

THE CLIMAX OF THE RISEN LIFE

with which are incorporated
THE PRIZE OF THE THRONE
THE PRICE OF THE THRONE
and
FAR ABOVE ALL

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INTRODUCTION

THE DEATH TO SIN

IT is very important to understand clearly the stage of experience depicted in the following pages, for truth out of place can be poison. The title of the book is a sufficient explanation, if it is apprehended, but it may be necessary to emphasize in still plainer language than the title expresses, the fact that conformity to death is the climax *of—not the way to*—the “Risen Life,” *i.e.*, the life of union with the Risen Lord on the heavenly side of the Cross.

Conformity to death, and bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, is quite another aspect of the Cross, to that given in the sixth of Romans. The believer’s break with sin, through apprehending the death to sin of Christ as the Representative Man, is to be definite and decisive. Based on God’s fact of the meaning of Calvary declared in Romans 6: 6, the believer is to reckon himself dead—not dying—to sin, counting upon the Spirit of God to make the reckoning true. Standing on the basis of “dead to sin,” the believer finds the mastery of sin broken, and “living to God” in Christ Jesus he is a “new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17). 17). Joined to the Lord, he is “one spirit” with Him—his life is hid “with Christ in God.”

But now comes the question of the manifestation of that hidden life—the life of Jesus—how is it to be lived? Here the messages in the following pages will meet the need. Standing steadfastly on the basis of Romans 6: 6, II, etc., as the bed-rock fact in relation to sin, the believer whose life is hidden with Christ in God, now is able to bear the “fellowship of Christ’s sufferings,” and be made conformable to His death, so that the life in union with the Risen Lord may be manifested in the body, and through the body, to others— “death” working in us, and “life in you” (2 Corinthians 4:12).

The need for both of these aspects of the Cross to be apprehended clearly, in their right order, by the Lord’s children, is very great, for if the believer imagines himself in the path of “conformity to death” when he has not first apprehended the death to sin, he will never obtain victory over sin, nor have any note of victory in his life, and, again, if the believer who rejoicingly knows the emancipation of Romans 6, from sin as a master, does not see the succeeding stage of conformity to death for life-giving and fruit-bearing service, he is in danger of being hard and unbroken in exterior, and of failing to manifest the broken and contrite spirit so precious to God.

It is necessary, also, to emphasize, not only the need of the believer’s knowing the two stages, *i.e.*, the death to sin of Romans 6, and conformity to death of Philippians 3:10, but that they both should be continuous at one and the same time, in every obedient child of God. The bed-rock basis of death to sin needing the persistent “reckoning,” must never be departed from, or the apprehension of Romans 6, looked upon simply as a past land-mark in the spiritual life. If this is done, *sin* in more subtle forms, will re-assert the mastery, without being called sin. The persistent standing on the bed-rock basis of death to sin alone enables the Spirit of God to reveal in deeper measure what is *sin* in the sight of God, so that in the power of the new life, the believer does not *let* sin reign in practice (Romans 6: **i 2**); and whilst standing on the basis, the acceptance of conformity to death alone permits the outflow of the life of Jesus through the mortal body, when “We which *live*, are *always* delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” *The two must go together !*

In relation to sin, we reckon we are dead with Christ, and therefore “dead indeed unto sin”, and living unto God “in Christ Jesus”; in relation to others, we accept the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings and the becoming conformable unto His death, so that life may flow through us to a dying world.

Standing then, on the basis of Romans 6—may the reader say Amen to the messages in the following pages, and follow in the steps of the Lamb of Calvary.

CHAPTER I

THE CLIMAX

OF THE RISEN LIFE

“I LONG to know Christ and the power which is in His resurrection, and to share in His sufferings, and die even as He died” (Philippians 3: 10, Weymouth). So wrote the Apostle to the Gentiles in his letter to the Philippians. “The risen life culminates in’ becoming conformed unto His death’; we ‘rise’ that we may *sink ourselves* after His likeness; we are emancipated that we may surrender ourselves into the hands of our Emancipator. The climax of the risen life gravitates, strange to say, back to the Cross; and when we have learnt the power of His resurrection, we are only being thereby fitted to become conformed into His death” ! [1] So wrote an apostle of the nineteenth century, the late revered Charles A. Fox.

It is the lack of *experimentally* understanding what Paul meant when he wrote Philippians 3:10, which causes departure from the proportion of truth by many of the Lord’s children. In the wisdom of God the Cross of Christ is the pivot, or *central truth, which keeps all other truth in its due proportion* both in doctrine and practice. Mr. Fox pointed this out when he wrote: *The Cross of Calvary is the one central eminence in all Holy Writ; thither all lines of truth, whether old or new, converge, and thence all light and life power radiate forth to the universal Church.*” If this is so, it is easy to see that the human mind cannot possibly grasp, to the fullest extent at one time, all the various aspects and infinite depths of what the Cross of Calvary means.

When in the grace of God, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, we have assimilated what we may have thought its fullest truth, we find we are but on the edge of a vast ocean of the unsearchable wisdom of God. Hence it is in relation to the “message of the Cross” that the Apostle Paul says God has declared: “I will exhibit the nothingness of the wisdom of the wise, and the intelligence of the intelligent I will bring to naught” (I Corinthians I:18, 19, Weymouth). In all truth, then, connected with the “message of the Cross”, let us humbly recognize that even the “intelligence” of the intelligent “is of little avail, for “the message” (I Corinthians I: 1 8; 2: 4) contains deeps of the wisdom of God which the Divine Spirit alone can reveal, and “mightily carry home”!

The message of the Cross is full of paradoxes on its experimental side, and these paradoxes can only be understood as we progress in experience. There is what is called the objective side “, which means the finished work of Christ in His death upon the Cross as a work complete and full and finished for all who believe; and there is the gradual apprehension of this by the believer, which brings about in him the “subjective” or experimental side. Therefore, as we

speaking about the Cross we need almost constantly to make plain from which of these standpoints we are speaking, lest we be misunderstood. But the Holy Spirit of God, we may reverently say, must be watching over with tender care the sacred message of the death of the God-Man, for the *Cross* is not a favourite theme with the wise of this world, even in the Christian Church. The very words—” the Cross “—seem to be a stumbling-block to the intellect of the natural man, even as was the case in the days of Paul. The Holy Spirit is also watching over the “message” as it goes forth among the people of God, for upon its reception and assimilation by the believer, depends the fulfilment of the ascended Lord’s desires for His Church. If it is true—and we know it is—that from thence—the Cross of Calvary—all “ life-power “ radiates forth to the Church of Christ, how much depends upon our increasing knowledge of what the Holy Ghost has to teach us about it!

On the objective side there is first revealed to us the Crucified Lord as our Sin-Bearer, and all who are truly born from above can bear witness to the *subjective* result of their apprehension of the finished work of the Lamb of God. But later on comes again the revelation of the objective fact, that in the Person of the Saviour the sinner was nailed to the tree. We are identified with Christ in the Cross; it is our Cross as truly as His. It is our death as well as His; we have died, and are dead with Him,” again writes Mr. Fox. Of later years thousands of the children of God have been apprehending this, and gladly acquiescing in all that it means subjectively— i.e. (1) in a death to sin; (2) a deep separation from the self or soul-ish life— according to Hebrews 4:12; (3) a severance from the world, to be separated unto the Redeemer as His purchased possession; and (4) a victory over Satan as conquered by the Emancipator at the very hour of His outward shame!

Through this blessed work of the Spirit in the Body of Christ, in a progressive unveiling of the meaning of the finished work of the Saviour, the living members of the Lord’s Body have been steadily advancing in the divine life, and life-power has been radiating forth to the whole Church of Christ. More and more the having “drunk of one Spirit” has been seen to be the characteristic of the children of God. The Church has been advancing to the “heavenly” sphere, where she is crowned “ with “ every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ” (Ephesians 1: 3); “ enthroned “ with the Risen Lord “ in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 2: 7), and where it is God’s purpose that “ the Church might now be used to display to the powers and authorities in the heavenly realms the innumerable aspects of God’s wisdom (Ephesians 3: 10, Weymouth). All this has gloriously been coming about in increasing measure as apprehended by great numbers of the children of God these last years.

But now, *What next?* is the question. *The climax of the risen life gravitates back to the Cross.* “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, sharing the likeness of His death,” is Conybeare’s rendering of Philippians 3: 10. [2] And the same keynote is struck in the Apostle’s second letter to the Corinthians, where he says: “In my body I bear about continually the dying of Jesus, that in my body the life also of Jesus might be shown forth. For I in the midst of life am *daily given over to death* for the sake of Jesus, that in my dying flesh the life whereby Jesus conquered death might show forth its power” (II Corinthians 4 10, 11).

What is the meaning of this? Why the need for “*always* bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus”? Because in the body we are open to the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil, whilst in spirit we are joined to the Risen Lord, and sit with Him “enthroned in the heavenly realm “; and so we need continually in ever-deeper measure to be made conformable

to His death, for it is only as we are thus willing to sink ourselves after His likeness “ that the true life in *spirit* in the heavenly sphere, can be maintained in purity, and increased in power.

The importance of fully apprehending the aspect of *continual conformity to the death of Christ*, as a balancing truth to the “ life in the heavenlies “, is very great, for to go beyond the due proportion of truth means danger at every stage of the spiritual life; and “ error “ is simply truth pushed too far. “ All truth, all light, all life radiates from the Cross,” wrote Mr. Fox, and if the Cross is kept in its central place by every believer seeking the fulness of the Spirit, no aspect of truth will be pressed too far; and no “line” of truth radiating from the Cross, followed beyond the radius of the Cross.

Moreover, the fullest victory in the believer’s life depends upon this conformity to the death of Christ. It is the “condition “, writes Mr. Hopkins, of the “manifestation of the divine life.” “ Our part,” he says, “ consists in *getting down* (note the same thought as with Mr. Fox, “sink ourselves “) into the death of Christ; His part is to live out His own life in us. . . . And this assimilation to the dying Christ is not an isolated act, but a condition of mind ever to be maintained, and to go on deepening” (1 Peter 4: 1). This simply means that however much any of us may have apprehended our death with Christ as a “ terminus “, or “ boundary line between us and the world “, and as “ the divine laboratory where the ‘ flesh ’ is cauterized and put to death” (C. A. Fox), there must be a fresh and daily application of the power of the death of Christ by the working of the Holy Spirit, *for the continued manifestation of the life of Jesus in actual freshness and power*. Whilst it is therefore true that we have died with Christ to sin, so that we walk in newness of life in union with Him, it is also true that for the “ life of Jesus “ to be manifested, we cannot get away from the Cross, but must “always bear about” the “dying” with Him.

It is not easy to make this important aspect of the Cross clear to young believers, for it needs must be, in the limitation of the human mind, difficult to apprehend two apparently contradictory truths at one and the same time. And yet in experience it becomes all so simple ! “ Some think that they are always to be hidden in Christ on the Cross,” writes a worker; but “ Christ is risen, and in Him we are to walk in newness of life.” Both are true, according to the texts we are considering. 2 Corinthians 4: 10-12 and Philippians 3: 10 are passages which *follow* the experience of Romans 6, and describe the absolutely necessary condition for the continued maintenance of Romans 6 in power.

But the Holy Spirit has many ways of teaching these deeper depths of the Cross, and often uses figures of speech which the babes can apprehend when Romans 6 and 2 Corinthians 4: 10 are beyond their grasping. “I will put thee in a cleft of the rock,” said the Lord to Moses; and “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee,” we often sing. It is only the spiritual fact of the necessity of maintaining the death attitude, or “ conformity to His death,” rendered into a figure of speech. The being “planted into His death” of Romans 6 is to be found over and over in the words of the Saviour, e.g., “ As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth *into* (Greek) Him, may have life” (John 3: 14, 15). It is, in truth, as we sink down into His death—His death was *on the Cross*—and abide in that death in daily, hourly conformity, that His life—the life of Jesus Himself in us—will spring up into “newness of life “; and even more, it is only in *proportion* as we “ get down “ into His death, that in spirit we ascend into that life within the veil “ hid with Christ in God “. “ For ye died,” said the Apostle, “ and your life is hid. . . .” It is only the *life* which is “ hid with Christ,” the “*ye died*” being a fact which is needed as the basis day by day.

We might also use the figure once referred to by the Rev. Andrew Murray, when he spoke of the acorn striking its roots into the ground, whilst the life sprang up into an oak. Christ was a “seed-grain,” in the language of the divine Spirit, whilst He hung upon the Cross, liberating His life for a dying world. His death may be likened to “ground” therefore in which we are planted (Romans 6: 5, A.V.), and it is as we abide in the ground of His death by faith that we strike the roots of faith deep down into Him, like a planted acorn, and thus His life springs up in us into “newness of life”; “resurrection life”; the ascension life within the veil.

We might carry the picture further, and say that the lack of “root”—strong root-power which comes from this deep abiding in the ground of the death of Jesus—is always the cause of pressing the truth of the “life in the heavenlies” too far, and thus getting uncentred, and open to the subtle wiles of the spiritual foes roaming at large in the spiritual sphere. It is as if the young oak tree becomes all at once all branch and leaves, growing away into space, with no attention to roots; or, in the other language, as if the believer soared away in spirit into space, and realms unknown, without seeing to the safe anchorage of deep daily abiding in the depths of the death of Christ. But all language fails in attempting to make clear these divine realities, yet behind all the poor limits of human speech is the watching Holy Spirit, ready to reveal the truth to needy hearts.

“By maintaining the death attitude we liberate the life power,” again wrote Mr. Fox; and “the death mark is the trade mark of the Church”. What is this but the Apostle’s words: “So then, death working in me works life in you”? (2 Corinthians 4: 12). Here we have “death” said to be *working*. The death of Christ was not an ordinary death, for He was the God-Man, and so His death carries in it power. His death *works*; it works deliverance, it works separation, it *works* in the believer as he yields to it, until the activity of the flesh is brought under its power in “conformity” to His death. The “*death attitude liberates life-power*”. Yes, the life-power of Jesus which makes the “man in Christ” “more ‘himself’, in one sense, than he ever was before”! For “this does not destroy our individuality, but it magnifies *His*,” wrote Mr. Fox. “The ‘I’ is not converted, but crucified . . . ‘I live’; (the Greek has not the ‘I’, it should be in italics) so the Christian’s ego should always be in italics. . .

But the *liberating of the life-power*! THAT is the need of the Church! The seed-grain in the ground *liberates life*; the acorn in the ground, as it abides and strikes its roots downward, *liberates life*. Need we wonder now why the climax of the risen life gravitates to the Cross? It is needed for (1) daily and hourly deliverance, and continual separation from sin. (The blood of Jesus Christ . . . *cleanseth* from all sin. “When we speak of the ‘blood of Christ’ we mean the life poured out, sacrificed, i.e. His *death*,” E.H.H.); (2) for continual separation from the “soulish” life of the first Adam (I Corinthians 2: 14) indicated in the words “deny *himself*, and take up his cross daily” (Luke 10: 23, 24, R.V.m.), and described in one aspect in James 3: 15 as “soulish wisdom,” or as in men “governed by soul,” as in Jude 19; (3) for rooting purposes, to keep the believer steadily founded on the rock; and (4) for deeper and richer and fuller liberation of life, springing upward into the heavenly sphere, and outward to a dying world.

If all the members of the Body of Christ, joined to the Living Head, will but thus “get down” into the death of Jesus, they will find springing forth in glorious fulness the life-streams the poor dead world so sorely needs; they will find as they hide in the death of Jesus, the safety from the enemy’s workings, which they need, for as they abide within the radius of the Cross he is a conquered foe.

And how can all this be? *By the power of the Holy Ghost.* The Spirit leads to the Cross, and the Cross to the Spirit. The oil must be upon the Blood, and upon man's flesh, it cannot be poured. "Christians too often attempt in early life to aim at being like the Crucified, and afterwards, later on, they aim at the Risen Life. We must bear and wear the marks of crucifixion whilst we, by the Spirit, walk in newness of life (C. A. Fox).

There is much else that might be said as to the practical results in the daily life, of the "life of Jesus manifested" in the fullest use of the faculties of reason, and the walking even as He walked in His life of lowly service and ministry to all; but "let all . . . who are mature believers cherish these thoughts, and if in any respect you think differently, that also God will make clear to you. But, whatever be the point that we have already reached, let us persevere in the same course . . ." (Philippians 3:15, 16, Weymouth).

Chapter II

THE CONTINUITY OF THE CROSS

"ALWAYS bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then *death worketh* in us, but life in you" (2 Corinthians 4: 10, 12, R.V.).

The Keswick Convention of 1897 was opened with an address by Dr.—now Bishop—Moule, who spoke on the tenth verse of this passage. He said that the word used in the original was precisely not "death," but "dying." It meant the *process* of dying, the process leading up to death. Their carrying about in the body the death-process of the Lord Jesus was the giving themselves up, by the grace of God, to a death which would assent and consent to a crucifixion, in which the Lord would be glorified in His people. Later in the week Mr. Hopkins spoke on the same theme. He pointed out (1) that "the new life cannot be lived triumphantly *until the old life is terminated*"; (2) that "it is only by the power of Christ's death that the old life can be terminated." "There is *only one holy life*"—the life of the Lord Jesus; and "only one holy death"—the death of the Lord Jesus. "The death of Christ is the termination of your old life. What was laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ? Your sins? *Yes, and yourself.* . . . You were laid upon Christ when He died upon the Cross. That is where death takes place. That is where the great transaction was done, where this death-pardon was obtained, where this death-deliverance was secured from that old life of yours. It terminated the old natural life.

But we take a step further in connection with the same thought: that we need the death of Jesus every moment, we need the *power of that death continually*. You say: 'Is it once for all?' 'Well, He died once for all in the eye of God. And you died in the eye of God with Christ once for all. But the power, the efficacy of that death needs to be perpetually appropriated and applied, that you may be perpetually delivered. . . . 'Always bearing about in the body the putting to death,' about which we have been speaking, 'of the Lord Jesus'—shall I call it the

essence of the Cross ? Not a dead Christ, but the putting to death, that which took place in Him when He died, not only for sin but unto sin. There is needed the perpetual application of that to the soul—getting down into His death, being brought into conformity to His death. It is not difficult now. You need not struggle or fight against the old life now, or try to tame it or conquer it, or try to ignore it; but you can claim your deliverance because it has been purchased, obtained for you by that death and your identification with it always.

“What follows? *The life springs up spontaneously.* ‘That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. . . ‘Bearing about in the body the putting to death,’ receiving, feeding upon the death, getting down into the death, conformed to the death. Drink in His death, feed upon His death. It is that which terminates the old life, which is the source of all our trouble. . . Let everything which belongs to the old course of life be cut off. . . Many of us are trying to yield the life to God before we are really cut off from the old, and nothing but the perpetual application of the Cross can do that. . . Rest upon the death of Christ on the Cross. . .

This is just the very aspect of Calvary which the people of God are needing, for many apprehend very clearly their death with Christ on Calvary, but it is the perpetual application of the Cross which will keep in the place of death the “old life which Satan can effectively play upon with subtle attacks as an angel of light. The “termination” of the old life by the apprehension of our death with Christ on the Cross must be followed, as Bishop Moule pointed out, by the “carrying about in the body the death-process of the Lord Jesus “; or, as Mr. Hopkins so strikingly says, by the “getting down into His death.” The sinking down into the death of Jesus is the faith-action of the believer, and then spontaneously and unconsciously the Risen Life of Jesus springs up in gentle, silent power.

How wondrously the Spirit teaches the children of God the same thing is illustrated by some words written by Jacob Boehme in 1622, words full of divine beauty and life. “I never desired,” he wrote, “to know anything of the divine mystery, much less understand the way to seek and find it. I knew nothing of it, as in the condition of poor laymen in their simplicity. I sought only after the heart of Jesus Christ, that I might hide myself therein from the . . . violent assaults of the devil. And I besought the Lord earnestly for His Holy Spirit, and His grace that He would please to bless and guide me in Him; and I resigned myself wholly to Him, that I might not live to my own will, but His, and that He might lead and direct me, to the end that I might be His child in Christ Jesus.

“I can of my own ability do nothing before Thee; I wholly sink myself down into Thy wounds and death. . . I have no refuge in anything, but only in Thy holy wounds and death I sink down. . . Do with me what Thou wilt. . . Bury me in Thy death. Break Thy judgments in me in the blood of Thy love. I wholly sink myself down into Thee; and though body and soul should this hour faint and perish, yet I will not let Thee go. Though my heart saith utterly No, no yet the desires of my soul shall hold fast on Thy truth, and neither death nor devil shall pull me out of my Saviour’s wounds. Thou must at length be confounded in me, thou malicious devil, and thy fort of prey must be forsaken, for I will drown it in the love of Jesus—and then dwell in it if thou canst

“I beseech Thee, O Christ, Thou patient Lamb of God, grant me patience in this my way of the Cross . . . and bring me, as a patient lamb to Thee in Thy victory. Let me live with Thee—in Thee.”

The cry to be wholly conformed to the death of the Lord Jesus, so that His own life may be manifested day by day, and as the “death works in us,” life go forth to others as rivers of living water, is the true path of progress for the child of God. In the life of Paul the Apostle as described in the Acts of the Apostles, we need to read the second Epistle to the Corinthians alongside of the life of power described by Luke the physician; for the one gives the story as it appeared to other eyes, and his own letters tell of his inner life as known to himself alone. In the Acts we see Paul baptized with the Holy Ghost (Acts 9: 17), and then, not long after, sent away by God for three years to Arabia, where he was given by the Risen Lord Himself the deep insight into the meaning of His Cross which ever afterwards characterized his ministry. We read of mighty things wrought by God through His servant, but what his own experience was we are shown in his letter to the Corinthians, when he spoke of the “weakness and fear and much trembling,” alongside of the “demonstration of the Spirit and power.” We see him “caught up into Paradise,” but glorying not in the visions and revelations but in his weakness. “Anguish of heart and many tears” over children of God sinning against their Lord. Commending his message by his life, in “much patience . . . long-suffering, and kindness.” Life, blessing, power for others; weakness, suffering, patience, endurance, gentleness in himself—this is the true fruit of the power of the Holy Ghost. “The Cross leads to the Spirit, and the Spirit to the Cross” (Dr. A. Murray).

As a glimpse into the inner life of those whom God is thus teaching, a letter from the daughter of a rector will lift the veil. She writes: “Two years ago I had a new vision of Calvary, and what Christ achieved there. This was followed by a definite baptism of the Holy Spirit. My soul was filled with such burning love to Christ and souls, as I had never known before. For years previous to this I had been surrendered to the Lord’s service, and He had allowed me to win souls for His kingdom. But two years ago a new epoch began in my life. I resolved to know nothing but ‘Christ and Him crucified.’ The result has been a fiercer conflict with the invisible powers of darkness, than I could have believed possible. Misunderstanding, false judgment, envy and strife—and that amongst Christian workers—seemed to surround one. The strain of what I have passed through would have driven me from my senses had I not learned the secret of the ‘hiding place.’ In olden days I was constantly running to the doctor for a tonic to brace up my nerves, and he would shake his head, and say I was wearing myself out, recommended rest, change, etc. This winter I have not needed a tonic at all. In spite of being pressed upon all sides, and there has been keen suffering, too, at times—yet in the midst of all, one knows the secret of victory, and the mind is at rest, and there is His peace within the soul, too deep to express. In consequence, the body is kept in health, there is restful sleep at night, and one wakes in the morning refreshed and with renewed strength. Perhaps these are trivial matters to mention, but I find with the mind set free from harassing care and worry, I am at liberty to minister to others as never before in my life. I am learning to say with Paul: ‘I take pleasure in infirmities, reproaches, etc., for Christ’s sake.’ There is ‘grace to suffer long and be kind,’ to pour out one’s life, and expect nothing in return, only that He may be glorified! Oh, the wondrous joy of it! To Him be all the praise. . .

In this story we have the order of spiritual progress and growth very clearly outlined. The old life “terminated by the apprehension of the death deliverance at Calvary; the incoming of the Holy Spirit in love and passion for souls; then the “death process” of ever deeper sinking down by faith into that death, for the manifestation of the longsuffering love and sacrifice of the Lamb of Calvary.

CHAPTER III

THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS

HE saved others Himself He cannot save!" (Matthew 27: 42) were the mocking words addressed to the dying

Christ as He hung upon His Cross on that "green hill far away." Mocking words, but embodying the very essence of the life and death of the Son of God; the very essence of the dealings of God with the world—the very essence of Calvary. "God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son. . . . To save others—sinners, rebels, enemies—the Father cannot save Himself from sending forth out of His bosom the Son of His love. To "save others" the Son cannot save Himself, but must pour out His soul unto death, and thus see His seed, and divide the spoil with the strong. To "save others" the Holy Spirit cannot save Himself from anguish, even like unto the anguish of the Son in Gethsemane, [3] in His entry into the heart of those once sunk in sin, and often wilful and disobedient to His pleadings.

"He saved others. *Himself He cannot* ." embodies in few words the whole history of the God-Man's path on earth, and thus He manifested to fallen man the "express 'image,' or 'character,' as in the Greek" (Hebrews I: of the Father in heaven. "Herein was the love of God manifested. God hath sent His Only-Begotten Son . . . that we might live . . ." (I John 4: 9). "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us" (I John 3: 16). The character of God was revealed in His Son; the divine nature manifested in Him Who was the "very image of His substance ". Briefly, it is God-like to save others, refusing to save yourself.

"He saved others, Himself He cannot!" This does not mean that He had not the power and the resources for saving Himself. On the contrary, He had the power—but would not use it ! To "save others" when it means no cost to yourself is within the scope even of fallen creatures; but to "save others" and refuse to save yourself when you have the power to do it—this is divine. He "cannot" save Himself because it is contrary to the divine nature to save self at the cost of others' loss.

"Himself He cannot! " Wondrous words, spoken in mockery, and by the lips of sinners crucifying their Saviour. Even in the temptation in the wilderness this law of His life was revealed. Later on He fed others, but in the wilderness He could not, because He would not, feed Himself. He could draw upon all the power of the Godhead to bless others, to feed others, to save others, but as concerning Himself— nothing! No using of divine resources to save Himself one moment's pang of hunger; one word less of scorn; one stroke less of the Scourge, and smiting with the hand. Even so must the child of God be conformed to the image of the Son, to show forth His divine character, as the Son revealed the express image of the Father. " He saved others, Himself He cannot . . ." is the law of the life of Jesus, and must be the law of the life of every follower of the Lamb.

To have the power to save yourself, and refuse to use it, because thus others cannot be saved, is the life of Jesus manifested in those He has redeemed. To pour out your life for others who reject and misjudge you, when you need *not—this is Calvary !* To have the power to save yourself and not use it, because it means loss to others -- *this is Calvary !* To be used to

deliver souls from the power of Satan, and then to lie at the apparent mercy of the “hour and power of darkness” yourself, as Christ *did*—*this is Calvary in truth*.

Oh, child of God, “He saved others,” but “Himself He cannot save,” must be the way for you in every time of sore stress and storm for the followers of the Lamb. God has used you to deliver others, and you are wondering, maybe, why you are not delivered from the “fightings without” and fears within which are besetting your own life. Others come to you in their deep need, and, with your own heart breaking, you yourself are called upon to give out of your emptiness and loss what it seems you need for yourself. You are asked to “claim victory” for others in distress, when it seems that you are in greater distress yourself. Thus it was at Calvary! He Who had loosed others from the power of Satan was given up, as it appeared, to the full rage of the power of darkness. He Who had done the mighty works of God for others, lay in impotence and weakness in the hands of men. Yes, this is Calvary. Life, power, blessing, deliverance for others—and—nothing for yourself, but to lie in the will of God, and accept from the Father’s hand all that He pleases to permit to come upon you.

“He saved others”—all the resources in God and the power of God for others! “Himself He cannot”—powerlessness, emptiness, suffering, conflict, death for Himself. Even so was the hall-mark of the highest manifestation of the spirit of the Lamb seen upon the heroes of faith as recorded in the eleventh of Hebrews, and among these heroes who reached the highest place in this roll of honour were women, who were “beaten to death” (R.V.m.), not “accepting deliverance,” that “they might obtain a better resurrection.” Yes, this is the very highest mark of the spirit of the Lamb. To “subdue kingdoms,” “obtain promises,” “stop the mouths of lions,” “quench fire, escape the sword, wax mighty in war—all as the result of faith in an omnipotent God—is mighty; but to be “*beaten to death*,” and “*not accept deliverance*”—*this is Calvary*. The voluntary choice to suffer and to die, rather than save yourself, is higher than even faith to conquer and subdue.

And, if we mistake not, this is the highest path put before all those who press toward the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus at the present time. “Fresh evidence has reached me this morning that God is mightily at work to raise up and establish a people really conformed to Christ’s death—a much more serious *and* potent matter than the granting of ‘gifts’!” writes a minister of wide experience, and in a position to see and know in a special way the trend of the work of the Spirit. Yes, God is “mightily at work in my direction,” many deeply tried souls will say, as they think of their own case, and the strange and special ways in which they are individually being led that they may know the pathway of the Cross, and enter into the spirit of the Lamb.

Two paths seem clearly opening before the Church of God, with a choice for each member of the Body of Christ which has eternal issues. There is the conformity to the Lamb which we have already referred to, and which needs divine vision to discern in its heavenly beauty and glory. On the other hand, the path of saving ourselves from the full extent of all that following the Lamb means on earth, with the loss in the glory of the sharing of the Throne of the Lamb. For it is written, “If we suffer we shall also reign with Him (2 Timothy 2: 12). “If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8: 17). The suffering of Christ was entirely voluntary, for He said, “I lay down My life. . . . No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself” (John 10: 17, i8). And in the path of conformity to His death many who have chosen to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, find themselves in a path of the Cross, which they could escape if they would! They could accept deliverance, and thus save themselves, but—lose the better resurrection.” This in

truth is the spirit of the Lamb slain, supplied by the grace of God to redeemed sinners. All that is of earth, in the voices of friends and of the world, and of their "own life," cries out, "Save thyself and us." But the Spirit of Christ within them leads on in the path of the Lamb, for like Him they "cannot" save themselves. To see a "way of escape" from suffering, and of their own free choice refuse to take it because it would be saving themselves—this is thankworthy with God, for it is the nearest path of likeness to Him of Whom it was mockingly said, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

Chapter IV

SONS OF THE CROSS

FOR the chief musician; set to the Gittith. A Psalm of the sons of Korah." In a sermon the Rev. C. H. Pridgeon, of Pittsburg, U.S.A., gives some most helpful renderings of these words in the title of Psalm 84. Speaking on the sixth verse of the Psalm, "Who passing through the Valley of Baca make it a well," the preacher pointed out the suggestiveness of the title, "Upon Gittith," in its meaning of concerning the wine-presses," this signifying that the psalm was probably sung at the time the wine was being pressed out of the grapes. The words, too, "A psalm for the *sons of Korah*," are equally instructive, for "the word Korah is about equivalent to our word Calvary—the place of a skull. Spiritually, therefore, these 'sons of Korah' may be termed the '*sons of the Cross*.' Some of the ancients so read these words. . . . Summarizing these points the psalm may, therefore, be said to be a psalm written for the use of the "sons of the Cross," who are passing through the winepress in the Valley of Baca.

A psalm for the Valley of Baca! A psalm to sing in the wine-press ! Only "sons of the Cross" can sing in the winepress, for they know the secret of the ways of God, that out of death comes life; out of suffering, heavenly joy; out of nothingness, the very fulness of God. Therefore, they see not the winepress, and the cross, in their outward pain and loss, as men see them, but from the viewpoint of the "tabernacles of the Lord of Hosts"—from the sanctuary of the heart of God—and they can *sing* in the winepress when they see the "wine" of the life of heaven pressed out of them in life-blessing to the souls of men, and know that He Who trod the winepress alone for their sakes is satisfied.

A psalm to sing in the winepress ! And what do they sing? "How lovely are *Thy* tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts" (R.V.m.), "My soul longeth - yea, even fainteth—for the courts of the Lord." When earth is darkest in the winepress, then heaven is opened, and God becomes all in all. And they sing—these sons of the Cross—of the blessedness of the one whose strength is in God, and not in circumstances, or earth-born helps and props. The Hebrew word means "might" or "endurance". "Blessed is the man whose 'might'—or power of endurance—is in THEE ! " "Behold, we count them happy which endure," writes the apostle. "Ye have heard of the endurance of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord" (James 5: II, A.V. and R.V.). Yes, happy Job, that he had strength to endure until the hour came when his captivity was turned, and he received of the Lord "twice as much as he had before." For the "end of the Lord" is double for all the pain of the winepress, and the length of the time in the winepress valley is the measure of (1) the power of endurance which the soul has in God, and (2) the foreshadowing of the "double" which will come forth in winepress blessing to others.

And they sing; yes, they sing, these sons of the Cross, when they find that in the winepress their hearts have been "melted like wax in the midst" of them (Psalm 22: 14), like their Lord upon His Cross, and how in the melting the old limitations have passed away, and their once

closed hearts have become “highways to Zion” for others seeking after God; no longer closed to the sorrows of others, shut up in narrow bounds of sympathy and love, but hearts enlarged and open to the needs of a dying world, for “whoso seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his heart of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” (I John 3:17, Alford).

Oh, the closed hearts among the people of God ! Oh, the high walls over which none can leap, surrounding their sympathy and love! It is worth the winepress to have the exterior of the “grape” bruised and broken, if thereby the “wine” of the love of God can be freed to pass out to a world needing more sympathy than preaching, more love than law. Blessed is he “in whose heart are the highways to Zion” for a needy world—a heart open for all in need of God, to enter, and march through it to Zion—even unto God.

But more than all, the “sons of the Cross” can sing in the winepress valley, because there they find that they themselves have become a “place of springs” for the water of life to others. They have sought with earnest longings to be channels for “rivers of living water” to flow out to others, and they have “believed” and “believed,” according to the letter of the word (John 7: 37), but still these “rivers did not flow. But at last the secret was revealed by the Providence of God. They found themselves one day in the winepress valley, and then the rivers flowed ! It was an hour when all men seemed to trample with their feet these “grapes” in the winepress of God, when lo, a spring of divine love, pure as crystal and sweet with the sweetness of heaven, opened in their hearts to the trampling souls, and they knew that they were in the “place of springs” —the heart of God—the heart of God revealed in the heart of Christ upon the Cross of Calvary.

“If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the Cross,” they cried, “come down from the Cross.” Come out of the winepress! But, how then shall others be saved? How then shall the life of God be given to the souls of men? And even thus must the “sons of the Cross” follow the Lamb into the winepress of Calvary, if through them shall be given the “wine” of the life of Christ to a dying world.

The Psalmist speaks of only a “passing through” the winepress valley; and truth to tell it can be only a “passing through” from time to time, as the “sons of the Cross” press on in following the Lamb, but as the divine life is increasingly imparted, and divine strength is given, those who knowing the “place of springs” rejoice each time they are counted worthy to be given winepress joy—yea, the joy of the Lamb, Who on nearing His Cross could say to His little company of sorrowing friends: “My joy I give unto you.” The joy which was set before Him for which He could endure the Cross and despise the shame. The joy which can only be known in seeing Calvary from the heart of God; from the viewpoint of heaven.

These souls who thus know the winepress valley as a place of springs, go from “strength to strength” or (Hebrew) “force to force,” and “every one of them appeareth before God in Zion.” Yes, in New Testament language, every one of them emerge into that hidden life with Christ in God, for these are the “overcomers” who are “lifted above all” by the loss of all ! From “force to force” they go, through the winepress valleys; more and more losing the earth-life as they are driven on out of extremity into resources which are to be found alone in God, more and more detached from all that earth holds dear to dwell in the heavens with the reigning Lord.

This conformity to the Son of God in His path of the Lamb, is the purpose of the Pentecostal fulness of the Spirit, rather than the “signs and wonders” which dazzle the eyes of men. “Ye shall receive power to be martyrs,” was the promise of the Risen Lord to His disciples, and this surely means in one aspect that just as “through the Eternal Spirit” He offered Himself to God, so all His followers would need the power of the Holy Ghost to follow Him and be conformed to His image—the image of a Lamb.

There are two spheres of service which follow the knowledge of the fulness of the Holy Spirit—the one of mighty works, and the other of being a life-channel for the life of God to quicken other souls. The one is the result of “doing,” and the other of suffering. The one stage may be likened in the life of Christ to His mighty works after the baptism in Jordan, and the other as the result of His poured-out life at Calvary. The Cross may be the “terminus” in the experience of the believer, in the sense of death with Christ to sin and the world; but as that “terminus” attitude of death with Christ is maintained by faith and obedience, the believer is then led on by the Spirit into a fellowship with Christ’s death for life to others; and these are the “Sons of the Cross” who joyfully consent to enter into fellowship with their Lord, that His life in them may be poured forth in springs of life to needy souls.

It is of the deepest importance that we co-operate with the Spirit of God in the stage of the divine life which He has brought us into. It is possible to be turned back in our spiritual progress by seeking an experience which may *look* more advanced than the path indicated by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4: 10-12. The highest purpose of God in the believer is not to make him so much a powerfully-used instrument, as to bring forth in him the fullest manifestation of Christ in every aspect of His character, and this can only be done in the winepress valley of fellowship with His sufferings. He was “crucified through *weakness*,” and there were no mighty signs and wonders wrought by Him to thrill the multitude at Calvary; but in His weakness and Lamb-silence in suffering and His poured-out life, He did more for the world than when He healed the sick and cast out demons in Galilee. Oh that this pure and lovely pattern may be unveiled to the eager children of God at this time who are seeking intensely what they term “God’s best”—the pattern of the Christ in His Lamb-likeness conquering the hosts of darkness, not by fighting but by death. And this beautiful Lamb-likeness of the Lord Christ will not be wrought in us by “visions” of Calvary, nor by sudden and mystical experiences of entering into the sufferings of His Cross, but by the daily and hourly choosing of the will of God in the discipline of life. The “answering not again” when accused of many things; the hidden and silent path of sacrifice unknown to men; the doing good and suffering for it as evil-doers worthy of death. . .

CHAPTER V THE MELTED HEART OF CALVARY

My heart is like wax; it is melted,” was the language of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross as foreshadowed by the Psalmist in the 22nd Psalm, fitly named “a psalm of sobs” by Archbishop Alexander, for, he says, in the Hebrew there is not a single complete sentence in the first part, but all is in fragmentary sighs, like the words of a dying person, when there is not strength to complete a sentence. In the pathway of the soul brought into conformity to the

death of the Son of God, there comes a time when there opens to him, by the deep inworking of the Spirit, the meaning of fellowship with His heart in its meltedness under the touch of God.

“Put on, therefore, as God’s elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion” (“bowels of mercies,” A.V., Colossians 3: 12, R.V.), writes the apostle to the Colossians; and in all his letters he so lays bare his own heart that he himself becomes an ensample in his own person of that “heart of compassion” which he enjoins upon his readers. “Though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers,” he exclaims to the Corinthians as he writes to them in their babyhood of the spiritual life, to lovingly admonish them, and bid them beware of the danger of being “puffed up” and “glorying” in spiritual experiences greater than others. They gloried in being “rich” and “reigning,” whilst he and the other apostles were living as “men doomed to death.” These “babes in Christ,” yet “carnal,” whom he could not feed with strong spiritual meat, were glorying in being “wise in Christ,” whilst he and Apollos were “fools for Christ’s sake.” They were “strong,” whilst the chosen vessel called to suffer great things for the name of Christ, was “weak.” They had “glory,” whilst he had only “dishonour. . .

What a contrast between the rich, reigning, strong “babes in Christ” and the apostle with the great heart who calls himself their “father -- “for “in Christ Jesus “ he had begotten them through the Gospel ! “Ten thousand tutors “ “ Not many fathers “ How true it is to-day! “Many teachers” (James 3: 1) but not many willing to suffer, and to bear others on their hearts, until they are borne through their babyhood stage into maturity.

A “heart of compassion “--of yearning, tender pity born only of the life of God in a believer, and which brings in power to suffer and to endure for the growth and life of other souls. There are those who think that fellowship with Christ in His death means a lessening of sensitiveness and power to feel, whilst others rebel against this thought, and say they do not believe in the eliminating of the “emotional “ in spiritual experience. The life of the Lord Himself, and especially the letters of Paul, show us clearly the true balance between these two extremes. In the first case, the truth is that fellowship with Christ in His death simply delivers us from undue self-sensitiveness, and sets us free to be increasingly and acutely sensitive for all that concerns Christ and others And in the second case, all that is needed is that the surface emotionalism be taken away, so that the very deepest depths of the whole inmost being may be opened for the life of God to be poured out for souls.

The expression in the Authorized Version of Colossians 3: 12 is very suggestive: “Put on bowels of mercies “ ! This speaks of depth and truth and power of sacrifice which does not come from the moving only of the surface emotion in a “powerful” meeting. Dr. Woods Smyth points out in connection with this word in Colossians 3: 12, that Professor Bain tells us that “feelings “ and “emotions “ are “distributed throughout the nerve centres of the internal organs of the body.” “Hence their great power compared with mere thought, which is confined to the limited range of the head.” This means true “emotion” and “feeling” for others, and speaks of the deepest work of God in our whole being. “Thought” “confined to the limited range of the head” describes the “ten thousand tutors” who can be teaching, and giving light and knowledge without a trace of the “bowels of mercies “--the ‘heart of compassion’ referred to by Paul. In brief, it is heart we want--the power to feel and to sacrifice for others, for it is the lack of heart which makes “truth” cold and repelling to needy souls.

"My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart is disquieted in me; I cannot hold my peace" (Jeremiah 4: 19, R.V.), cries the prophet Jeremiah concerning Israel; and this capacity for suffering over others made him peculiarly a picture of Christ when He came as a "Man of Sorrows." This inward "melting" of the heart, when the "nerve centres of the internal organs of the body" are moved, so that the whole man is broken up with pain for others, is referred to as the experience of the Saviour when He cried: "My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst. .(Psalm 22: 14).

This same wonderful moving of the whole inner being in strong compassion is said to be the cause of God the Father sending the Son as the Dayspring from on high to visit us. This came about through "the heart of mercy of our God" (Luke 1:78, R.V.m.), and Jeremiah, in fellowship with God also pictures Him moved and troubled over Ephraim as a "dear son", who had turned away from Him.

It is this wondrous unveiling of the heart of our Father-God which we so deeply need to know, so that we may speak as Jeremiah spoke of Him, to wandering souls, "I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first-born," said the Lord; and "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself," but" as often as I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still . . ." (Jeremiah 31: 20).

Dr. Woods Smyth points out that this same word "bowels of mercies," "bowels of compassion," is translated "tender-hearted" in various passages. "Be ye kind, *tender-hearted*, forgiving one another" (Ephesians 4: 32), the apostle writes to the Ephesians; "If there are any *tender mercies* and corn-passions, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be of the same mind" (Philippians 2:1, 2) to the Philippians; "Onesimus. . . I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is *my very heart* . . .(Philemon 12, R.V.) he writes to Philemon. These passages show how God can communicate to His redeemed the very "heart of mercy," and "bowels of compassion," which moved Him to give His Son to die for sinners, and moved that Holy One upon His Cross in strong love and pity for all who crucified Him.

Tender-hearted, forgiving . . . even as God forgave," said Paul. And who that has known how freely, and sweetly, and compassionately, the whole inner being can be moved by the love of God to pour out gracious, loving, melting "forgiveness" to another, even before the very first trace of sorrow or regret for wrong doing is seen, will not better be able to tell of *God's* forgiveness to any repentant sinner or child of God? And how these "tender mercies" and "compassions rejoice in filling to the full the joy of others, and is poured out also in gracious, exquisite, tactful words, as seen in the apostle's letter to Philemon over his runaway slave. How Paul's "heart of mercy"—"heart of compassion"—comes out in his language concerning him. "My child, whom I have begotten in my bonds," he writes (v. 12, R.V.). *And this about a Phrygian slave!* The "very heart" of Paul had yearned over this soul, in "bowels of mercies," so that he ceased to be to him a "slave," and he saw only in him a child," begotten in his time of suffering and sorrow.

What a wealth of gracious, God-given compassion was manifested in Paul! His letters may be said to be "all heart"—not "heart" in our narrow conception of "heart" in the sense of earthly, personal affection, loving only those who love us (Matthew 5: 46); but "heart" in the wider, fuller, rich revelation opened to us in the words of our theme—"bowels of compassion," yearning, pitying, suffering, pouring out in wealth of divine fulness upon all, irrespective of any thought of "return." "I seek not yours, but *you*," the apostle writes to the Corinthians; "for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the

children. And *I* will most gladly spend, and be spent out for your souls . . .” (2 Corinthians 12: 12, 15, R.V.). “Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved” (A.V.). And again to the Thessalonians he writes: “Life is for us life indeed, since you are standing fast in the Lord” (I Thessalonians 3: 8, Weymouth), and “when I could no longer endure the uncertainty,” I “sent to know the condition of your faith . . .” (I Thessalonians 3: 5, Weymouth); showing how deeply Paul’s “heart of compassion” lived in the life of those he had nurtured for Christ (I Thessalonians 2: 7), as a father . . . his own children” (v. II, Weymouth).

Ten thousand tutors Not *many* “fathers,” we can say in the light of this glimpse into the heart of the apostle Paul. “Tutors” to teach, correct, admonish, advise—but few to suffer with others, with such burden of heart as to write in need with “anguish of heart and many tears.” Few to yearn over others with the whole inner being moved in compassionate longing for the welfare in fellowship with the very “heart of mercy of our God.”

Would we say to-day that the apostle’s language was exaggerated? Could he really speak of a soul he had yearned over as his “*very heart*”? Yes, for Paul’s great heart was in fellowship with God, and with His Son Jesus Christ, and “desperate tides of the whole great world’s anguish” were “forced through the channels of this single heart” (Meyer’s “Saint Paul”), reaching out upon even a slave, brought to him in his bonds.

Is this “heart of compassion” possible for each of us? Yes, for the Apostle writes: “*Put on,*” as “*God’s elect, holy and beloved,* a heart of compassion. . .” And why? “Seeing that ye have put off the ‘old man’ with his doings . . . (Colossians 3: 9, R.V.). *Calvary’s Cross is the place of blessing.* There let the old narrow, earth-born limitations be put away. There let the old selfish, self-seeking, self-grasping life be left, as we “put on” the “new man which is *being renewed* . . . after the image of Him that created him, where there cannot be “earthly distinctions, divisions, separations”, but “Christ all in all.” In the heavenly sphere—” In Christ Jesus “—alone can the “heart of compassion” be given, and the soul be so taken into fellowship with Christ’s sufferings as to know throughout its whole being that yearning love and pity which is, in truth, of God, and not of man. It is written that the “new man” is “*being renewed*”—a gradual process which follows the crisis of the definite “putting off” of all that is of the old creation, and the decisive putting away of all “anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking. . .

And in the “renewal” of the “new man” comes, in due season, the stage of real fellowship with Christ in His travail over others, when the whole inner being is moved by the “tender mercies” of God to pain over a nation—as with Jeremiah; or to yearning for Christ to be formed in others, as with Paul; to the compassionate, gracious manifestation of God’s forgiving love (Ephesians 4: 32), and the impossibility of “shutting up” “compassion” from any in need (I John 3: 17); to the yearning, longing prayers for others “in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus” (“tender heart,” Alford) (Philippians 1: 8); and the glad spending out of life and love for all, though the more abundantly the love is given, the “less” the outpourer is loved

But how does this come about? “He that believeth *into* Me” (lit. Greek), the Lord Jesus said, and this means a faith in Him which draws the soul *into Him* on His Cross—something more than a mental assent to His finished work, or a faith similar to faith in some other person. It means a faith which *unites* the trusting one with the Saviour. “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself. But this He said signifying by what manner of death He should die” (John 12: 32, 33). The Saviour on the Cross *draws*, and the believing one is drawn *into* Him there, by the working of the divine Spirit, so that the Saviour and the saved are

united in His death. This is the believer “planted together” (Romans 6: 5) with Him in death, or “grafted” into Him on His Cross, as a graft is placed on the stock with the view of vital union, so that stock and graft become one, and share in one life.

These are the stages of the work of the Spirit in bringing the believer into that place in Christ whence out of Him shall flow the rivers of living water: The uplifted Christ *draws*; the believer “believes into”—or is drawn *into* Him on His Cross. Then the Holy Spirit grafts the trusting one, with a view to vital union, and “plants” him ever deeper and deeper into the “likeness of His death,” as by faith he abides in his place of “crucified with Christ.” As the “graft” is kept in place—bound with cords of surrender and faith to the Crucified One—the vital assimilation goes on, until the Saviour and the saved *become so one* that His death works in him in deeper power, and he is evermore becoming “conformable to His death” (Philippians 3: 10). In this ever-deepening conformity the grafted soul, planted into Him, begins to know aspect after aspect of His death on the Cross, until there comes the knowledge of *His broken and melted heart*, and out of the *depths* of the one who has thus “believed into” the Redeemer, comes the outflow of rivers of life, breaking forth from the Lamb slain in the midst of the Throne, and through the one brought into vital union and conformity to Him. Then he is always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in (his) mortal flesh.” “So then death worketh in us, but *life in you*,” adds the apostle, for the “death working” is the condition for the life-stream to flow to others.

Out of the heart are the issues of life,” wrote Solomon, and this is specially seen in the death of the Christ on the Cross His *body* was broken for us, and becomes, in a strange, deep, spiritual sense, the “true meat for all who truly are united to Him, and live by Him, as He lived by the Father. His” *soul* “was poured out unto death, that He might” divide the spoil with the strong” (Isaiah 12), and bring all united to Him, out of the power of darkness, by the hating of their soulish life, and the laying of it down with the Representative Man on the Cross. *Out of His broken heart* came the “issues of life” for the dying world. “He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow *rivers* of living water”; or, as the old Syriac gives it, “Out of the depths of his life shall pour torrents of living water.” The Lord said “*rivers*,” and rivers He must mean. Rivers of life broke out of His heart, opened on the Cross, and they are issuing now in limitless measure from the Lamb slain in the midst of the Throne. The children of God must learn that only through the *inlet of Calvary* can the life-streams in the heart of God break into the world; and again, only *through each believer* as he is brought into deep conformity with the death of the Son of God.

Chapter VI

THE LIFE UNION OF CALVARY

‘THAT He might create in Himself of the twain one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God THROUGH THE CROSS, having slain the enmity thereby . . .’ (Ephesians 2: 15, 16, R.V.); or, as Weymouth renders it: “His design was to unite the two sections of humanity in Himself, so as to form one new man, thus effecting peace, and to reconcile Jews and Gentiles in one body to God BY MEANS OF HIS CROSS—slaying by it their mutual enmity. . .

The Cross as the basis of unity between man and man, as well as between man and God, is clearly set forth in this passage; and once again reveals the Cross as the centre from which all light and life radiate to the Church and to the world. This is another aspect of the purpose of the Cross which we need just now to emphasize. “*His design was to unite . . .*” when He the God-Man descended from the throne to become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross; and all “mutual enmity” between every believer and all other human beings *is slain* by “means of the Cross” in actual reality, if the children of God apprehend this message of the Cross for their own deliverance.

Let us consider for a moment the circumstances which drew out from the apostle the words we have quoted. There were then in his mind but “two sections of humanity”; (1) The “Circumcision,” bearing upon their bodies the mark which set them apart from other men as God’s chosen people. To them belonged the “covenant of the promises” and the peculiar privileges of Israel; and (2) The “Uncircumcision—the Gentiles—covering all the nations of the world outside the chosen people. But both “sections of humanity” were equally under the headship of the first Adam, and were equally fallen in his fall, and were equally needing a Saviour and Deliverer from sin.

The difference was mainly external, for the” circumcision was “in the flesh, made by hands,” and the Gentiles were Gentiles in the flesh.” The middle wall of partition between them was not, therefore, “inward and spiritual,” but outward—” even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” Into the midst of this division upon earth the Son of God came, with the design of uniting the two sections of humanity by creating in Himself a “new man” who would be **neither** Jew nor Gentile, but a “new creation in Christ Jesus.”

To apprehend what this uniting through the Cross means to the professing Christians of to-day we must see clearly that the dividing line between Jew and Gentile was not so much national or individual as *religious*. The “wall of partition” lay in an outward sign—even one ordained by God—and obedience to “commandments” given by God Himself. It was, to put it in modern language, a question of conscience—a question of obedience to God’s commands on the part of the Jew; and on the part of the Gentile no knowledge of, or sympathy with, what the Jew placed supreme importance upon. In the flesh, and according to the flesh, this meant irreconcilable division. But Christ’s “*design was to unite. . .*” And the Cross was the place, and the means, by which this union was to be effected. A new race must be created under the headship of the Second Adam—the Son of God, the God-Man. A new creation must be formed in His image, which would be neither Jew nor Gentile, but “sons of God in Christ Jesus”; and on the Cross, in the Person of the Redeemer, Jew and Gentile must be crucified and die, and thus He would “create in Himself of the twain, one *new man*. . . even as it is written: “If any man is **IN CHRIST**, he is a new creation. . . .” And “it is *through Him* that Jews and Gentiles alike have access through One Spirit to the Father (Ephesians 2: 18, Weymouth).

What have these words of the apostle to do with us to-day? Just this, that now, as then, the *Cross is the one place of unity*, and so far as the children of God apprehend experimentally not only the death of Christ for them, as reconciling them to God, but His taking them with Him to the Cross in death, they are made a new creation, united to the Risen Lord and to all others who are joined to Him in newness of life. Thus by “means of His Cross” He slays the “mutual enmity” that exists between “Jew and Gentile”—and, may we say, between “Christian and Christian” who still walk according to the flesh in their religious life? The “old creation,” in its form of Jew or Gentile, must die to make way for a new creation “after the image of Him

that created him; where there *cannot be* Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Christ is all and in all” (Colossians 3 { 10, II). Or, again, as Paul wrote to the Galatians: “Baptized INTO Christ . . . there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye are all one IN Christ Jesus “ (Galatians 3: 27, 28).

In the face of these words we cannot wonder that the Cross is a stumbling-block, and its message likened to a sword or *knife*, for it cuts deep into the very core of the pride of the old creation. God’s cure for disunion and division is not a superficial one. He is not content with the modern ideal of the “union of Christendom,” which practically means no “union” at all ! . . . Nothing but the Cross will bring about the unity He desires. By means of His Cross He *slays the enmity* between Christians, who look upon other Christians who do not use their shibboleth, as “opponents.”

But to accept this as truth which cannot be gainsaid, and experimentally to experience it, and live it out in actual practice, are two different things. Yet we are not to be hearers only, but doers of the Word, and we are bound to act upon all light given us in the Scriptures, lest we come under the Lord’s rebuke of the Pharisees when He said of them: “They say, and do not. . . .” But we can easily see how in the emphasis of this aspect of the work on Calvary, the offence of the Cross “will not cease. If we are set upon implicit obedience to light, and faithful living out of the principles of the Cross, we shall soon find the Cross an offence.

The sphere where all this is possible is “IN Christ Jesus.” This brings us again to Romans 6. 3, “Baptized *into His death*.” “Baptized INTO Christ” we “put on Christ,” and in Him there cannot be distinctions, divisions, disunions, prejudices, partialities. How plainly the apostle urges this upon the believers of his day. By the *Cross* they are cut off from the world and its ways, ambitions, and plans; by the *Cross* they have escaped from the world’s “rudimentary notions” of the worship of God in rules, and human injunctions and teachings (Colossians 2: 20-23, Weymouth); by the Cross they cease to be “Jew “ and “Gentile “ in enmity to one another in religious ordinances. And just so far as we actually apprehend our planting into the death of the Cross, so far shall we realize the power of the Cross to sever us from all these things.

What is the purport of this message to us in present-day conditions ? It is an aspect of the finished work of Christ, which is of supreme importance to the Risen Head, for the Eternal Spirit is at work in the members of His Body, seeking with yearning desire to bring each one into place, so that holding fast the Head,” the whole Body, “knit together,” may increase “with the increase of God.” This can only be actually brought about as each one apprehends this aspect of the Cross, for as each yields to the power of the Cross to slay “mutual enmity “—that innate contrariety of the old creation which is manifested in prejudice, partiality, pride, obstinacy, and self-opinionated ways - division and disunion between the living members of Christ insensibly passes away.

But what about apparently irreconcilable positions of disunion among the true children of God? How are these breaches “to be repaired? Ephesians 2 is the answer from the *spiritual* standpoint. *The Cross is the place of unity*. But what is *the practical* way of dealing with these “breaches “ ? Again the message of the Cross is the answer, for the acceptance of the Cross in the aspect of Ephesians 2 means *the manifestations of the spirit of the Cross—i.e.*, the spirit of the Lamb—in our attitude to others, in practice. But what is the spirit of the Cross in practical manifestation to others who do not know it in its slaying of “enmity” and uniting power in the

Risen Lord? How full and abundant is the material given in the written Word to show the “life of Jesus” to those who desire this conformity to His death! In the “dying of Jesus” on the Cross, we see at the very same time the “life of Jesus which is to be manifested in our mortal body. Briefly summarized, it is the *spirit of pouring out life and blessing* to others who will not be reconciled, of praying for those “despitefully use you”; blessing those who curse you; doing good to those who “hate you”; loving your enemies, “despairing of no man—in fact, just acting to others *as Christ acted when He was a Lamb in the midst of wolves Calvary.*

This is the gist of the Sermon on the Mount, embodying the “laws of the Kingdom” for those who are “in the Kingdom”—i.e., the reign in the heavens. *That ye may be seen to be “children of your Father” in heaven!* Children of God, ye are to act as He acts to those who work evil and good. “*He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.*” He loved the world in enmity against Him, and gave His “best,” His only begotten Son, to save the very worst; and ye who are united to the Risen Lord must *love*. . . LOVE ! Not tolerate, or endure, but LOVE Not ignore and flee from, but LOVE those who hate you, and pray for them that persecute you. There may be “enmity” in other children of God who know not the crucifying Cross, but it must riot be *mutual* enmity “. The Cross is the answer to all. Others may call you an “enemy” or an “opponent”, but the spirit of the Cross must triumph in you in “opening not the mouth,” and in the spirit of patient waiting for the working of God. “I once fled from a difficult position,” writes one, but “God showed me He would take me back; but those from whom I fled are still unreconciled, and I have failed to put things right. . . .” Yes, the Cross is the answer. There must be no “enmity,” but love for those who will not be reconciled, and the faithful, patient, silent, poured-out life day by day in the spirit of the Cross, until the “coals of fire (Romans 12: 20) have done their work, and the “breach” is healed.

This again emphasizes the fact that the finished objective work of Christ at Calvary, must be *inwrought experimentally day by day*, not only by the inward spiritual yielding of the believer to the death of Christ, but the “bowing the head” to the providence of God in His permission of misjudgments, misrepresentations, misunderstandings, and even “despiteful using, and “persecuting,” permitted of God to bring into action and evidence the inward acceptance of the Cross of Calvary. The spiritual is made actual by practice, and how can we practice the spirit of the Cross if we are not placed in circumstances which call forth the Spirit of the Lamb? *His design was to unite. . . .* The Devil’s design is to divide! The Cross is the place of union and unity. The uniting of the divided sections of humanity cost nothing less than the life of the Son of God. Let us enter into the desires of His heart. “That they all may be one,” He prayed. “He came to *unite* “—let us make His prayer ours until we are drawn thereby into such union with Him that all “enmity” passes away by the power of His death, and we love, as He loved, His Church, and are ready to fill up the afflictions of Christ for His body’s sake. Thus shall we in our measure “go up into the breaches,” and become restorers of paths to dwell in.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRIZE OF THE THRONE

“ He that overcometh, I will give to Him to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in His throne

(Revelation 3: 21)

THESE words were spoken directly by the Ascended Christ, and they describe the climax reward for all who will fulfil the conditions for obtaining it. Many may ask why we should go forward in ceaseless conflict and warfare with the forces of evil. It is for the *prize of the throne*. In His messages to the churches the Lord clearly holds out to all the incentive of reward. Paul’s writings are full of references to “reward for all who will fulfil the conditions.

Christ is not yet seated on His own throne. At His ascension God said to Him, “Sit Thou on My RIGHT HAND until . . .” (Hebrews 1: 13). He is “ seated on the RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH” (see Hebrews 1: 3; 8: 1; Acts 2: 34, 35; Hebrews 10: 12, and 12: 2) waiting for the time when He will have His Throne, and those who are to share it with Him.

The throne for the *overcomers* Is it possible? Are they to share the *throne* of the Son of God? We can see now why, as we pass through the closing days of the age, there must be such terrible conflict, and why the prince of darkness will challenge every child of God who wants to “overcome.” It is the final testing and training of all who are to share the throne, and to rule and reign with Christ.

What is the throne which awaits our Ascended Lord? It is the millennial throne of reigning and ruling the kingdoms of the world. After it is given to Him, the voice from heaven is heard saying: “The kingdoms of this world ARE become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” (Revelation 11:15). This throne God promised to Him, when far back in the ages of eternity He was “appointed to be heir of all things” (Hebrews 1: 2). This is foreshadowed in Daniel 7: 13, 14.

Then the millennial throne of Christ is to be shared with others on certain conditions, by the gift of Christ Himself. I will *give* to him to sit with Me.” Paul refers to this heir-ship in his unfolding of the work of the Holy Spirit in Romans 8. “Joint-heirs with Christ . . . if so be that we suffer with Him” (Romans 8: 17). This is foreshadowed in Daniel 7: 22-27, where it says, “the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” The fact that Christ’s coming throne is to be shared by overcomers, who are appointed by the Father to be “joint-heirs “ with Him Who was appointed heir of *all things*, ” is therefore quite clear.

Glimpses are to be found, too, into the future time when the Christ, and those who are to share the throne with Him, will reign. Paul said: “Know ye not that the saints shall *judge the world?* “ “ Know ye not that we shall *judge angels?* (I Corinthians 6: 2, 3). What angels? Certainly not the unfallen ones. The explanation will be found in 2 Peter 2: 4. The angels which kept not their first estate . . . judged.” These fallen angels—Satan and his hierarchy of evil powers—are to be judged by those who reign with Christ on His throne. In brief, they who are “overcomers “—those who overcome the world and Satan *now* will be the “judges” of the fallen hosts of evil, when these overcoming ones are “glorified together” with Christ upon His throne.

The obtaining of the prize of this “high calling” of sharing the Throne with Christ, was the incentive which urged Paul on to count all things loss to obtain it, and to be willing to be made conformable to the death of Christ as the primary means for reaching such an end (see Philippians 3: 10-14); for each believer who reaches the prize of the throne, goes by way of the Cross in the path of the ascended Lord. “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection ... being made conformable to His death, if by any means I may attain to the *resurrection* from among the dead,” wrote Paul. In Greek it means the resurrection “out from among the dead.” A little later in this same chapter, Paul says, “I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Notice the word “if” which Paul uses, “*If by any means I may attain. . . . “If.”*” Paul was perfectly sure of his eternal salvation as a free gift from God, through the finished work of Christ. Romans 4: 4, Romans 6: 23, and many other passages make this clear, but he again and again refers to a “*prize*” which even he could not be sure of, unless he pressed on to fulfil the conditions for obtaining it. In Romans 8: 17, the same “*if*” comes in again in connection with the same subject: “joint-heirs with Christ *if so be* that we suffer with Him, that we may be also *glorified* with Him.” Again 2 Timothy 2: 12, “if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.” We shall be “joint-heirs with Christ,” and be “glorified with Him, when He is given the millennial throne and is visibly ruling over the kingdoms of the world, *if* we are willing for the path He trod. He obtained eternal life as a free gift for all who will believe on Him; but for His new government over the world when it has been re-taken from the hand of the enemy, He must have those who have gone through the same “made perfect through sufferings” that gave him the throne.

What is in the balance for every believer, therefore, in the present warfare with Satan, which must intensify as the age closes, is the millennial crown and throne. The question for each is, how to hold fast all spiritual victory hitherto obtained, that we do not lose the crown; for we must expect that Satan will challenge every one he sees moving on to the throne, where, with Christ, he will “judge angels.” In brief, he contests the future judges of the evil hosts of darkness when he contests and hinders those who, like Paul, press on toward the goal.

Now consider the qualification for obtaining the prize of the throne. The Ascended Lord gives it in the words, “*He that overcometh I will give*”—a personal gift—“*to sit with Me*”—a personal sharing with Him—“*on My throne*”—Christ’s own throne open to the overcomer—“*even as I overcame.*” Here is the qualification, and the path made clear.

How did Christ overcome? If we carefully consider it, we shall find that Christ’s overcoming had mainly to do with the world and Satan. It was not a question of victory over SIN. The “overcoming” which is the qualification for sharing Christ’s throne is not merely victory over sin, although that is included in it; for victory over sin is set forth in the Scriptures as the normal life of any child of God, and not as the full goal of the overcomer.

Christ’s overcoming had to do with Satan and the world. He overcame Satan in the wilderness, and on the eve of His Cross He said to His disciples, “in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, *I have overcome the world.*” He had overcome the world, and Satan, but He dealt with *sin* on the Cross of Calvary.

Let me make this clear. We must return to the fundamental basis of Romans 6 as the very foundation of the Christian life, where Paul said, “We who *died to sin*, how shall we any longer live therein?” (Romans 6: 2). The believer is never told to “overcome sin,” but to

reckon, on the ground of death with Christ, that he is *dead* to it. On this ground of death, he is told not to “*let*” sin reign in his life. In brief, it is to be dealt with by the attitude of death, not by “overcoming” (see Colossians 3: 5, R.V., m., Galatians 5: 24, Ephesians 4: 22). The language about sin, and the works of the flesh, is consistently “Put off,” “put away,” “put to death,” “reckon yourselves dead indeed,” “let not sin reign.” The attitude to sin is the attitude of Separation by death. We who *died* to sin, *how* shall we any longer live therein?

He that overcometh shall sit with Me in My throne,” therefore means more than personal victory over known sin. The epistle written by the apostle who transmitted Christ’s messages to the Churches recorded in the Apocalypse, strikingly makes this clear. There are two passages about the meaning of the call to overcome, which, read as from the pen of the same writer, throw much light on Revelation 3: 21. The one speaks of overcoming the world, and the other of overcoming Satan. The question of *victory over sin* seems to be settled according to I John 3: 9, where the Apostle says that those who are “begotten of God”—*i.e.*, having His own life in them—do not *practice sin* as a habit. No man with God’s life in him *can* settle down to a life of perpetual sinning, it is morally impossible, but, John says, he *may* sin, and God makes provision for it as seen in I John 2: 1, 2, where the “if” is clear.

The believer therefore is not to be spending his whole life in getting victory over sin, but understanding his position as having died to sin, he is to overcome the world, and Satan.

“Whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (I John 5: 4). “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” This speaks entirely about overcoming the “world.” It does not say “whatsoever is born of God overcometh *sin*, and this is the victory that overcometh *sin*, even our faith!” In all the epistles, whether of John, Peter, or Paul, the true position of a Christian is described as an attitude of death with Christ, reckoning himself dead to sin, and then in the strength of the imparted life of God—begotten of God—he is to overcome the world, and overcome Satan. Satan may deceive you if this is not clear. He knows that you cannot be “overcomers” of the world and his evil hosts, if he can keep you revolving around yourself in getting victory over your “temper,” and other personal aspects of known sin. What is it, then, to overcome the world?

It means conquering your circumstances, and never going “under” them; conquering your environment, and not being affected by it; conquering everything that would drag you down. It means that this “victory” that “overcometh the world” is the result of a faith that lays hold of the Living Christ Who is the Son of God, and in the power of His might and the strength of His Spirit, overcomes environment, and everything that is “in the world”—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain-glory of life (I John 2: 16) - overcomes the fascinations of the world, the world spirit, and all that the world means as opposed to the Father. It means the overcoming of the opposition to God in your home; the worldly atmosphere in your church; the talk of the world; the trials of the world—everything that belongs to this present evil world.”

Are you an overcomer in the things round about you? Are you conquering everything with an indomitable faith in the living Christ? I do not say, Are you *changing everything!* You cannot alter things around you, until they cease to affect your victory spirit. Overcoming the world means that you do not need any props whatsoever; that all your faith is so rooted in the living Christ, that you do not require anyone, or anything to help you *to stand!*

WHEN GOD TELLS YOU TO DOUBT

The second passage about overcoming, in John's epistle, clearly brings out the overcoming of Satan. This is in I John 4, and you need to read the whole passage, verses 1-6, to see its force. The believer is to overcome the visible world, and the things in the *invisible* world also. The apostle writes: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but *prove the spirits*. . . This has to do with the spiritual world. "Prove the spirits." But how can I do this? you say. You can, at least, do the first thing: "*Believe not every spirit*. . ." You can keep an attitude of neutrality to all things from the spirit world until you are *sure* they are from God, instead of keeping yourself open to everything, in the fear of rejecting what may be of God. When *God* tells you to doubt, it is necessary to do so. You are bidden to doubt until you have *proved*. Then will God be grieved if you do so?

"Because many *false prophets* are gone out into the world." These "spirits" then are spirits that speak and teach through men, according to I Timothy 4: 1-4. How shall I "prove" such "spirits," for I can only see *men*, you say? The apostle makes it clear. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God, and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus, is not of God; and this is the *spirit of the anti-Christ*, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already. . .

Then we reach the verse about overcoming: "*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.*" Notice the personal pronouns: "*He*" that is in you, against "*he*" that is in the world. In the overcoming of the world, and the things of the world, the *faith* of the overcomer is the principal factor—faith laying hold of a Living Christ. But in the fight against Satan, the factor is essentially spirit, for the conflict is spiritual. The Spirit of God in the spirit of the believer against the spirit of Satan *in the world*, penetrating, and permeating the world.

The spirit of anti-Christ which the believers of John's time were told would be coming in the last days—deceiving spirits with *doctrines* to deceive—had even begun in John's day, according to the messages to the churches written by him. It was "in the world already" then, but it would reach its climax at the end, when the overcomers would be in the last great hour of testing for the prize of the Throne.

He who would overcome must try the "spirits" to-day, until they are proved to be of God; he must "believe not every spirit," teaching through the mouths of men, however good they may be, without proving the origin of the teaching, by its attitude to the Lord Jesus Christ. The spirit that is of Satan is *anti-Christ*, i.e., *against Christ*, and the test given by the apostle (without going fully into it here) is manifestly connected with truth about our Saviour; for in the most subtle way evil spirits can instigate "teaching" about "Jesus which practically annuls (see R.V. margin) Him and His work. They can preach "another Jesus" (2 Corinthians 11: 4) than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who is our Saviour and Lord. Beautiful teaching, and sacred sentiments called "*Christian*," may wholly eliminate the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and be used to cover an annulling of Jesus Christ as the Substitute for sinners, and the Calvary Conqueror of Satan. They who would overcome the spirit of Anti-Christ which is at work in the world, must test all teaching by the *written Word*.

This is only one of the many ways in which Satan must be overcome in the last hour of the dispensation. The *fact of this warfare* is the primary point I wish to emphasise. The great fight of the overcomers, at the close of the age is against the *works* of the devil in the world, and

against Satan himself as the spirit that now worketh behind, and in, and through the world. If you were in accord with the spirit of anti-Christ, and the spirit of the world, there would be no fight; but the very fact that you have your eyes opened to the victory of Calvary, means that Satan challenges you, and will stir up all the resources he has in the world against you. We are told that the condition at the end will “wax worse and worse,” men “deceiving and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3: 13), and many true children of God, for lack of knowledge, will become unconscious instruments for Satan to use in the day of his power (see Matthew 24: 10).

Notice again that in qualifying for the prize, each believer must stand *alone*. It is “*he* that overcometh.” Each future ruler with Christ must have individual preparation and training, and his environment and Satan’s attacks upon him will be specially permitted and weighed and weighted by Christ (I Corinthians 10: 13) to bring about the required results. Each “heir” to a vast estate must be carefully trained according to his capabilities and sphere (Galatians 4: 1-2). There may be only one placed by the Head of the Church where “Satan’s seat” is, but he must “overcome” or lose his crown (Revelation 2: 13). He must not look for a second to “overcome” with him, for “*one* receiveth the prize” (I Corinthians 9: 24). He alone, must alone qualify for the throne, by a faith developed by trial (I Peter 1: 7), and a triumph over Satan because of the Spirit of God in him as the sufficient power.

The part of the overcomers in the conflict is mentioned in Revelation 12: 11. They are in *direct personal conflict* with Satan now, not only with his works, for they “overcame *him* because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death.”

From this point let us take one glimpse into the future, and in Revelation 17: 14, see Christ and the overcomers with Him — the Heir and the joint-heirs—carrying out the judgment. In Revelation 17 Christ is carrying out terrible things on His enemies who “war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall *overcome* them, for He is the Lord of lords and King of kings; and *they also shall overcome who are with Him*, called, and chosen, and faithful.” The saints shall judge the world, the saints shall share in judgment. They will appear before the judgment seat, first to be judged themselves (2 Corinthians 5: 10), and then they who are given to share Christ’s throne, “the called, the chosen and the faithful,” will be with Him in His dealing with the world.

“HOLD FAST . . . THAT NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN”

You may say: Ever since I began to testify to Satan’s defeat at Calvary, and to pray against him, he has been attacking me. That is because he sees the prize before you. He is attacking those who will judge the fallen angels if they obtain the prize of the throne. Will you not then hold fast your crown? How are you to do it? Just with a steady, unswerving aim *to be true to Christ, and to the light He has given you at all costs*. Say to yourself, “The Lord is training me for the throne.” Say again and again: “*Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.*” “*Hold fast* that which thou hast that no man take thy crown.” For every bit of the conflict there will be the gain. So Paul said, “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.”

CHAPTER 8

THE PRICE OF THE THRONE

Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom . . . Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask . . .” (Matthew 20: 21-22)

THE message of union with Christ in His death, and that death-identification as the way to the throne, is clearly set forth in the Epistles. In the verse quoted, we have a foreshadowing of it in the words of our Lord Himself, and I want to press this home to a practical issue. Long before Calvary, the Lord gave a hint of what was coming, and His disciples caught the vision of a throne—an earthly throne for their Master, with themselves in close association with it—and some of them came to ask Him about it. The Lord took the question and, applying it to the infinitely higher destiny of those who “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth,” asked: “Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of . . .?” “Are you prepared for the price?

They replied, “We are able,” and the Lord said, “Ye shall drink indeed of My cup . . . but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father” (verse 23). When the other disciples heard this conversation they were “moved with indignation against the two brethren,” but the Lord called them unto Him and said, “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them . . . it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant.” That is the practical out-working of union with Christ! The way down is the way up.

THE TRAINING FOR RULERSHIP

There are those who will sit with Christ in His throne hereafter (Revelation 3: 21), but the preparation for that position is Now. We need to understand, when we know this death union with Christ, and the life-union which brings us into fellowship with Him in resurrection life, that there must be an intelligent out-working of it day by day. It is not only sharing the fellowship of the victory He won over the world and Satan its prince, but that victorious rulership has to be wrought into us, and manifested through us in daily life. There are many references to rulership in the Gospels, and so often it appears as if that rulership is to be postponed until after the Judgment Seat—but the training for it is in this life. “Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things”: to one, rulership over ten cities, to another, over five, according to the measure of their faithfulness.

The rulership of the throne is not yet a visible thing. The princes of the Gentiles exercise earthly dominion still, “but it shall not be so among you.” Now, the one who would be “great” must act the part of a servant; he who would be first—who would lead his brethren—must be “their slave” (verses 26, 27). It is a going down; down to be a servant, never to stand for your “rights”; power to submit; power to be a bond-slave on earth—that is the “price” of the throne. But all the while, on the heavenly side, you are being made a ruler in resurrection power.

Can you drink of the cup? Can you go down? Have you so truly entered into union with your Lord that you have power to go down before someone else gracefully--without looking

miserable about it, and without struggling and effort, and a fight? Think of Christ as He washed His disciples' feet; as He stood in the Judgment Hall. Think of the mocking and scoffing, the scourging and beating! Can you drink of the cup? Can you go down? Every time you go "down" you go "up." May the Lord prepare us for the throne, and make us willing for the preparation.

But I would urge upon you that it is Now--now, in this present year; now, through our present circumstances, that God wants to work in us. God has put you into just the one place where He can fulfil your prayer, and prepare you for the future. You may think that the enemy has interfered with your circumstances: apparently they are all upside down almost as if you were in the devil's hand. My friend, that is God's highest vote of confidence in you ! God is greater than the devil. The things that are the blackest and most difficult, that look as if the devil was having his own way with you--do believe that it is out of that very condition that God is working out your future glory and rulership. " Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." That is the way to rulership. How deep can your faith go? If you can stand in the midst of all that, and trust God absolutely, without anything to show that He is with you--if you can stand unmoved through it all, and say, " I believe that God is GOD "-- that is victory. "Be still and know that I am God "--how far can you trust God in the dark?

Can you drink of the cup? You may say, "I am able. I can do all things through Christ." Yes, we do not know that God is able, and we need to get clear away from ourselves, and very close to Him. There will come a time when we have nothing left to us but God, so that we are just anchored upon Him. The devil is absolutely defeated, and God can have all His own way with you, when you learn to "go down "; if you can really bring self--this evil thing that wants to be something--down to the Cross, so that wherever you are, you will know to be the very best place God could have found for you, and no other circumstances would have suited His purpose. God has put you in exactly the right crucible to burn up what He sees needs to be burnt up. Many think "victory" means getting your circumstances put right. No ! victory is within--when in the midst of your circumstances the Spirit of God can so energise you and strengthen you in spirit, that you can stand quiet in the thick of it all, and say, "God is God," and know that you are held by Him—which is infinitely better than all your trying to hold things steady.

“SERVANT OF ALL”

At the end of Ephesians i we are shown the Risen Christ, set at God's right hand, "far above all principality, and power, and dominion," with all things under His feet, and immediately we are told, "and you hath He quickened . . ."; "bath quickened us together with Christ . . . hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." The Risen Lord calls us to this place "far above" even now, and in spirit we are seated with Him there. But on earth, our visible position is that of "servant of all" for His sake. May the Holy Spirit teach us how to be, in deed and in truth, "bond-servants of Jesus Christ" down here, for this is our preparation for sharing the throne later on.

Are you willing for this? Are you able to drink of the cup? He drank of the cup for us, and we may say, " Lord, I cannot of myself, but by Thy grace, I choose it." I have been reading a book written by a lady who was imprisoned in Russia during the revolution. She belonged to the old Russian nobility. I was very impressed by one thing she wrote—it contains a tremendous lesson for God's children. She said this: "We had to prove to these Bolsheviks that people of

our class could not be injured by what they did; and that what our enemies did would never make them what we are.” They were sending these noble ladies to clean their floors—floors so dirty that they had to take knives to scrape the filth off—and they went with a smile, as if it did not matter to them at all. What about your “class”—your heavenly position? We belong to the royal family of heaven, and we have to show what we are. Nothing on this earth can lower you, if you do not lower yourself. It is not what you *do*, but what you *are* that counts.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, “ye have seated yourselves upon your throne” (I Corinthians 4: 8, Conybeare). They were glorying in their spiritual privileges and knowledge, but the Apostle adds sorrowfully, “I would to God ye did reign.” Their idea of throne-life was very different from the pathway of the Lamb of God, and very different from the path of His apostles, who were “made a spectacle to the world,” who were “fools for Christ’s sake,” weak, despised (verses 9-14); yet Paul beseeches them to follow him in this path—it is the path of spiritual power now, and it is “the way up to the throne.

If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him” (I Timothy 2: 12). Salvation is free to all—the throne position is prepared for those who are willing for the preparing. “To sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it shall be given to those for whom it is prepared.” “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne” (Revelation 3: 21).

CHAPTER 9 FAR ABOVE ALL

Ephesians 1:21

“He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand far above all . . . and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1: 20, 21; Ephesians 2: 6)

Far above all!” Yes, this may be the continuous experience of every child of God. However great the difficulties, our Mighty Keeper is able to keep fully at all times, and in all places. Joined to the Risen Lord we may truly be kept “far above all” our surroundings. The enemy would use these to drag us down, but Jesus can keep us “far above” as we learn to live in His faithfulness, and cease to struggle and resist, but lie down in His will day by day and say “Yes, Lord” to all that comes.

“Far above all !“ How can this be? Only by knowing God’s deliverance from the life which keeps us in bondage to the things of the earth. Only by knowing in the power of the Spirit the full meaning of Calvary’s Cross. Not only has Christ died that we might be “forgiven all trespasses,” but the apostle Paul tells us, again and again, that we too died with Him and were buried with Him “through baptism into *death*” (Romans 6: 4).

The one condition of setting us free to live “far above all” in the power of His endless life is “faith in the working of God, Who raised Him from the dead” (Colossians 2: 12).

But first we need to ask if we are really and honestly purposed to be separated from all that holds us down, and to let the Holy Spirit “make to die” all “doings” not of God? (Rom. 8: 13, m.).

The Holy Ghost will bear witness to our death in the death of the Lord Jesus, if we are true in our desire to know all that it means, and so fully prove the life of “far above all” with the Risen Lord.

“Far above all” “If the things around us fret us, the enemy has succeeded in pulling us down enough to do it. “For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again ... in bondage” (Galatians 5: i, m.) We need simply to recognize our freedom, and as we go in and out among the things that so try us, trust and praise our God He *is* keeping us “Far above all.”

“Far above all !” Lifted above earthly things and earthly surroundings the spirit *dwells in God* (Psalm 90: 1, Psalm 32:7, John 6: 56, John 3: 24). Here it sees the King in His beauty and gets such a vision of eternal realities, that the things of time sink into their right place, and are valued at their true worth. Here it hides in the “secret place of the Most High” and finds “no plague come nigh its dwelling” (see Psalm 91:1-10, A.V.). “The Eternal God is thy dwelling place” Deuteronomy 33: 27).

Blessed are they that dwell “ (Psalm 84: 4).

“Thy hidden ones” (Psalm 83: 3).

“Hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3: 3).

Hidden in His pavilion “ (Psalm 27: 5, A.V.).

“His chambers” (Song of Solomon 1: His “banqueting house” (Song of Solomon 2: 4). Hidden “from the strife of tongues “ (Psalm 31: 20). Hidden “ in the day of trouble” (Psalm 27: 5). “ Hidden manna” given to them (Revelation 2: 17). Hidden “wisdom” revealed to them (I Corinthians 2: 7, Matthew I I: 25). “ Hidden riches of secret places “ (Isaiah 45: 3). Dwelling “ at ease “ upon His heart (Psalm 25: 13). Dwelling in “ quiet resting places “ (Isaiah 32: 18 “ In the secret place of the Most High” (Psalm 91:1).

“Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care, Not a blast of hurry, touch the spirit there.”

His child. Here we reverently say with Jesus, “ the cup which the Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it? (notwithstanding that the cup of sorrow was given to our suffering Lord by the *hand of Judas*). There are no second causes to the soul hidden in God. Misunderstanding, sorrows, trials may come, but it yearns to follow, in its EARTHWARD life, the footsteps of Christ in His gentleness, meekness, lowliness and love. For “*Far above all*” in *spirit* with God, makes us rejoice to be the servant of all in our intercourse with others.

“Believe ye that I am able to do this?

They say unto Him, Yea, Lord” (Matthew 9: 28).

The references are taken from Revised Version

NOTES:

[1] From a most suggestive book, *The Spiritual Grasp of the Epistles*, by Rev. C. A. Fox.

[2] The chapter on “Conformity to the Death of the Christ,” in *The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life*, by Rev. Evan H. Hopkins, most clearly unfolds this theme.

[3] See Ephesians 4: 30, “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.” The very word used of the Lord’s sufferings in Gethsemane.

He saw Lillian at the foot of the stairs. The patrician lines of a lemon-yellow Empire evening gown stressed her graceful body, and she stood like a person proudly in control of her proper background. He smiled; he liked to see her happy; it gave some reasonable justification to the party. "The philosophers of the past were superficial," Dr. Pritchett went on. "It remained for our century to redefine the purpose of philosophy. The purpose of philosophy is not to help men find the meaning of life, but to prove to them that there isn't any." An attractive young woman, whose father owned a coal mine, asked indignantly, "Who can tell us that?" "I am trying to," said Dr. Pritchett.