to judgment and condemnation.

How does God speak to us now? We can hear the Voice of God speaking in His Word. When any portion of Scripture is specially impressed on our minds it shows that God is speaking to us. A young man who had been seeking God very earnestly said one day, "While reading the Word, I felt certain that God had really spoken to my soul, that He had actually said to me, Live!" Yes, that young man was right, for that is just what God has said to us, but it makes all the difference whether we each one receive it as if God is really saying it to us personally. Luther felt this, for he used to say, "When I open the Bible it talks to me."

Why is the Bible like no other book? Because it is the revelation of God Himself. The glory of God shines in its pages. In life and in death the only source of comfort is a Personal God. Our great need is to have God personally near, near and dear. Never rest till you can look up into His Face with confidence and say, "Thou art near, O Lord." [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 151.]

He is saying to you now, "Seek ye my Face." [Footnote: Ps. xxvii. 8.] What answer will you give? Will you say to God now, "Thy Face, Lord, will I seek." When we seek His Face, then we see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." [Footnote: 2 Cor. iv. 6.] How grand it all is, and yet how simple!

Let me say one word of loving appeal to any who have never really sought the Lord. How is it that you say your prayers and yet you do not expect to get an answer direct from God? Because, like Jacob, you have never believed there is a God. You have not got hold of the first truth which the Bible teaches us, _God is_; "He that cometh to God must believe that HE IS." [Footnote: Heb. xi. 6.] When you pray, He must be as real to you as if you saw Him standing by hearing and answering you. Until our eyes are opened to see that death and judgment, heaven and hell, are great realities we do not really cry to God, and when we do we find out that we have never realised there is a God. Think of what God offers to you. Forgiveness, life and glory. Would you neglect getting these priceless gifts if you believed they were the real offers of a real Person? "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God." [Footnote: Jonah i. 6.]

ADDRESS VI

THE HANDS OF GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--St. John xx. 19-31.

Why has this Gospel been written? The last verse of this chapter tells us. "It has been written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we may have life through His Name."

In the Old Testament when "The Name" is mentioned it meant the unveiling of the grace and glory and power of God. So we read men called upon "The Name"--and in the New Testament when the Divine glory of Christ is described we find the same expression, "His Name." It means His nature and His character.

In the verse which we have just read, the wonderful truth shines out that it is through His Name, through all that He is, and all He has done, that we have _life_. So Christ Himself declares, "My sheep hear My Voice and I know them and they follow Me, and I give unto them Eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My Hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." [Footnote: St. John x. 27-30.]

Christ first speaks of His own hand and then of His Father's hand, so there are two hands which hold us fast and keep us safe, now and for ever.

Let us look at what is said about the Hands of God in the Bible.

Think of God's Hands in creation. The Psalmist says, "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of Thy hands." [Footnote: Ps. cii. 25.] "The sea is His and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land." [Footnote: Ps. xcv. 5.]

Think of His strong Hands in Providence, as Moses said, "Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power." [Footnote: Exod. xv. 6.]

Nehemiah speaks again and again of "the good hand of my God upon me," [Footnote: Neh. ii. 8.] when he tells us of all God's loving help and guidance in the difficult work he had undertaken.

Think again of God's loving Hands in grace, healing the broken in heart and binding up their wounds. How safe David felt when he said, "Thy right hand upholdeth me." [Footnote: Ps. lxxiii. 8.] He shows his confidence in God when he prays, "Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe." [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 117.] When your child wants you to hold him up he slips his little hand in yours, doesn't he? Have you ever put your weak hand into God's strong loving Hand so as to let Him do the holding up?

The saints in olden times felt God's Hand in everything, over-ruling, planning, guiding, and Jesus assures us of the perfect safety and everlasting security of the believer, for He says, "No one, either man or devil, can pluck them out of My hand, nor shall any man be able to pluck them out of My Father's hand;" [Footnote: St. John x. 28, 29.] so there are two Divine Hands holding us fast.

Think once more of the hands of God: not only strong hands to help and to heal, but redeeming hands, mighty to save; hands that have been in the fire to pluck us out of the burning; hands that have laid hold of the enemy and have overcome him; hands that have unlocked the gates of a new life that we may enter in.

Not long ago a little girl was caressing her dear old nurse, and when she caught sight of the deep scars in her hands she asked, "How did you get these scars?" The nurse looked at her very tenderly and then she said, "When you were a baby, a fire broke out one night when you were asleep in your cot. I plunged my hands into the flames and lifted you out." The child's eyes were full of tears as she looked at the dear scarred hands, the hands that had been wounded to save her.

Those scarred hands remind me of another story. One day, about thirty years ago, some children were playing on a mountain in France, and their merry peals of laughter attracted the notice of a shepherd lad who was taking care of the sheep a little way off. Suddenly a wolf foaming at the mouth came in sight. He saw it run madly down the mountain towards the children. Without a moment's hesitation he rushed forward, seized the wolf, and grappled with it. After a fierce struggle he managed to bind a leather strap around its mouth, and then he killed it, but not before the wolf, which was raving mad, had bitten him severely in the hand. This occurred just at the time when Pasteur, the famous Paris doctor, had discovered a remedy for hydrophobia. Without delay the shepherd lad who had saved the lives of the children at such a cost was taken to Paris and was cured. Hundreds of patients are sent to the Pasteur Institute at Paris and when they ring the bell, the door is opened by an elderly man with a scar on his hand. He was once the shepherd lad who rescued the children from the raving wolf, and the deep scars are from its bite. Inside the hall there is a statue representing him in the terrible struggle with the wolf.

Think of the wounded hands of the Son of God. Do you ask Where? How? Why? Where were they wounded? On Calvary's Cross. How? "They pierced My hands and My feet." [Footnote: Ps. xxii. 16.] This is the wonder of it, "He was wounded for our transgressions." Look at the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and

there you will see Jesus as the Suffering Substitute. Seven times in that chapter it is distinctly mentioned that all His suffering was because He was bearing our sins. Notice in verse 5 it says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." Then in verse 6, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." In verse 8, "For the transgression of My people was He stricken," or the stroke was upon Him. He stood between the stroke of Divine Justice and the sinner and received the blow Himself. In verse 10, "Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin;" verse 11, "He shall bear their iniquities;" verse 12, "He bare the sin of many." Jesus was the Suffering Substitute because He was the Sin-bearer. See how in His death He was identified with the sinner. For in verse 12 we read, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

In the Gospels we are told that there were two thieves crucified with Him, on either side one and Jesus in the midst. I once saw a coloured illustration of the three crosses on Calvary. One cross was painted black, the other was white, and the middle one was red. Now if we look at those three crosses on Calvary from the Divine standpoint, it seems as if one cross which was black at first is now white. It is the cross of the penitent thief; all his sins have been transferred to the Sin-bearer, so now there is not one sin on him; he has been washed "whiter than snow." The cross of the impenitent thief is black, and remains black, for he dies with all his sins on him and goes into the blackness of darkness for ever. The middle cross is red: Jesus the Holy One has no sin in Him, but the sin of the whole world is on Him, because He is the atoning sacrifice for sin.

"O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head,
Our load was laid on Thee.
Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead,
Didst bear all ill for me.
A victim led, Thy blood was shed,
Now there's no load for me."

In the writings of an American Evangelist we meet with this quaint illustration, "God uses bright red to get pure white out of dead black." It is just the same truth as we have seen shining out from the three crosses. There we see Jesus "in the midst," the God-appointed Sacrifice for sin, and we see the penitent thief washed whiter than snow in the precious Blood. We see Jesus again "in the midst," three days after. It is in the Upper Room at Jerusalem, on Easter Sunday. The disciples who were like scattered sheep have gathered together there once more, though still trembling with fear. "Then came Jesus and stood in the midst and said unto them, Peace be unto you." [Footnote: St. John xx. 19.]

It was the first time He had spoken to them since the night when He was betrayed when they had forsaken Him and had run away. He might have met them with a reproof, but He knows all about our poor hearts, so He meets them with a smile and the sweet greeting, "Peace be unto you." And He says it to them all, even to Peter who had denied his Lord, and to the others who had forsaken Him. Yes, He has only one greeting for them one and all, and that is "Peace."

Then a pause, and after the pause there came a revelation--"He showed them His hands and His side." Why did He show them the nail prints in His hands and the deep wound in His side? It was to reveal to them the wondrous truth that He Himself is our Peace, and that the Peace which He gives is the Peace which He has Himself made through the Blood of His Cross. [Footnote: Col. i. 20.]

"Through Christ on the Cross peace was made,
My debt by His death was all paid;
No other foundation is laid,
For peace the gift of God's love."

He showed them His hands and His side, because He wants them to understand that these sacred scars tell us of His wondrous love and of the infinite cost of Redemption. Let us lift up our hearts and say--

"Oh, make me understand it,
Help me to take it in,

"What it meant to Thee the Holy One
To bear away my sin."

We find from St. John's Gospel that Thomas, one of the twelve, was not among them when Jesus came, so the rest of the disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." He replied, "Unless I see in His hands the wound made by the nails, and put my finger into the wound, and put my hand into His side, I will never believe it." So when a week later Jesus says to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger and behold (or feel) My hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side," [Footnote: St. John xx. 27.] it shows how our Lord made these scars the very test of his faith, and it is the same now.

In St. Luke's Gospel we read that He said, "Behold My hands and My feet." When He showed them the marks of His sufferings for them, it was as if He said, "Here is the guarantee of your pardon and peace." We cannot have peace until we have pardon; many seek peace instead of taking pardon first. When He showed them His hands, and His feet, and His side, it was as if He said, "You need cleansing from all sin; here are the marks of the cleansing Blood. You need the touch of healing power, and here is the Hand that will give it to you. You want companionship in your daily life. Here are the feet that will travel with you, you never walk alone." What wonderful tenderness and love! If ever you feel depressed or ready to doubt God's love, remember how "He showed them His hands and His side," that they might see those sacred scars. And we read in the next verse, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." Yes, "they were filled with joy at seeing the Master." You will remember how troubled Thomas had been before this, but now the sight of the wounded hands took away all his doubts and fears. It was then that his faith rose higher than that of any of the others, for he exclaimed with adoration and worship, "My Lord, and my God!" If ever you wander away or your heart grows cold and careless, think of those words, "He showed them His hands and His side," and remember He is still the same in the glory.

When the beloved Apostle John looked through the open door into heaven, he saw Him standing there in the midst of the throne with the nail prints in His hands and feet, "a Lamb as it had been slain." [Footnote: Rev. v. 6.] What a sight!

"Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

But why did He show them the wounds in His hands and side? To make it plain that He bore all the penalty of sin. Some speak about sin as if it

were only a mistake, but God says sin is guilt, and that all are guilty, for all have sinned. We have offended against God's holy law, and if any one breaks the law he brings upon himself the penalty. God says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" [Footnote: Ezek. xviii. 20.] so the penalty we deserve is death, everlasting punishment. The penalty must be paid by some one. God's justice demands it.

God is not willing that any should perish; He loves the sinner, though He hates the sin. Still the penalty must be paid, so He found out a way; His own dear Son must take the sinner's place and suffer the full penalty instead, the death-penalty.

Perhaps you wonder, how can the death of One atone for the sin of the many? A lad once asked his father this question. The father made no reply but took him into the garden. Then he dug up a spadeful of earth with a number of worms in it, and turning to the boy he asked him, "Now which is of most value, your life or that of one worm, or even a thousand worms?" "Mine," said the boy. "Now" said the father, "you can see how the life and death of the Divine Saviour is _sufficient satisfaction to God_ for the sins of the whole world."

Oh! the wonder of it all. We see God, the Holy God, the just God, the righteous God--we see man, guilty, condemned, sinful. Then we see the Son of God Who knew no sin, _made_ sin for us, [Footnote: 2 Cor. v. 21.] so that all the requirements of God's holiness and justice are fully met.

It was on the Cross, in that hour of darkness and agony when He cried, "My God, My God, _why_ hast Thou forsaken Me," that He was _made_ sin for us. Now we see the meaning of the wounded Hands, the broken Heart of God.

"If I were God," the cynic said, "this sinning, suffering world would break my heart." But what if God's heart _was_ broken? Do we not read in the 69th Psalm, "Reproach hath broken my heart?" [Footnote: Ps. lxix. 20.] The last night before He died He went to the garden of Gethsemane. Only three of His disciples followed Him into the place where He knelt down to pray, and even these three fell asleep. He was left alone. He says, "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none." It was then the agony began which ended on the Cross in a broken heart.

It was then He prayed saying, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me, and there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him." [Footnote: St. Luke xxii. 42, 43.]

His prayer was heard and the victory was won over the adversary, for it must be on the Cross and in no other way that the Atonement could be made. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." [Footnote: Gal. iii. 13.] "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." [Footnote: 1 Pet. ii. 24.]

It was there on the Cross that He said, "It is finished; and He bowed His Head and died." We should not have known that He died of a broken heart if one little circumstance had not taken place. The Holy Spirit has shown us that this circumstance was foretold in the Scriptures and was all part of God's purpose in our redemption. The soldiers had orders to break the legs of those who had been crucified, so as to hasten their death, and remove their bodies without delay; but when they came to Jesus and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs; but one of the soldiers pierced

His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. "This was a proof that He had died of a broken heart." [Footnote: John xix. 34.]

"He died of a broken heart for you,
He died of a broken heart,
Oh! wondrous love for you, for me,
He died of a broken heart."

When we remember that the pouring out of the blood followed on the breaking of the body, then we see the meaning of the precious words spoken by our Lord during the Last Supper. We read that, "He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My Body which is broken for you.' [Footnote: I Cor. xi. 24.] And He took the cup and said, 'This is My Blood of the New Testament which is shed for many.'" [Footnote: St. Mark xiv. 24.]

Why did He die? Why was His blood poured out? The Apostle Paul answers that question when He says, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." In that one sentence we have the Message of the Cross! We see God's purpose behind it all.

Two wonderful truths lie hidden in that glorious message. The first is, that "Christ died to put away sin," because sin is the thing and the only thing which comes between us and God. The good news which Christ brings to us is that God Himself has taken the first step in this work of reconciliation. Oh! how wonderful it is that it is our sins which have brought out all the anguish and love of God's heart. Yes, our sins grieved Him so much He could not rest till He had devised a plan by which they could "all be blotted out," once for all.

Dear friends, whenever your sins are a burden, say these words over and over in your heart, "God was in Christ reconciling me to Himself." [Footnote: 2 Cor. v. 19.] This alone would have been wonderful, but there is something more in the good news, and that is "God is beseeching you to be reconciled to Him." Have you ever grasped that truth?

I remember hearing of a great lawyer who was moved to shed tears, and when a fellow-lawyer asked him why he was in trouble he replied, "I see now what I never saw before. Yes, I see that God is beseeching me to be reconciled to Him. I always thought it was for me to beseech God."

Many think as this lawyer did that the sinner must first come to God. No, it is God Who comes to us entreating us to return to Him. He is always sending us messages of love, and the moment we turn to Him and trust Him He gives us a full free pardon.

Dear fellow-sinners, "we pray you now in Christ's stead," and because of His great love in dying for you, "Be reconciled to God." God is now willing; are you willing? Do say "Yes." Will you say it now very solemnly in your heart to God?

ADDRESS VII

THE WORD OF GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--Psalm xix.

This Psalm is full of the glory of God. It tells us first of the Glory of God shining in this beautiful world which He has made, and then it shows us the glory of God shining in the Scriptures, in this Book which lies open before us.

The first verse bursts forth with the triumphant note, "The heavens declare the glory of God." Everything in earth and sky shows forth His wisdom, His power and His love.

Then it gives us a wonderful picture of the sunrise and compares it to "a bridegroom coming out of his chamber." You have seen the first streaks of light in the early morning, and then you have watched the onward course of the sun till it is high up in the sky at mid-day, full of power, "rejoicing as a strong man to run a race."

But Nature, with all its secrets, Nature with all its wonders and treasures, is only part of God's revelation of Himself; the other part is to be found in His Word.

So the Psalmist passes from the glorious sun in the heavens to the glory shining in the Word of God. The glory we see in God's works is only an illustration of the glory shining in this Book. After giving the wonderful description of the rising sun, he goes on to point out that there is not a single spot in the whole world where the sun does not shine, and that its light and heat can be felt by everything. Then he shows us that it is just the same with the Word of God. It is God's message to every one, but it is only when it finds an entrance into man's heart that it gives light.

[Footnote: Ps. cxix. 130.]

If you draw down the blind the sun cannot shine into your room; so the Holy Spirit must open our hearts for the light of His Word to enter in, otherwise it will be to us the same as any other book.

"Is it dark without you, darker still within?
Clear the darkened windows,
Open wide the door;
Let the blessed sunshine in."

How can we know that the Bible is the Word of God? A gentleman, who was an unbeliever, stopped one day to speak to Molly, the old woman who kept a flower stall near the station. He noticed she was reading her Bible, so he asked her why she read it. "Because it is the Word of God." "How do you know?" "Because it cheers and warms my heart. I am just as sure it is God's own Word as I am that it is the sun shining up there." This simple testimony was the means of convincing him and he thanked her for it.

We have heard how the sun shines over the whole world, but is it not wonderful that every little drop of water can reflect the whole of its light? In every sunbeam there are seven colours, and when you look up at the rainbow you see all the seven in one drop of rain. This is only an illustration of the wonders of God's grace. If you are a child of God the whole of God's grace enters your heart, so you have grace to speak, grace to pray, grace to be loving and patient, grace for everything. The whole of God's life and light and love are for you as if there were no one else in the world. It is the same with all the precious truths of God's Word: they are all yours. A minister who wanted to know how many promises there are in the Bible searched all through the Book and he counted nearly five thousand. Had you any idea that there are as many as five thousand

precious promises for the believer in God's Word? Have you claimed them?

A Christian woman who was very ill asked her daughter to read the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. When she had finished the mother said, "That's mine, it's all mine." How rich she was! Only think of it and it is an Eternal inheritance, for the chapter begins with "no condemnation" and ends with "no separation."

If you will look at verses 7 and 8 of our Psalm, you will see four things which the Word of God does. "It converts the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart, enlightens the eyes." Let us think of these four things.

First: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." The law here means the whole covenant of Jehovah.

You remember how, when God appeared to Abraham, that Abraham fell on his face, feeling his utter weakness and nothingness, and then God talked with him. When a man is laid low in the dust then God can talk to him. And God said to Abraham, "I will make my covenant between Me and thee." [Footnote: Gen. xvii. 2.] A covenant is a promise made under solemn conditions, and it is God's covenant of grace which converts the soul. Such a promise as we have in Ezekiel: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: And I will put my Spirit within you." [Footnote: Ezek. xxxvi. 26.] God says "I will" five times in those few lines, because He wants us to understand that in giving this promise He undertakes to do in us and for us what we can never do for ourselves.

This reminds me of a young woman who was troubled because, although she was longing to be saved, yet she felt her heart was so hard. One Sunday the minister took this verse as the text for his sermon. When he gave it out it seemed to her as if a voice was speaking these words close to her, right into her ear, "I will give you an heart of flesh." It came like a message direct from God. She was so deeply touched she could not listen to the sermon, and after it was over she went into the fields to find a quiet place that she might look at the words again in her Bible. She is now a very bright earnest Christian.

It is through the Word that God speaks to our hearts, and when the Holy Spirit makes it a living Word and quickens us to receive it with faith, then we are converted. If you are not saved, take your Bible and read it prayerfully, and you will find in it just what you want. Remember the letter of Scripture is of no use unless we experience its power and enjoy its sweetness.

A young clergyman was converted through a very strange text. He was so much depressed he thought of committing suicide, and then his eye fell on that verse in Ecclesiastes, "A living dog is better than a dead lion." [Footnote: Eccles. ix. 4.] The words brought fresh hope to him. He said to himself, One thing is certain and that is, I am still a living man, and he was then led to seek Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

It is wonderful to think of the many different ways in which God sends His Word home to our hearts. Spurgeon gives an instance of this. He was asked to visit a dying man who told him about his conversion. He said, "Some years ago I was at work in the Crystal Palace. God's Spirit was striving with me and I felt the burden of sin. It seemed to follow me wherever I

went. Suddenly a voice said to me distinctly, 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' [Footnote: St. John i. 29.] No one was near me, and I thought the message had come straight from God. I then saw clearly that Christ had died to save me, and ever since I have had joy and peace in believing."

Spurgeon listened to the dying man's testimony with deep interest, and he remembered that on that very day he had gone to the Crystal Palace to test his voice in the transept before speaking at a People's service which was to be held there, and had used that very text, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Let us thank God that His Word is perfect in converting the soul.

"The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." It is well known that very often a man who is no scholar, but who is taught of God, is able to see deep truths which learned men fail to understand. Every time you read your Bible look up and say, "Lord, open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 18.]

Do not feel discouraged because you do not understand it all. There are many things which earthly fathers tell their children which they do not understand till they are grown up, but still they love to get father's letters, and the Bible is our heavenly Father's letter to us. Do you value it?

In the 8th verse of the 19th Psalm it says, "The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart." I have seen many careworn faces lit up with joy when reading the Word. One man especially, who had a great deal of trouble and opposition in his home life, used to give his testimony at the Meeting. Opening his Bible in the 5th chapter of the Gospel of St. John he would read the 24th verse, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

Then he would tell us with a beaming face that it was his song of assurance, for, as he said, there are three links, "He that heareth, believeth, hath--and 'hath' means 'got it,' and I've got everlasting life. Jesus says it and I know it's true." He is now in the glory, and maybe he is telling the angels about it.

If we had no Bible we should have no certainty that our sins are forgiven. A little girl named Molly said to her aunt who was teaching her about Jesus, "How can I be sure that my sins are forgiven?" "Because God says so," [Footnote: St. John i. 9.] was the reply, and then she repeated the text, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Many say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," and yet they still carry about the burden of their sins. They see clearly how God can forgive sin, but they cannot realise that it is their own sins which are forgiven. This was the case with Luther. He tells us how, when he was distressed because of his sins, a friend pointed out to him that he would not have real peace unless he claimed God's forgiveness for his own sins. It was like a new light flashing into his soul; he saw his mistake and looking up with a beaming face, he said, "I see it now--it is not other people's sins, it is my sins which are all forgiven!"

We must not estimate sin and forgiveness by our own standard. When we have

given way to sin again and again we feel ashamed to ask God's forgiveness so often but the wonder of it all is that God meets this very feeling of shame with the words, "My thoughts are not your thoughts"; and then He adds, "For I will abundantly pardon," [Footnote: 2 Isa. lv. 7, 8.] which means, I will repeatedly pardon. God's thoughts of sin and His thoughts about forgiveness are far higher than ours. Sometimes I feel quite overwhelmed when I think of how great His forgiving love has been to me.

Look again at our Psalm, verse 7, "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." The word Testimony means an assurance or a promise from God to the individual soul, and David had such confidence in God he is quite sure He will not disappoint him or fail to keep His word. So he says, "The testimony, or promise, of God is sure." It is this certainty which makes David so happy.

He seems to be overflowing with joy, for he says, "Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors," [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 24.] and again, "I love Thy testimonies." "Thy testimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my soul keep them. Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful." [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 119, 129, 138.]

The word "Testimony" means also what God has commanded us to believe and also to practise.

A native convert in China said the other day, "I began by reading the Bible, but now I am behaving it." This is what David means when he says, "My soul hath kept Thy testimonies, and I love them exceedingly." [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 167.]

The question was once asked at a meeting, "Can you point to any text in the Word of God which makes you sure you are saved and safe?" "I can," said one of the company, in a quiet firm voice. "It is John iii. 36, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

We have many bed-rock texts and that is one, as the beautiful old hymn says--

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word."

I was summoned late one evening to see a dying man who had been brought to Christ through my Bible Class. When I entered his room he looked up and said with a smile, "I sent for you because I want to tell you that I am quite safe, quite sure and quite satisfied. I am quite safe because Jesus died for me. I am quite sure because I have His Word for it. I am quite satisfied because I am going to be with Him in the glory."

The Word of God was written that we might believe; to believe is to know, and to be quite certain. The word "believe" comes from an old root meaning "to live by." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." [Footnote: St. Matt. iv. 4.] Put your finger down on one of the many precious assurances which God has given us in His Word, of the certainty of complete forgiveness and acceptance, and then look up into His face with loving gratitude.

God's pardon and acceptance are absolute and eternal; nothing can ever alter them. God wants us to know it and to live in the joy of it. Trusting His Word gives us safety, certainty and enjoyment.

If any sin comes into your mind and troubles you, dear child of God, do not carry it about with you, tell Father about it at once; confess it to Him and remember that you are under the cleansing Blood. "The Blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." [Footnote: 1 John i. 7.] It has not only cleansed us once for all, but it is cleansing us now at the present moment.

It is important to remember that the whole purpose of the Bible is to give glory to God. It is the Everlasting Word of the Everlasting God. "The word of our God shall stand for ever." [Footnote: Isa. xl. 8.] Make the word of God _everything_. Receive its statements by faith as revelations of simple certainties. Find out how happy you are. "Happy is that people that is in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is Lord." [Footnote: Ps. cxliv. 15.]

If we are walking with God in our daily life we need a light to show us the way. David knew well what it was to go along rough roads on dark nights, so he says, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 105.]

Did you ever hear about Moody's torch? One night Moody had to return home through a dark wood after one of his meetings, and the path was winding and rough, so a friend offered him a torch. Moody declined taking it, saying, "Thank you, but it is too small."

"It will light you home," said the man.

"But the wind may blow it out."

"It will light you home."

"But if it should rain?"

"It will light you home."

At last Moody started, taking the torch with him, and he said afterwards, "In spite of all my fears, it gave abundant light on my path all the way home."

Every promise in the Word of God is like Moody's torch, and if we will take it and use it, we shall find as he did, that it will light us all the way to our Eternal Home. The Bible is the Book of light placed by our Master in the hand of faith that we may see clearly how to walk and to please God and how to deal wisely and kindly with those around us. It contains plain directions about everything in our daily life.

The Bible is a Revelation of God Himself. It is a direct communication from Him to us. There are four things made known to us in the Word which are of priceless value--

1. It proclaims a full, free salvation through faith in Christ. "To you is the Message of this Salvation sent."
2. It opens out to you the riches of grace and invites you to take them freely--freely--freely.
3. It opens "the door of faith" wide to the weakest sinner and even to you.

4. It gives a new life within, which transforms the soul and makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Our Lord says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." [Footnote: St. John vi, 63.] Can you say, "Thy Word hath quickened me"? [Footnote: Ps. cxix. 50.]

Do not be satisfied with reading a chapter here and there. Read straight through. Why? Because the Bible has a beginning and an ending like any other book. It begins with the story of a friendship between God and man: we see man very happy in this friendship. Then something happens; you will find it in the third chapter of Genesis. Some one has come in between them and the friendship is broken. Still God is looking for His friend and calling him, "Where are you?" The answer comes from under the shadow of the trees. "I heard Thy voice and I was afraid and hid myself."

Now we come to the last words at the end of the Book, and we hear the same Voice saying, "I am coming back again very soon." It is the Voice of the same Friend, no longer sad but glad. "The darkness has all passed away and the true Light is shining," [Footnote: I John ii. 8.] and will shine for ever: yes, it is sunshine all around, everlasting sunshine.

Where is the Bible? Do you keep your Bible where you can take it up whenever you have a few spare moments? Is it ready at hand so that you can read it before you go to bed at night? Do the children speak of it as "Mother's book"? Do you turn to it for strength and comfort? Is it a living book to you?

One of the most solemn things which God says to His rebellious people in olden times is that "they were casting His Words behind their backs." We are doing the same thing if the Bible is laid aside on the shelf, or put into the front room and allowed to remain unopened week after week. There can be no blessing in your home and in your life while you neglect the Word of God. It is this very word of God which will judge you at the last day.

Listen to Christ's solemn warning: "He that rejecteth Me and receiveth not My words hath one that judgeth him," which means you will not be left without a Judge. It is not a matter of small importance whether you read the Bible or not: it is a matter of life or death. A neglected Bible shows you are living without God; a neglected Bible shows you are living for this world only; a neglected Bible shows that your soul is dying of starvation; a neglected Bible means that though you may think you can get on very well without it, Jesus says, "The Word that I have spoken the same will judge him in the last day." [Footnote: St. John xii. 48.]

The Bible is God's Message to this present generation. Sometimes people want to lay it on one side as an old book which is out of date. It is the most up-to-date book in the world. It not only tells us of what is going on at the present moment, but about what will happen in the future. We see pictures in the daily papers of what people were doing yesterday and what they looked like, but in the Bible we have portraits true to life not only of what we are outwardly, but of the thoughts of our hearts. "The Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword: it can discern the secret thoughts and purposes of the heart." [Footnote: Heb. iv. 12.] We hear a great deal about the X-rays which show what is going on inside the body, but this is nothing compared to the Word of God which penetrates deep down into our inmost feelings and brings them to light. It is better to be searched and cleansed now, than to go on in the old way

and then to stand before the great White Throne by and by, condemned to everlasting punishment.

Let us pray with David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way Everlasting. Amen." [Footnote: Ps. cxxxix, 23, 24.]

ADDRESS VIII

HAVE FAITH IN GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--Romans iv.

There is one man set before us in this chapter as the man who had faith in God. The one thing which marks him more than any other is his faith. The man lived nearly 4,000 years ago, and yet he is still a vivid personality; he lives on in our thoughts and memories as the man who trusted God. His name is still revered all over the world, even among people of different religions, as "The Friend of God."

"The God of Glory appeared to Abraham," and from that moment Abraham's faith fastens on what God is. The attractive power of Jehovah drew him from his home, his relations and his country, and with every fresh revelation of God, Abraham's faith grasped more of God and clung to Him with a firmer hold. God's word was all he had to go by; whatever God said was enough for him; whatever God told him to do, he did it, because, to _trust God_ means to obey Him. He had God with him at every step.

If ever there was a clear-sighted man, that man was Abraham, for trust in God enlightens our understanding. He was a man with a far sight. He saw what no other man then living saw. He saw that the day was coming when God would send His Son to be the Saviour of the world. How do we know this? Because Christ said, "Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." [Footnote: St. John viii. 56.] He saw far on into the future, farther than any other man then living. He saw the golden City, the holy City, "whose builder and maker is God." [Footnote: Heb, xi. 10.] Yes, the eye of faith not only sees God, it sees also what "God has prepared for those who love Him."

God was very real to that man. Abraham trusted God because he knew Him personally. Faith is the act of the soul which looks wholly away from _self_, whether it be righteous self or sinful self, and looks to God only, in complete submission and confidence.

It was because Abraham trusted Him that God stamped the man as His friend--Abraham My friend. On and on through all these hundreds of years he has been called "the Friend of God." In the book of Chronicles, in Isaiah and in the Epistle of James it is mentioned again, "He was called the Friend of God."

What is friendship? It is two hearts trusting in each other. Abraham trusted God, and God trusted Abraham. God put such confidence in him that He let him know that He was going to destroy the cities of the plain. The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" [Footnote: Gen. xviii. 17.]

Mutual trust is at the root of all friendship. Where there is a lack of mutual confidence in the home life or in commercial life it spells ruin. The great question for each one in life is, What is my relation to God? Is it trusting God, or is it doubting God?

"Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness." [Footnote: Rom. iv. 3.] What is righteousness? It means to be right with God, and the moment we trust God's Word we are made righteous, and we become righteous.

We read in Acts that after their first missionary tour. Paul and Barnabas reported in detail all that God had done, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. [Footnote: Acts xiv. 27.] So faith is the gate of life by which the Gentiles were entering in.

Here was a new fact proving that faith was the gate of the Lord into which the righteous should enter; [Footnote: Ps. cxviii. 20.] righteous because believing. Faith is the door by which God comes into our hearts. Faith is only the door, nothing in itself, but it is called "precious faith" because of all the life and joy and riches of grace and glory which it lets in.

Abraham is not only presented to us in the Word of God as the Friend of God, but also as a pattern for all believers, and we are told to take him as our model, "to walk in his steps," to trust God and to find in God's wondrous friendship all that he found. God has been teaching us ever since, through the simplicity of the faith of this man. The most remarkable point in his faith is this, he grasped as no one else had done that God is God because He can quicken the dead. [Footnote: Rom. iv. 17.] He can give life to the dead because He Himself is the Source of life. He calls "those things which are not as though they were" because He is the Creator of all things. This applies not only to the body but to the soul. Your confidence in God began when your soul, which was "dead in sin," was quickened into a new life. When we ourselves have experienced this quickening it gives us such faith in praying for those we love, knowing that God alone can quicken dead souls.

Abraham was "strong in faith"; even when God promised him a son, although it seemed impossible, "he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief," being "fully persuaded" that God was able to do it. To be "strong in faith" is to feel our utter helplessness and to rely on God's power only; to be "strong in faith" is to grasp God's promise and not to let anything make us doubt it.

We have an illustration of this strong faith in the case of the first missionary who went out to China a hundred years ago. The captain of the ship in which he sailed was an atheist, and one day he said to him with a sneer, "You don't suppose, do you, that you are going to convert those Chinese?" "No," said the missionary, "but I believe God is going to do it." Did God fail him? No. His faith was rewarded, and at the present time there are a quarter of a million Chinese believers who meet in fellowship at the Lord's Table.

What is faith? It is the link between me and God. The link between my emptiness and God's fulness. The link between me, the sinner and Jesus, the Saviour. Is there this link between you and God? Is the link on? Faith is the spiritual link, the one and only means by which a man can have dealings with God, realise God and walk with God. It is a living link

between God and the soul, a living union. The word "faith" comes from an old word which means to bind. When I say "I believe God," it means that "I am His and He is mine for ever and for ever." It is trusting in His love, not a mere cold belief in His power. It is grasping His promises, because they are precious promises. It is the whole heart and mind going out and up to God. David says: "Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul; O my God, I trust in Thee," [Footnote: Ps. xxv, 1, 2, 5] This brings perfect rest. "Thou art the God of my salvation, on Thee do I wait all the day." Do we make it a habit to be constantly referring to God about everything? We learn first, that God is, and then our faith feeds upon what God is. His faithfulness and His lovingkindness are seen in all His dealings with us.

Faith has to do with unseen realities, for faith is the evidence, or proof of things not seen; [Footnote: Heb. xi. 1.] it makes them as real as if we could see them, and brings them near.

So we may say faith is like the telegraph wire which connects two places however far apart they may be.

We had an illustration of this not long ago. Our Queen Mary was in her sitting-room in Buckingham Palace. A hospital was to be opened in Canada 4,000 miles off, and she was asked to perform the ceremony. When the signal was given that all was ready, the Queen pressed a little ivory button and in two seconds the door of the hospital, which was held by an electric wire, opened, and in fifteen seconds the signal was flashed back that the hospital was open. So in about half a minute the signal went there and back over a space of 8,000 miles. How wonderful! and yet greater spiritual wonders are happening every day and many times in the day, if only we have faith in God and let Him work in us and through us.

I will give you another illustration how the simple touch of faith links us with God's power. A few years ago some rocks blocked the entrance into the river St. Lawrence, so that the ships could not go up the river to Quebec. It was decided that the mass of solid rock must be removed. How was it done? In the presence of a large crowd a little child stepped forward and touched an electric button and the whole mass of rock was blown up by dynamite and the passage cleared.

Faith has done great wonders in times past, and it can still do wonders, if only we make use of God's Almighty power. But the rule is, "According to your faith so be it unto you."

I will give you an illustration. When I want light in my room I touch the electric button and the room is filled with light. The moment I press the button I expect the light will come, and I am surprised if it fails. Why? Touching the electric button is like the touch of faith; it brings us into contact with the source of light. Faith brings me into contact with God Himself, for He is the source of life and light. God has ordained that faith shall be a power as real and as uniform in its working as light or heat or electricity. Everything about them is a mystery which we do not fully understand, but all the same they are real to us and we use them. Although we do not understand them, yet we prove again and again that they supply us with new life and energy simply by a touch. Even a child can touch. Faith places all God's fulness at our disposal, but it is only according to our faith that we receive it.

I know a poor woman who went through a time of great anxiety about her little girl who was ill. One day a Christian friend called to see her and

she told her all about her trouble. When she had finished the friend said to her very tenderly, "You have forgotten one little word of five letters." "What is it? Do tell me," she exclaimed, looking puzzled. Then the friend, pointing on her five fingers, said slowly, _f-a-i-t-h_. The dark cloud cleared away and she was able to look up into God's face again and to trust Him.

So when Christ says, "Have faith in God," it is a command to hold fast to God. It means trust God about everything, great and small; nothing is too small. Trust Him to save you, and to keep you. Trust Him in every difficulty and in every duty.

"Little faith will bring your souls to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your souls."

When Christ said to Peter and the others, "Have faith in God," He said it very earnestly and with a ring of deep conviction in His voice. He knew in Himself what dependence on God means in the earthly life. Day by day He showed what it is to have simple trust in God. When He said, "Have faith in God," He said it very solemnly, because He was speaking on behalf of His Father.

He had come to reveal Him, so He says, "I do nothing of Myself, but as My Father hath taught Me I speak these things." He had already said, "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life," and now He adds, "Have faith in God." Yes, He claims our confidence, our full confidence, not a half-hearted trust.

Our Lord saw men seeking other objects of trust, so He says, "Take hold of God, hold fast to God, have faith in God and never let it go."

The world's great need is faith in God. God's own character demands it. The Scriptures make Him known and reveal Him as altogether trustworthy, such an One as invites our entire confidence. To have faith in God means leaning on Him, letting Him bear the whole weight. There is a great difference between believing and committing. Many say they believe, but they are not willing to commit themselves to Him.

A few years ago there was a man named Blondin who performed wonderful feats at the Crystal Palace. Once he walked on a tight rope stretched across the centre of the Palace at a height of 150 feet. Another time a rope was stretched at a great height over a shipbuilder's yard, and he not only walked steadily across, but he carried a man on his back. A large crowd gazed at him in wonder and awe, and great was their relief when both Blondin and his burden reached the ground in safety.

Among the eager upturned faces in the crowd there was a lad about eleven years of age. When Blondin came down he went up to the lad and said to him, "You saw me carry that big man across, do you believe I could take you?" "Of course you could," replied the boy; "why, he was a big man, and I am only a little chap." "Well, then, jump up, my lad," said Blondin, and he stooped down for the boy to climb up on his back. But although the boy said he believed Blondin was able to carry him across, he was not willing to trust himself, and so, just saying, "No, thank you," he was off like a shot and ran as fast as he could till he was lost in the crowd. Though he said he believed, when it came to the point he did not commit himself, and that is all the difference, between believing _in_ Christ and believing _on_ Him.

Faith in God means really committing ourselves into His hands and rolling our burdens on Him.

If we withhold our confidence it shows that we do not really believe that God is what the Bible says He is. The reason there is so much unrest and ungodliness is because we have lost sight of God. It is not because the Bible is out of date as some say, or that the Gospel has lost its power; it is still as ever, "the power of God unto salvation," but we are limiting God.

It is just the same now as in olden times when the children of Israel limited the Holy One of Israel, and we read how this lack of confidence grieved God all through those forty years in the wilderness. Yea, they spake against God, they said, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness; can God give bread also; can He provide flesh for His people?" [Footnote: Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20.] Unbelief asks, "_Can He?_" Faith says, "_He can._" Dear friends, let me ask you to stop and ask yourself, Where do you put that little word "can"? Are you constantly thinking to yourself, Can God? or are you saying in your heart and meaning it too, "_God can_"! We limit God's power to save, by asking, "_Can_ God? The hindrance is the same as in olden times when Jeremiah felt that because of the unbelief of the people "the Lord was as a mighty man that cannot save." [Footnote: Jer. xiv; 9.]

You have prayed many years perhaps for the conversion of some one near and dear to you, but are you limiting God because you doubt His power to do it? A poor man who gave way to drink said sadly, "I have broken the pledge again and again"; then pointing to his pledge card he said, "But now I have written a text on it, Isaiah xli. 13: 'For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee.'" Then looking up he said simply, "Maybe, Him and me will do it together."

Is it victory over temptation you long for? Look up to Him and say, "I can't, but God can." Is it grace you need for some special trial? Say, "God is able to make all grace abound towards me, for He tells us in His Word that He is able to do 'exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think according to the power that is working in us.'" [Footnote: Eph. iii. 20.] The world's great sin is not trusting God. "Thus said the LORD, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm and whose heart departeth from the Lord." [Footnote: Jer. xvii. 5.] Yet in times of difficulty or danger how apt we are to lean on the arm of flesh.

During the present European war I was much impressed by the words of one of our soldiers who writes from the front: "After all that is being done there still remains one supreme necessity without which neither arms or munitions can be decisive, namely, the spiritual outlook of the whole nation. When I returned home after ten months in Flanders, I was amazed at the lack of spirituality of the people as a whole. The simple faith and dependence upon God which characterised our country in her past struggles seem lost to sight. 'They trusted in Thee and Thou didst deliver them' implied no disregard for military efficiency; it was the real and vital accompaniment to armed force. Can it be that the hellishness of battle, the wearing down of the spirit induced by trench warfare, moments of utter loneliness which every soldier has to bear, strike right at the soul and enable him to realise the nearness of the spiritual world? 'Prayer is the foundation of all grace' were the words of a dying soldier who had deliberately returned to the area of poisonous gas and had brought back the machine gun on his shoulders. Some of us have realised what individual prayer at home has done for us, but we should all like to feel that the whole nation is also testing the value of spiritual power."

We read in God's Word that "The children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God"; [Footnote: 2 Chron. xiii. 18.] and when King Asa was defeated the prophet said to him, "Because thou hast relied on the King of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the King of Syria escaped out of thine hand." [Footnote: 2 Chron. xvi. 7.]

To have faith in God we must put God first in everything. He must be first when we awake in the morning. How blessed it is to be able to feel, "When I awake I am still with Thee." A working man said to me once, "I make myself happy in God the first thing in the morning." David says, "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee and will look up." [Footnote: Ps. v. 3.] "When I awake I am still with Thee." [Footnote: Ps. cxxxix. 18.]

"In my morning prayer," said a Christian man, "instead of thinking of my own needs first, I like to think of the fulness there is in Christ for me." Let us resolve to put "God _first_," even if we have only time for one text of Scripture. "God _first_," even if it is only a minute or two for prayer. A Christian said once, "I must see the face of God before I see the face of man." The manna was gathered early every morning. Another said, "Unless I meet with God first, I cannot meet the difficulties of the day in a prepared spirit." If you put "God first," you will find this will make all the difference as to how you do your work and how you deal with others. "Little is much if God is in it."

To have faith in God is to trust Him _only_. David says, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." [Footnote: Ps. lxii. 5.] Is it so with you? If so, what for, and for how much? First find out from His Word that God is able and willing to do what you need; then trust Him to do it. "Trust in Him at all times" it says again in that beautiful Psalm. [Footnote: Ps. lxii. 8.]

"I have been looking into my Bible," said a working man, "and I find a great many men trusted God, and whatever they trusted God for, they always got it; He never failed them, and it is the same now."

You have all heard of Florence Nightingale and her life of devotion in nursing the sick. She was asked to tell the secret of her earnest Christian life, and after a pause she said, "I have kept nothing back from God." Faith in God is unreserved confidence, telling Him all and keeping nothing back. But before we can do this as a daily habit we must definitely commit ourselves and all we have into God's hands.

It says in Isaiah xlv. 5, "One shall say, I am the Lord's." I have a mark in my Bible which I made many years ago by the side of these words. I put the date and then I wrote these words: "He gave Himself for me and I give myself to Him. He takes me and I take Him." Ever since then it has been my delight to tell others how simple it all is. It is the sinner taking the Saviour and the Saviour taking the sinner.

Are you asking, What must I do? First believe what God says about you in His Word. He says, that you are guilty, lost, ruined. Then He presents Christ to us as the Saviour and calls on us to believe what He says about Him. "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar because he hath not believed the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son." [Footnote: I John v. 10, 11.]

"Have faith in God." Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, and "faith is the gift of God." And the wonder of it all is that God says to the weak ones like poor Jacob, "I have chosen thee and not cast thee away," and He never will, for "_God keeps all His failures_" not like man who throws his failures on one side as worthless.

Oh! to trust Him then more fully,
Just to simply trust.

Then instead of "limiting the Holy One of Israel" we shall be singing at the top of our voices, "The LORD hath done great things for us whereof we are glad." [Footnote: Ps. cxxvi. 3.] So then let us "trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is Everlasting Strength." [Footnote: Isa. xxvi. 4.]

ADDRESS IX

THE CHURCH OF GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--Ephesians v. 22-33.

"Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it." [Footnote: Eph. v. 25.] Two precious truths shine out in these words. He _loved_, He _gave_. He not only gave Himself for the Church when He died on the Cross, but He is still sanctifying and cleansing it, and by and by when He comes again "He will present it unto Himself a glorious Church." [Footnote: Eph. v. 27.]

So we have the history of the Church in the past, in the present, and in the future. We look back to the past and we see Christ giving Himself, that is, laying down His life on the Cross; but we must also look far, far back into the past Eternity to find out another precious truth. (Perhaps you have never thought about it.) It is, that the Church was in God's thoughts from the very beginning! The Son of God was in the bosom of the Father "in the beginning"; and it was then--before the world was created, that God chose us in Him and gave us to Him. [Footnote: Eph. i. 4.] Now we see why "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it."

What is the Church? The word "Church" means "called out," so the Church embraces all who have been "called out" during the present age to form the "Body of Christ." In the Old Testament we find that the Jews were God's chosen people, [Footnote: Exod. vi. 7.] so they had all the privileges, but in later times, the Jews rejected the Gospel of the grace of God, and then God graciously visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people to be called by His Name. [Footnote: Acts xv. 14.]

When did this special "_calling out_" begin? Nearly 1900 years ago on the Day of Pentecost, and it has been going on ever since, and when the number of "the called-out ones" has been completed, then "The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." [Footnote: I Thess. iv. 16, 17.]

Each of those three words, "_chosen_," "_called out_," and "_caught up_,"

leads us on to something more. We were chosen in Him to be holy; [Footnote: Eph. i. 4.] we are called out to be the Body of Christ now, and by and by we shall be caught up to meet the Bridegroom and to be with Him for ever. If you are a child of God, you can say with holy wonder, "God has done all this for me."

The Church was formed out of a little company of 120 men and women who were gathered together praying in the Upper Room at Jerusalem. [Footnote: Acts i. 14, 15.] Suddenly they heard a wonderful sound and saw a heavenly vision, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and before the day was over that little company increased to the number of 3,000 souls. How many does it number now? No one knows, but it is a "multitude which no man can number." [Footnote: Rev. vii. 9.] Some are already in glory, some are still on earth, but it matters not where they are, they belong to the "whole family" of God "in heaven and in earth." [Footnote: Eph. iii. 15.]

On the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out, His special work was to create a new thing--it was then that the Church of God was formed into one Body by the Holy Spirit, "For, as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." [Footnote: I Cor. xii. 12, 27.] "Now ye are the Body of Christ and members in particular," that is, individually, for every saved soul is a member.

The Church is a living body united to Jesus Christ, for He is the living Head of the Body. He needs His Church just as much as His Church needs Him. It is the Holy Spirit who unites us to the risen and glorified Christ Who is the Head, and then He unites us to one another in Him. It is a living union, because we pass through death into the resurrection life of Christ, for by "One Spirit we are all baptized into One Body, and we have all been made to drink into that One Spirit." [Footnote: I Cor. xii. 13.] The Holy Ghost sustains the life of the Church. In Him we live and move and have our being. As the bird lives in the air, as the flower lives in the sunshine, so we live in the Spirit, and when we drink in His fulness there is growth and fruitfulness.

Have we ever felt this need of drinking into that One Spirit? Everything connected with the true Church of Christ must be spiritual, it is this which is being lost sight of in the present day, and it is the reason why there is so little power and so few conversions.

Have you ever tried to understand why the Church is called "the Body of Christ"? Think first about your own body. It is the only part of your real self that can be seen. I cannot see your heart or your thoughts, but I know what your thoughts are by your words, and what you feel by the look of joy or sorrow in your face, and by the way you go about.

It is by your body that your real personality is made known to others; what you really are would never be seen unless your body made it known. In the same way the Church is the Body in order to make Christ known in the world. He is hidden from our view, He is unseen, but He manifests Himself and shines out through us, and He sends us to carry His messages and to do His Will.

This was the earnest desire of the Apostle Paul when he said that he was willing that the old self should be taken away so that "the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." [Footnote: 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.]

This is what the Church is here on earth for, to make the unseen Christ

known. Just as every drop of water reflects the light, so every member of the Church, however weak and small, can reflect His love.

Is His compassion for sinners beaming in your eye? Is His purity seen in your daily life? Do you judge things from His standpoint?

I remember when some one was telling me why she loved a Christian worker whom we both knew, she added, "I love her for what I see of Christ in her."

Think of Christ exalted in Heaven far above all things, and remember He is there not for Himself, but for you. "He is Head over all things to His Body, the Church." [Footnote: Eph. i. 22, 23.]

It is wonderful to think of this union with Christ, that we are His Body and He is the Head; but there is another wonder quite as great, it is that He is the Bridegroom and the Church is the Bride. When we speak of the Church as the Body of Christ, it is a living union, life is the one thought brought out; when we speak of Christ as the Bridegroom it is love which is the chief point. It brings out the affection, tenderness and nearness of the Bridegroom. "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies, He that loveth His wife loveth Himself." [Footnote: Eph. v. 28-30.]

We have nothing so wonderful in the Old Testament. Think of the depths out of which we have come, and the heights to which we are raised. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill to set them among princes and to make them inherit the throne of glory." [Footnote: 1 Sam. ii. 8.] Think of the sinner lifted out of all his bondage and ruin to be the Bride of the Lamb! There is nothing higher that God can give than this. This will be our glorious position by and by when the Bridegroom comes to take us to our Heavenly Home, for His parting words were, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." [Footnote: St. John xiv. 3.]

There will be three great surprises on the day that He comes again. These surprises have been kept secret, but on that day the glorious secrets will all be made known.

The first surprise will be when we shall see all the saints who have died in Christ called back from the unseen world and clothed with their new, glorified bodies. What a joyful meeting it will be.

The next surprise will be that we who are still living on earth when Christ comes will be changed, we shall not die, we shall escape from the hand of death. "It is appointed unto men once to die," but "Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many," [Footnote: Heb. ix. 27, 28.] and when He comes the saints who are living will be changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." [Footnote: 1 Cor. xv. 52.] You know how long it takes for you to shut your eye and open it--it will not take longer than that for the change to be made. Three great changes will take place--our bodies will be changed, no more sin, or pain, or weariness; our minds will be changed. "We shall know" then what we cannot know now, we shall see all as God sees it, we shall know the love of Christ and we shall love Him as He deserves to be loved, and best of all "we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is."

The third surprise will be that our circumstances will also be changed; we shall be no longer on the earth, for as soon as the great change takes

place we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. He will then look into our life work, and He will say to His faithful ones who have been true-hearted and loyal: "Well done, good and faithful servant." [Footnote: St. Matt. xxv. 21.] Then the heavens will resound with the Hallelujah chorus, "Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife hath made herself ready." [Footnote: Rev. xix. 7.]

But the glory will be only then beginning, it will be "_glory upon glory_." Remember there are two stages in Christ's Coming; He will come _for_ His saints, and then He will come down to earth _with_ His saints. As it is written: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints." [Footnote: Jude 14.] "When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." [Footnote: Col. iii. 4.] We shall come _with_ Him when He comes to reign on the earth.

But there is something still grander than the glorious position of having a place with Him on His throne. We look on and on into the Eternity that is coming (and it is a wonderful outlook) and what do we find? It is that we are wanted for the ages to come to show forth, and to be living personal illustrations "of the riches of God's grace." It is not only that we shall be saved and glorified, but that God will use us personally to show forth all His love. The grace of God is the love which flowed down to us in our great need, when we were dead in sins, slaves to sin and Satan and deserving nothing but God's wrath.

It is we ourselves who are wanted for the ages to come for "the praise of His glory." The expression "_the riches_ of God's grace" [Footnote: Eph. i. 7.] meets our personal need, but there is something else that will shine forth, it is called "_the glory_ of God's grace." [Footnote: Eph. i. 6.] All that God prepares for us is worthy of His greatness and power. The inheritance which He has in store and the beautiful Home above will be worthy of God Himself, all that is in it and around it surpassing everything that we can imagine in its glory and beauty will be worthy of God Himself. It is only as our eyes are spiritually enlightened that we can get a glimpse of "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." [Footnote: Eph. i. 18.]

The words of this old hymn describe what it will be like--

"I go on my way rejoicing,
Though weary the wilderness road--
I go on my way rejoicing
In hope of the glory of God.

"Then no more in the earthen vessel
The treasure of God shall be,
But in full and unclouded beauty,
O Lord, wilt Thou shine through me.

"All, all in Thy new creation
The glory of God shall see;
And the lamp for that light eternal
The Bride of the Lamb shall be.

"A golden lamp in the heavens,
That all may see and adore
The Lamb who was slain and who liveth,
Who liveth for evermore.

"So I go on my way rejoicing
That the heavens and earth shall see
His grace, and His glory and beauty,
In the depth of His love to me."

Our mission throughout eternity is to make known the love and wisdom of God that He may not only be all, but in all. He is in us now, but we want Him to be in all, and it will be through us that God will let the whole universe be so filled with the glorious knowledge of His love and wisdom that these words will at last be fulfilled--"God ... all and in all."
[Footnote: I Cor. xv. 28.]

We are passing through wars and convulsions and revolutions hitherto unknown, but a glorious future is awaiting us, and one thing is certain, that nothing can "separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." [Footnote: Rom. viii. 39.] That is our security.

It is also certain that it is not in the power of the devil to destroy the Church of God, for we are wanted in the ages to come. It is the Church which is to be the glory of Christ to all Eternity.

We are also wanted now in a very special way. Men's hearts are failing them for fear, they need strong, calm, prayerful helpers in this time of perplexity. Who can speak a word of cheer and encouragement? Who can point them to the Rock of Ages which cannot be moved? Who can inspire them with faith and hope? Only the one who has himself made God his Refuge. It is in times of trouble that the worldly man turns for help and sympathy to the believer. It is through us that God would work out His purpose of grace and love to the world.

A young man who had met with a bitter disappointment went to an aged Christian and poured out his trouble. After hearing his sad story, his friend said in a calm, tender voice, "God knows all about it, there is no such thing as chance in the world." "What is there then?" asked the young man eagerly. "There is love, Eternal love," was the answer.

The reason why the believer is kept in perfect peace is because he looks beyond all the tumult of battle, the bitter strife and terrible bloodshed to the time when God will gather together all things in Christ, for He is to be Head over all.

LOVE, ETERNAL LOVE.

Never for a moment shall that love cease to bless us and shield us. Whatever may happen to our bodies nothing can touch the eternal life within.

Do you feel anxious to know whether you will have a share in the glory? I will tell you how you may know. You remember Christian had a roll given him by Evangelist which he was to give in at the Celestial Gate. When you first come to Jesus as a poor sinner the Holy Spirit gives you four precious words written as it were in a roll for you to hide in your heart until the moment when Jesus comes and you are caught up to meet Him in the air. Take your Bible and you will find there four precious words which God has written for you to rest upon, and which will never fail you.

1. REDEEMED. [Footnote: Pet. i. 18, 19] "Bought with a price," and the price was the life-blood of God's dear Son, so we belong to the Church of

Christ which He has "purchased with His own blood." [Footnote: Acts xx. 28]

2. SEALED. [Footnote: Eph. i. 13] The Seal is God's mark upon us showing to men and angels and devils that we are His "purchased possession"; that we belong to Him, spirit, soul and body absolutely, and for ever, for God's solid foundation stands unmoved, bearing this inscription, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." [Footnote: 2 Tim. ii. 19]

A Christian doctor who had been in the Crimean War and in China, was very particular when going on a journey to have all his luggage "_labelled and ready_." In his last illness he turned to a friend and said with a smile, "_I am labelled and ready_"! and then he gave this beautiful testimony: "There is only one thing that makes me quite ready and quite sure of Heaven, it is that my sins are forgiven by trusting in the Blood of Jesus. Nothing that we can do can save us, it is what He did. He alone can give us peace with God."

3. KEPT. [Footnote: 1 Pet. i. 5] A young Christian told a friend that he was afraid as to whether he would be able to live the life. The friend looked at him, and said, with a ringing voice of assurance, "He is able to keep you from falling." [Footnote: Jude 24] He then saw that he was no longer in his own keeping, but in _God's_ keeping, and that the keeping would be up to the last moment, and be so complete that he would be handed over without the smallest defect to stand in "the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

4. GLORIFIED. [Footnote: Rom. viii. 30] This is the last and grandest of the four precious words which God has given to strengthen our hearts, and it is the crown of all. What shall we say? No words can express what it will be, it will surpass our highest expectations. But we know that it will be fulness of life, fulness of joy, fulness of love, and all our deepest longings satisfied, all our highest hopes fulfilled, and it will be for ever and for ever!

Let us hold fast God's sure word of promise, "The Lord will give grace and glory." [Footnote: Ps. lxxxiv. 11] Let us lift up our hearts in praise and thanksgiving to Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, UNTO HIM IS THE GLORY IN THE CHURCH, THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, TO ALL ETERNITY, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN. [Footnote: Eph. iii. 20, 21]

ADDRESS X

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE--St. Matthew xxi. 1-17, and Revelation xi. 15-18.

Now, therefore, why speak ye not a word of bringing the King back? [Footnote: 2 Sam. xix. 10] This question was asked a long time ago. You remember how David was driven from his throne. His son Absalom rebelled against him and he had to leave the country; but Absalom is now dead, the rebellion is at an end, and still David is an exile. At last some of the people talk it over together and inquire of one another, "Why say ye not a word, or why are ye silent about bringing back the King?" So they sent

word to the King and Judah went to meet him.

I was reminded of this Old Testament story when a correspondent wrote in the spring of this year as follows: "I have spent two days in what is left of Belgium, and I find that the dream of the Belgians is to see the King ride back into Brussels. Men and women, old and young, talk and plan and have visions of the time when the King comes Home."

It is touching to think how these people, in spite of all their misfortunes, still love their brave King and cling to the hope of having him once more among them in his rightful place on the throne and then their ruined towns and homes will be restored.

It makes me think of another King, our Lord Jesus, who entered the City of Jerusalem amidst the cheers and acclamations of a large crowd, and how the words came true: "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy King cometh unto thee." [Footnote: St. Matt. xxi. 5] And now they cry, "Hosanna"--He is come, He is come! and the children's voices ring out with praise. But this proclaiming Him as King aroused the enmity of some of the rulers and they stirred up the people against Him. Here was the opportunity, the golden opportunity, for accepting or rejecting the Son of God. They had listened to His teaching, they brought their sick to Him for healing, they appreciated the benefits of His ministry, but they refused to submit to His authority, so they were determined to silence His Voice. Sin shows itself in the rebellion of the will against God, and so they lost the opportunity, and instead of accepting Him, they crucified their King.

The words are still true: "Behold, thy King cometh," He comes to set up the Kingdom of God in our hearts, so the opportunity is given to you now to accept Him as your King.

We listen to the good news about peace and forgiveness, but are we willing to make Jesus King in our hearts? Here is the great test, it is here that the opposition of man's will begins to show itself, because if He is to be our Lord and Master He claims all we are and all we have. He must be Lord of all or He is not Lord at all; nothing less will do. There is no real union with Him by faith until we say in our hearts, "My Lord, and my God." [Footnote: St. John xx. 28.] It is impossible to accept Christ as our Saviour without also yielding to Him as King, and proclaiming Him as King.

A young friend of mine has these three simple words, "Make Jesus King," in a frame hanging on the wall of her room. She told me they were the means of leading her to decide for Christ.

Nothing but the power of the Holy Spirit can enable us to yield to Him as our Lord and Master. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." [Footnote: 1 Cor. xii. 3.] This is the central fact--"JESUS IS LORD." "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." [Footnote: Rom. xiv. 9]

It is the Holy Spirit who first reveals Christ to your heart and enables you to say, "Thou art my Lord," [Footnote: Ps. xvi. 2] and then He gives you grace to love and obey Him as your Master. So, whether you look backward to the moment when your sins were all blotted out, "He is Lord"; or whether you look at your present life with all its shortcomings, "He is Lord"; or whether you look forward to the end, waiting for His Coming, He is Lord. "Can you say truly--

"He cleansed my heart from all its sin,

What a wonderful Saviour!
And now He reigns and rules within,
What a wonderful Saviour!"

We have seen our Lord proclaimed King at Jerusalem and accepting the title. Although rejected and crucified, His every word and action was kingly up to the last moment of His earthly life. He spoke openly of His Kingdom to Pilate, for when Pilate asked Him, "Art Thou a King then?" [Footnote: St. John xviii. 37] He answered, "I am." The purple robe, the crown of thorns, the sceptre, though offered in mockery, were all kingly, for the superscription over the Cross, THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS, [Footnote: St. Matt. xxvii. 37] was true. The Cross was the way to the Throne. "I beheld, and lo in the midst of the Throne stood a Lamb, as it had been slain." [Footnote: Rev. v. 6]

In that dark, dark hour of Christ's agony on the Cross, there was only one man who recognised Christ as King, and that was the dying thief. It was a very real cry that broke from his lips in his utter need--"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." [Footnote: St. Luke xxiii. 42] It was wonderful faith. Can you think of any other as wonderful? He recognised Christ as King--not a dying King leaving His throne--but a victorious King about to enter His Kingdom. The penitent thief saw even more than this, he saw that it was a Kingdom of souls rescued from sin's bondage and slavery; not a Kingdom of the great ones of earth, but for outcasts such as he was, so he cried, "Take me as I am and give me a place in the Kingdom."

But the answer to the cry was as wonderful as the cry itself--"To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." When the King said "With Me," He meant, "I am passing from darkness into Everlasting Light. Come with Me. I have broken the chains of sin, I am setting the prisoners free. Come with Me." From that moment the penitent thief was identified with Christ in His death and in His Risen Life. Is this true of you?

When earth rejected the King, not only was Heaven opened to receive Him, but a triumphant reception awaited Him. Heaven resounded with the joyful chorus of the angelic hosts--"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!" [Footnote: Ps. xxiv. 7.]

So for nineteen hundred years the heavens have received Him, but once again the everlasting doors will open, and the Son of Man will come in "the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." [Footnote: St. Matt. xxiv. 30.]

What has been going on during all these years? Kingdoms and world powers have risen up one after another, but all have failed to give what the world really needs, "A King to reign in righteousness." [Footnote: Isa. xxxii. 1.] God is still saying, "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing?" [Footnote: Ps. ii. 1.] But in spite of man's rebellion and forgetfulness of God, God's purpose will stand firm, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." [Footnote: Ps. ii. 6.] God's purpose is to have all power placed in the hands of One Man, and that is Christ. What will be the final winding up of Earth's suffering and struggles? The veil will be drawn aside and

"The Glory of the LORD will be revealed." [Footnote: Isa. xl. 5.]

It is the glory of the Personal Presence of the Son of God. When? Where?

How? will the glory be seen.

Look back into the Garden of Eden. God gave man control over all, but he listened to another voice and then he lost control. The question was raised, "Who was to rule, Satan or God?"

By and by another veil will be drawn aside and we shall see how the unseen powers of darkness have been at work behind all the wars and sin and rebellion of this poor world. "An enemy hath done this." [Footnote: St. Matt. xiii. 28.] It is the devil who blinds the eyes, hardens the hearts, and deadens the conscience of mankind. But we must not lose heart or think that Satan is getting the upper hand. The Word of God enables us not only to trace some of his plots and schemes, but it shows us why God has been so long silent and when God intends to break that silence. [Footnote: See Ps. 1] The victory is sure, but whose victory? The Victory of the Son of God.

But first the Jews must return to their own land, and then "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" will be gathered to the battle of the great Day of God Almighty. All these nations will fight against the Jews at Jerusalem in the place called Armageddon. It is really a desperate attempt of the devil who is sending forth these nations to make war with the Lamb. Jerusalem will be taken, and when the enemy is rejoicing over the victory and the destruction of the Jews seems certain, then suddenly they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, [Footnote: St. Matt. xxiv. 30] "the armies" which are "in Heaven" following Him. [Footnote: Rev. xix. 14]

Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, [Footnote: Zech. xiv. 3, 4] and "every eye shall see Him." [Footnote: Rev. i. 7] The armies of the enemy will be destroyed and God's people will be delivered. In this marvellous way the Lamb shall overcome, for "He is Lord of lords and King of kings and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." [Footnote: Rev. xvii. 14]

It will not only be the deliverance of the Jews from their enemies, but the wonder of that great day will be that at last their eyes will be opened to see Him as the Messiah, so they will be converted and restored. The Lord says, "I will pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced." [Footnote: Zech. xii. 10.]

What an overwhelming sight! The same Jesus whom they despised and rejected is come down from heaven to deliver them, but they only think of Him as the One whom they have pierced. The glory which meets their eye at that moment is the glory of the love and compassion of the Crucified One. The result of looking is mourning. They get such a view of their sin against His love that they are filled with godly sorrow. When the eye of faith is turned to Jesus then the tears flow. Oh, how perfectly will all Satan's evil influence in man's heart be destroyed in the presence of Jesus.

"In that Day we have seen what has taken place at the beginning of that day, and now before it closes a fountain will be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." [Footnote: Zech. xiii. 1.] With the opening of that fountain there is grace given to use it, for God says, "I will pour upon them the spirit of grace." Many see the fountain now who never use it!

Precious fountain, of all things most precious to poor sinners such as you and me. No one but God's dear Son, and nothing but His atoning death on Calvary, could open that fountain. The fountain is still flowing--has it cleansed you?

Then the Kingdom of God is set up on earth. Who can tell the good news so well as these restored and converted ones?

The question is sometimes asked, Has the Gospel lost its power? Is Christianity a failure? No. The Gospel will yet be preached throughout the whole world. Who will be the preachers? Converted Jews, [Footnote: Isa. lxi. 6] "a mighty angel, [Footnote: Rev. xiv. 6] and glorified saints, for they shall be priests of God." [Footnote: Rev. xx. 6]

What will be the result of their preaching? There will be a world-wide revival. "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." [Footnote: Hab. ii. 14]

When Christ comes to us now, it is to rule in the hearts of His people, but then He will reign over a believing world without opposition, for Satan will be bound and Christ will take the Kingdom which is His by redemption, and His glory will be seen on Mount Zion. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." [Footnote: Ps. 1. 2]

And the seventh angel sounded and there were great voices in heaven saying: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign for ever and ever." [Footnote: Rev. xi. 15]

After reigning on earth for a thousand years there will be the Judgment of "the Great White Throne," [Footnote: Rev. xx. 11-15] when all those who had no part in the first resurrection will be raised, and all whose names are not "written in the Book of Life" will be "cast into the lake of fire."

"This is the second death."

Has your name been entered in the Book of Life?

One more glorious Vision of the Kingdom is unfolded before us, and the glory grows brighter and brighter, for it is "THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM."

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there was no more sea.... And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new...." [Footnote: Rev. xxi. 1, 5] "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads."

"And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." [Footnote: Rev. xxii. 3-5] How wonderful that God should promise us an abundant entrance into His Everlasting Kingdom. [Footnote: 2 Pet. i. 11] What does an abundant entrance mean? It means that we shall not, as it were, just creep into heaven by a side door, but that we shall have a grand welcome from the glorified ones there and from the Lord Himself, all the doors, as it were, being thrown wide open to receive us. Are we preparing for it? A mother who was dying called her little daughter

who was ten years old to her bedside and said tenderly, "I want you to learn this little prayer, 'O God, prepare me for all Thou art preparing for me.'" And the prayer was answered, for that little girl was Frances Ridley Havergal, who lived a consecrated life, and passed away singing about the Lord whom she loved.

I must give you some words spoken by that holy man Samuel Rutherford who was persecuted and put into prison for Christ's sake. "I wonder many times," he said, "that ever a child of God should have a sad heart considering what the Lord is preparing for him. When we get Home above and enter into possession of our Brother's fair Kingdom, it will be like one step from prison to glory." These words came true, for soon after this he received notice to appear before his judges in court, but before the day of the trial came he died. So it was literally one step for him from prison to glory. His own account of it is given in the following lines----

"They've summoned me before them,
Thither I may not come;
My King says, Come up hither,
My Lord says, Welcome Home."

What will it all be like? No words of ours can describe it, but God Himself tells us what He will be to us and what He will do for us in the Eternal Kingdom.

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." [Footnote: Rev. xxi. 3-4]

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

The Crown of it all is that "God Himself shall be with them and be their God." [Footnote: 1 Cor. xv. 28] All creatures will say, "God is everything to me," for GOD will be "All in All."

We have traced out some of the wonderful truths which God has revealed to us about Himself. "This is Life Eternal that they might know Thee, the only True God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." [Footnote: St. John xvii. 3]

Apart from God, all is death and ruin for ever; to _know_ God, to _trust_ God, to _love_ God is Eternal Life.

The great question is, What is God to me? Can you say--"O GOD, THOU ART MY GOD"?

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