

MANCHESTER CONFERENCE MAY 14th—17th, 1932

SATURDAY EVENING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.45 p.m.

Hymns sung: 137, 139, 403, 414.

Scriptures read: I Thess. ii. 1-13, iv. 16-18.

LORD'S DAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.45 a.m.

Hymns sung: 106, 260, 194, 20.

Breaking of Bread, 10.30 a.m.

Hymns sung: 217, 393, 215, 8, 142, 95, 427, 5, 34.

Scriptures read: Luke xxii. 14-20; xxiii. 33-47; Isaiah liii.; S. of S. i. 2, ii. 4, v. 9, 10, 16; Heb. ii. 9; John xix. 17, 18; Heb. ii. 10-12; John xx. 19-20; Rev. v. 6-14.

LORD'S DAY AFTERNOON. *Bible Reading*, 3 p.m.

Hymn 214. Prayer. Romans xii.

Verse 1. "Therefore" connects this chapter with the first eight, where we have God's full provision for the sinner, Christ for us. The intervening chapters (ix-xi) are a parenthesis dealing with Israel. Now the apostle exhorts his readers to give up their whole lives as a sacrifice to God. Paul calls himself the bondservant of Jesus Christ, so those at Rome were called to be bondservants, and present their bodies a living sacrifice

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The outcome of realising God's mercies is that, as His property, we render to Him all we have: it is, however, also a duty incumbent upon us. In 2 Cor. viii. 5, the saints first gave themselves to the Lord, and then came service. Since our bodies are the Lord's it is a continuous obligation to present them a living sacrifice. From Col. iii. 3-5 we learn that God will receive the service of our bodies as holy and acceptable when we have the new life. It is not enough to say the mercies of God are great; we should consecrate our whole lives to Him.

In *verse 2* the believer makes progress. His body belonging to the Lord, his mind should go with it; God's will, which is good, acceptable and perfect, is proved as we are transformed. Conformation and transformation are the practical result of the mercies of God (*ver. 1*). The Lord could say "I love to do Thy will, O My God," and He is our example to follow in fulfilling the precepts of this chapter. How far do we obey them? If we are the objects of God's mercy it is but our reasonable service to live for Him. We do not belong to the world, and therefore our minds require constant renewal; and because we have a new mind, we can be transformed. Christ is our Touchstone to prove what things are good, acceptable and perfect as the will of God. Christian service is not because we must, but because we like it. We are children with a dear Father.

Verse 3. "Through the grace given unto me" shows that Paul did not rely on his own strength. When Peter was told to watch and pray, he did not do so, and thus he failed to present his body a living sacrifice. We cannot present our bodies to God in our own strength; we need faith and confidence in the One Who

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is His power. That which presents Christ to God is the only thing acceptable to Him.

Verses 4, 5. How often do we regard our brethren as members of the same body? If we profess to love the Lord (ver. 9), then that love has to be real and practical and visible by those around us. If one member does not do his duty, then the others suffer.

Hymn 392. Prayer.

LORD'S DAY EVENING. *Preaching of the Gospel.*

6.30 p.m. Mr. T. Davis.

Hymn: "We saw Thee not when Thou didst come."

Prayer.

Hymn: "Jesus lived—He lived for sinners."

Luke xxiii. 27-49.

Our subject to-night concerns a triple death scene. Death is always solemn, but we soon forget its awesomeness, and live as if *we* were to live for ever. But "it is appointed unto men once to die." This is not a law of our existence, but one which has come in through sin. God has ordained, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The dying man we will first consider is the thief who died as he lived. He lived in sin, he died in sin and will be raised in his sin for judgment. When the voice of one of the mockers was stilled, he only was left to say "If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us." He heard others saying "Save Thyself" and gave an added taunt,

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“Save Thyself *and us.*” There was no fear of God before his eyes even in the hour of death. Pain did not soften him, death did not convert him. Nothing at death’s door will necessarily move a sinner’s heart if he has rejected such a Saviour.

This impenitent saw his fellow repent, but did not do so himself: this is God’s reproach against the sinner. He had the same opportunities as the one who entered heaven’s gate that day, but he died as he lived. Let this be a warning.

On the middle cross, Jesus was crucified. Here, though a death, all the anthems of heaven centre and all the hearts of God’s people, and here the eye of God will ever be. Though over in a day, it has left a mark upon eternity which will bring everlasting praise to God and fill heaven with guests.

Travelling the road to Calvary, the Lord bade the women, “Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” The blessed Lord was thinking of the awful days in store for them, even with that death before Him. Is He not altogether lovely?

With the smart of the nails through His hands and feet, and the added agony of the cross jerked into its socket, there comes from His heart of infinite love, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Did ever another turn *advocate* for his tormentors?

Listen to the cry, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save.” A week before, all Jerusalem was singing His praises, Who had raised Lazarus only a mile or so away. What a change—but on whose part? “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and

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for ever." They supposed the source of His power had dried up, but He chose to be led as a lamb to the slaughter. An Old Testament scripture says, "Messiah shall be cut off, and shall have nothing" (Dan. ix. 26). Is it not the supreme test of virtue to see one thing after another that was His right, and finally life itself, taken away by those who had every reason to love Him?

Satan had gathered all his forces for a final onslaught upon the Christ of God. He says, "I came to Thee once before and in hunger Thou didst conquer. But Thou shalt not escape this time. Then I quoted that scripture about the angels, but now there is no help from heaven. Where are those kingdoms Thou didst refuse at my hand? Thou art cut off, with nothing. Where are those sheep in the wilderness, the people Thou hast loved? Here they are, like bulls of Bashan. But Messiah, to prove Thyself, save Thyself." But one thing was not gone: God looked upon Him with delight. The foundation was laid in Zion, tried and sure, and all the wiles of Satan could not prevail against it. Everything was gone except the glory of God, except perfect obedience, except "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," a sweet-smelling sacrifice upon the altar of devotion to His Father.

But in those three hours of darkness there was a cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Why did God forsake the One Who withstood every attack of Satan in that dark hour? Was He mistaken about His own position? In time of trial every believer hangs on God's promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Stephen's face was transfigured, he passed without any forsaking. The only one ever forsaken in the world was the only begotten Son of God.

Why was it? Read Matt. i. 21; Is. liii. 6; 1 Peter iii. 18; John iii. 16.

Now let us turn to the third cross. What did this thief see in Christ? At first, one "in the same condemnation": but seeing all, and his own conscience accusing him, a figure of One Who could not be holden of death was unveiled before his faith. Death would not end His kingship. He knew this, as we may, by listening at the cross of the Lord Jesus; and suddenly he "feared God." He felt in his heart that his sins needed a sacrifice he could not bring. Perhaps he remembered something of Isaiah liii., the face marred more than any man's, the sheep dumb before its shearers, and, hearing His words, said to himself, "It looks like Him. I believe He is the King, the Shepherd giving Himself for His flock. And He will come again in glory." He opens his lips, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." He asks life and gets it on demand, like a draft at the bank. "He that believeth . . . *hath* everlasting life." Faith has short cuts to the heart of things in the presence of Jesus. Trust replaces scoffing. No longer, "If Thou be the Christ," but "Lord." No longer, like the other thief, "Save Thyself and us," but "Remember me."

Is the Lord concerned with him, while He is atoning for the sin of the whole world? In the middle of God's world-wide proclamation (John iii. 16), He said "whosoever," that He might bring it down to every longing soul. The thief did not want life here, but he wanted to live. And we may live for ever by putting in our request to the Son of God upon God's throne. He saw the One who was dying for him, and was going to live again, and he speaks of the time when He should

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come in the glory of His Father (Matt. xvi. 27), and he asks to be remembered. It seems too good to be true, but the King of kings on the right hand of the throne hears the sinner's cry. "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." How infinitely better than what he asked! One was that day going to Paradise, and the gates were flung open for every one that believes in Him. This earliest trophy went with Him, His sole companion, as it were, on that day of His triumph.

The love of Jesus is still the same. He cannot be parted from those for whom He died. He will never deny one that calls upon Him. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Of this dying thief we may say that as he died, he lived, with Jesus, one who turned to Him at the eleventh hour. And so, "He that believeth though he were dead, yet shall he live."

The One Who died upon the cross died for love of us, and has power to open the heavens for the vilest and present us fit to live there. Must we not believe in this glorious Saviour, Who has life and power and all we need?

Hymns: "Behold the Lamb of God": "Jesus, Lover of my soul."

Prayer.

MONDAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.45 a.m.

Hymns sung: 368, 124.

Scripture read: Eph. v. 1-21.

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Open Meeting, 11 a.m.

Hymn 52. Prayer. Hymn 195.

A brother read John xiv. 15-17; xvi. 14; Acts ii. 2-4; 1 Cor. ii. 9-13; 2 Cor. iii. 17; 1 Cor. xiv. 26-30, and spoke a few words of exhortation.

Hymn 328.

T.R. 1 Tim. vi. 17-21; 2 Tim. i. 8-14.

“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.”

“..... I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us” (1 Tim. vi. 20-21; 2 Tim. i. 12-14).

A striking feature of a Manchester conference nearly 60 years ago was that the first brother who spoke struck a note that pervaded the whole of the time they were together: and that note was, “We are near the end of our journey.” Nearly 60 years have passed away, and the Lord has still left us here, but surely that thought must appeal to us still more forcibly. Another brother said, “One truth gripped in our heart is worth a great number only in the mind.” With these words before

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our minds, let us turn to these two scriptures in the epistles to Timothy.

In the first, Paul urges Timothy to keep that good thing (or better, deposit) which had been committed to his trust; and in the first chapter of his second letter he emphasises it with the impressive urge to keep the deposit "by the Holy Ghost Which dwelleth in us." What is this good deposit? It is not, I think, a question of working out our own salvation, or even our standing or state, but it is doubtless the truth more especially concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. And that is typically the work of the Kohathites, who bore the ark upon their shoulders throughout the wilderness journey. In 2 Tim. i. 12, the apostle uses the same word "deposit" when he says of his own personal concerns that he had committed all into the hands of the Lord Himself.

Timothy, a young man, and feeble in body, was one of the few that had not turned away from the apostle to whom they owed so much, as had the believers of Ephesus, Thyatira, Pergamos, and elsewhere in Asia Minor. It was not the faults or failings of the apostle, but his faithfulness, that had led them to forsake him; and the great danger to-day among those with the highest pretension of possessing the truth is heterodoxy concerning the Person of Christ our Lord. This is the deposit we have to keep—not by our own power, but by the power of the Holy Spirit Who dwelleth in us.

We are now nearing the end of *our* journey. If our brother, now so long with the Lord, felt that 60 years ago, what ought we to feel? In Numbers xxi. the children of Israel were in the thirty-ninth year of their wanderings in the wilderness: and after all their

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wonderful and gracious experiences of God's mercies, He had to rebuke their murmurings by the terrible visitation of the fiery serpents. But He was also prepared to heal, and we know the remedy provided in the brazen serpent. Then a few days later in grace He meets their need with water from the well, and they had to learn a new song, "Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it." Moses had not to strike the rock this time—the nobles had to dig for the water with their staves. We have to learn also in our day how to do "spade work." May the Lord graciously help us, and grant us the hearing ear, and the exercised heart, for our own blessing and that also of the "twos and threes" we represent.

Hymn 251.

W.G.T. 1 Pet. i. 8, 9, ii. 24, iii. 22.

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." (1 Pet. i. 8, 9, ii. 24, iii. 22.)

This Epistle was not written to Gentiles, but as it is addressed to suffering saints and scattered strangers, we may take it to ourselves. We suffer persecution and infirmity, and are scattered: yet our centre is the blessed

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One Whom having not seen, we love. Peter could not say this of himself, but by God's Spirit we not only see the beauty of Him Who has satisfied our hearts, but we are conscious of having a place in His heart. The apostle Paul could never forget that the Son of God loved him, and gave Himself for him. When they said he was beside himself in his zeal, he said that, whether it was so or not, the love of Christ constrained him.

It is not only in great gatherings, but in small meetings too we realise the blessedness of Him in Whom "believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." In the early days of the church, Christian joy in the Lord led, on the human side, to the comparatively rapid spread of Christianity. We have the salvation of our souls, but He saves us daily from the power of sin, and because He lives we shall never want a powerful Advocate, and by and by we shall be saved from sin altogether and be like Him and with Him for ever. It is wonderful to think that the Son of God should deign to hear our feeble praise for His goodness.

In ii. 24, our hearts are directed to the price He paid: this is what made us love Him. Our souls love to look back to that solemn hour and to know that He will never bring our sins up against us. Yet we say, "My sins were the nails, my unbelief the spear." There is a danger that our feelings should evaporate in emotion, but He has loved us not in word only, but in deed. He laid down His life for us that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. There should be the answer of a good life springing from the love of Him Who has made it possible.

In iii. 22, our hearts rise up in glad exultation. We see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels

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for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. We are glad indeed that our Lord, Who was humbled for our sakes, has been exalted. In the place of power, the centre of everything is a Lamb as it had been slain. We think of Ps. xxiv. 7-10. He came down in grace and conquered and is gone up to heaven in righteousness.

“Set your mind, your affection, on things above, not on things on the earth.” He is here in the midst, to hear the outpouring of our hearts. We look back at the price He paid to save us. We look up to see Him glorified at the right hand of the majesty on high. It is for us to be living and looking that way, and by and by we shall find ourselves there in the twinkling of an eye. Christ the forerunner has entered in, and, as a brother once said, “Our future, our fortune is bound up in His future.”

Hymn 416. Prayer.

MONDAY AFTERNOON. *Brothers' Meeting, 2.0 p.m.*

Young People's Meeting, 2.0 p.m.

Hymn 53. Prayer. Hymn 392.

L.C.H. Jas. i. 21; 2 Tim. iii. 15; Acts xx. 32.

The power of the word of God is referred to in these verses in three ways. Firstly, it is “able to save your souls,” because therein God points you to the Lord Jesus as the Saviour of sinners. But the salvation of God is not only deliverance from the wrath to come, but from the power of Satan in this world. God's word is

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“able to make you wise” unto this salvation too. It can keep you from the many mistakes which you would make if you had not the instruction it can give you. But besides this, it is “able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.” Building is a slow process, and unless you persevere diligently with your studies there will be something lacking in your building.

W.G.T. Eph. iv. 1-6.

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Eph. iv. 4-6.)

Real spiritual progress is always characterised by a jealous care for principles. In chapter ii. of this Epistle, we read of one body, one city, of which all the saints are citizens, one household, and one holy temple: and in this chapter the pathway consistent with our position is plainly pointed out. The unity secured by our Lord is the dominating thought of the Epistle, so we are exhorted in this chapter to use all diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit and instructed as to the only spiritual atmosphere in which it will flourish, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and forbearance. This is the principle underlying being gathered upon the ground of the one body of which the Lord's Supper is the outward expression (1 Cor. x. 16). We ought to be gathered where every believer, if walking godly, could be found without having to give up anything scriptural or take on anything unwarranted by scripture. What

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a clearance of humanly devised adjuncts this principle makes, for God's Spirit and word enable the simplest two or three to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," and to "offer the sacrifice of praise . . . confessing His name." Any other ground must be sectarian, and can only be avoided by adhering to principle. The price of faithfulness is often isolation and apparent limitation in practical usefulness, but the principle is divine. On the other hand, there is the danger of spiritual pride and self-satisfaction, whereas we are nothing, have nothing and can do nothing of ourselves.

The three unities in verses 4-6 may be described respectively as the essential, the professional and the comprehensive unities. In verse 4 we have what is eternal, but internal, all believers but no others being included: verse 5 is of a more outward character and covers all publicly professing Christianity. Faith here means the Christian religion, and baptism the outward rite. It is a unity of profession. In verse 6 we have God Himself presented, a personal God, the Supreme Being, all pervading, and specially related to believers.

Hymn 391. Prayer.

Open Meeting, 3.15 p.m.

Hymn 166. Prayer.

G.F.C. John xiii. 1-5; Phil. ii. 5-8.

It is very desirable that something definite should be before us during the conference, something that will

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stand out distinctly in our minds when we separate. The doctrine and work of Christ have been put before us. The doctrine of Christ is the truth as to Christ Himself and is summed up beautifully in 1 John v. 20. It is ever the object of Satan's attack. If this truth is lost, nothing is worth holding, for what distinguishes Christianity is that it all depends upon one Person. "We know that the Son of God is come" (1 John v. 20), and He is "over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5)—not a subordinate God, but the supreme God, eternally blessed. Scripture also tells us that He was in every way a man. It was not the Son of God indwelling a human body, for then He could not enter into all our need. The Lord Jesus was as truly man as He is God over all. He gave Himself, not only His body, for us.

There is a striking analogy between John xiii. and Phil. ii. In Philippians, the Lord Jesus, Who was in the form of God, divested Himself of glory and became a servant. In John, the Lord, in the full consciousness of His divine glory, not only given by the Father, but underived and eternal, divested Himself of His garments and humbled Himself to the lowliest of services.

But the scripture tells us that being in the form of God, He thought it not a prize to be equal with God: He sought not to maintain it. He divested Himself of glory and became really and truly a man "in all things like unto His brethren." The first object of Satan's attack was on the reality of the Lord's humanity: that is why John dwells upon it in his Epistles. "That which was from the beginning"—His incarnation. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." Modern unbelief

questions His deity, but then Satan attacked His humanity, and soon after denied the distinctiveness of the Trinity, an error into which denial of Christ's Eternal Sonship compels people to fall. For they must believe that, at the Incarnation, God became in and to Himself, what He had not been before: not till then was He Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It is true that the term Eternal Sonship is not in scripture, but it is a mistake to suppose that we have in scripture every phrase we are to use. God has given us His word, and if any fresh truth is brought forth, it is in perfect agreement with the old. What is of God will bear the closest scrutiny, and whatever advance we make will not contradict what we already have from God, upon which we rest.

What God has given us is attacked in these days, but we are called to believe that which is from the beginning. The apostle touchingly turns back to the truth he had known from his forefathers, to the faith of Timothy's mother and grandmother. He seems to have had special anxiety regarding Ephesus (Acts xx. 30), and so he exhorted Timothy to abide.

In our difficult day, there is no security apart from abiding in subjection to God's word. It is easy to escape difficulties by joining larger companies, but we are called to hold fast His name, and not deny His word. We must refuse all speculation, whoever brings it, applying to every doctrine the test that, if it is of God, it makes much of Christ. This is the only way to please the Father. May the Lord Jesus find us holding fast to His Name.

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T.W.B. Psalm cxxii.

This is one of the fifteen Songs of Degrees which God's people used to sing on their way to Jerusalem. The house of the Lord (ver. 1) was merely a tent that David pitched in Zion, a poor affair compared with the glorious temples of the nations, but there God had set His name. So now saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus are nothing very great. What constituted the gathering place in that day? The name of the Lord—cf. Matt. xviii. 20.

They arrived at the gates of Jerusalem (ver. 2), where they were examined (cf. Neh. xiii. 19-22). So there should be an examination now of those who wish to gather to the name of the Lord, though many try to do away with this reception, and so do not keep a proper watch over the Lord's house.

The enemy does not like a compact city (ver. 3). But as long as there are enemies you must not have breaches in the wall; God would not have them round His earthly dwelling, and He will not have them in the millennium. But to-day there are large breaches in many parts of the wall, often beginning as breaches in the heart. Yet we have the Lord's command "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." If we are careful in fellowship and love, we shall be compact together.

The tribes went up (ver. 4) from north, south and from over Jordan to the spot where God had made His word known. How sad that so few nowadays are content to gather to the Lord's name and be a testimony! But though the testimony is poor, God will acknowledge it. We have not lost everything so long

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as the Lord is there. He can revive—"Ye have not, because ye ask not," and we do not ask because we have lost courage and do not trust Him enough. Paul told Timothy that even in the worst days the word was to be preached. The Lord *can* work, even in the very last days.

Where the Lord's authority is acknowledged, there will be discipline (ver. 5), and judgment of evil. It may take us a long time to arrive at a decision, but the Lord will give grace to acknowledge the good and judge the evil according to His word.

We are not only to pray for our own peace, our family and business, but also for the gatherings and the testimony (ver. 6); not only in the meeting, but at home, and then we shall pray better at the prayer meeting, and shall prove the beautiful promise that if we love the saints and work of God we shall prosper, by His care. The Lord careth for His own.

Peace is not to be within our walls (ver. 7) at the cost of holiness. I ought to be glad to be put right by a brother if I am wrong; it makes for peace if he admonishes me according to God's word.

Is not verse 8 beautiful? One would hardly expect so much love for the brethren in the O.T. May the Lord give us grace to echo verse 7, and to seek the good of the Lord's servants and of one another.

Hymn 134.

T.D. Col. iii. 14, 15.

"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Col. iii. 14-15.)

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There seems to be here a double emphasis, first with regard to love, "put on love"; secondly, as to peace, "to the which also ye are called in one body." They are the N.T. enforcement of Ps. cxxii. The saints of God are soldiers indeed, but are apt to turn their weapons against the family instead of the foe. We must never act as though denying our relation to those who are also called. When God's word says "one another" (ver. 13), not one of Christ's is omitted.

The church at Colosse was told to put on love, the bond of perfectness which would unite their hearts. The Lord emphasised the same thing when He spoke of the exhortation to love one another as His commandment. We have been afraid to emphasise love. Even if a brother has been put away, love will pray, will watch for signs of repentance, will seek to exercise his heart and mind, so that perhaps the Lord will use the word to rebuke him. When we meet a brother apart from us, we should ask him, "Why are we apart? Are you praying about it?" We should not merely fraternise, but we should not forget that he is a member of Christ's body, as we. Our loss is immense if we do not contemplate the whole church in this day of small things. We are not only free now to love the children of God, all of them, with all our hearts; but we cannot escape our responsibility to do so.

The apostle longed to present every man perfect. If we were to exercise one another's minds about our separations, should we find the Lord indifferent? When He comes, He will make good the gathering we have left undone, but our love has its work to do.

We are afraid sometimes, in feeling the necessity for faithfulness, to emphasise peace, but it is God's will

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that His people should be at peace among themselves. Certainly it is *His* peace, but it is to rule, to be the dominant note. When we are positive we are right, we must yet consider those who have difficulties, not forgetting John xiii., nor that the Spirit is here to show the truth to all our brethren, as well as to ourselves.

These words speak of the loving purpose of Him Who wishes to find all according to His mind at His coming. Nothing will fail when we are with Him. May we be more in the current of His mind in His love towards His people till He come.

Hymn 132. Prayer.

Greetings from Athens (quoting Is. xl. 26-31; Ps. lv.; Is. liii. 11; 1 John ii. 28; Heb. x. 37); Cairo (quoting Ps. cxxxiii.), and South Africa.

MONDAY EVENING. *Address* by Mr. J. N. Voorhoeve, 7 p.m.

Hymn 388. Prayer. Rev. i. 4-6.

I wish to say a word about the Person of Christ, because God's Spirit always takes Christ's word and applies it to our hearts, and also because in our time especially we need a Person.

The Holy Spirit fulfils His mission in glorifying Christ. In John xiv. to xvi. we have what the Lord Himself said about the Holy Spirit, and it comprises the whole New Testament. In chapter xiv. the Holy Spirit brings to our remembrance what Jesus has said and done—the Gospels; in chapter xv. He is a witness,

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a testimony to Christ's Person—the Acts; and in chapter xvi. He guides us into all truth, and speaks of the things He has heard from above, the coming things—and these are the themes of the Epistles and Revelation. Our dear Lord was Himself the Comforter, but He sent another Comforter, as the Witness to testify that Jesus Christ is all for God and is to be all for us.

Our times especially want a Person. The whole world of our days is looking for a Person, and we have in dark and difficult times by faith to see Him Who is invisible (Heb. xi. 27). We love Jesus Whom we do not see, and rejoice in Him with unspeakable joy (1 Pet. i. 8). Moses saw Him Who is invisible, by the spiritual eye of faith, and refused to stay with Pharaoh, thirsting after the things of Christ more than the things of this world. He saw Jehovah, and we must see Jesus at the right hand of God. To do this, we must, like Moses, listen to God's word and separate ourselves from all evil, from doctrine too that is not in harmony with Scripture. We want to have the eyes of our understanding (new translation: heart) enlightened (Eph. i. 18), and constant fellowship with our Lord in doing His will, or else we are blind and short-sighted (2 Pet. i. 9).

This is the one thing needful in these days, to be in real fellowship with His precious Person. The world of our days says, One thing at a time, and Scripture says the same (Luke x. 42: Ps. xxvii. 4). He is to have the first place in all things: let us ask the Lord to fix our eyes upon Him, that He may fill us. Seeing the Unseen with the eyes of our heart, with spiritual eyes: beholding a person, the Lord Himself!

In Revelation we have the end of the one great testi-

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mony to the Lord Jesus in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit throughout the New Testament had in view the Person of Christ and the blessings He brought, now and for eternity. Each book of the New Testament reveals the Person of our Lord and His work.

In *Matthew*, we behold Him as the Son of David, with a perfect legal title, on the throne of His father David;

In *Mark*, we see the perfect Servant, ever doing the Father's will, calling His own to be fishers of men;

In *Luke*, His perfect Manhood, the virgin-born Son of God, coming to save sinners throughout the world;

In *John*, we rejoice in the perfect glory of Jesus as the eternal Word, the Creator of all things, made flesh for us sinners, attracting all to His Person and work;

in *Acts*, we see the risen One, ascending into heaven; at the same time the One Who gives the promise of His return and the gift of the promised Comforter;

In *Romans*, we have the testimony that He is the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. His gospel the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;

In *1 Corinthians*, saints are in fellowship with God through His name;

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In *2 Corinthians*, all the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Him; comfort and deliverance are provided in Him;

In *Galatians*, He gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of God and our Father;

In *Ephesians*, all the beauties of Christ are found together; we are blessed with every spiritual blessing, accepted in the Beloved, washed in His blood, and obtain in Him, Who is the Head over all things, an inheritance;

In *Philippians*, He controls the lives of His own to be glorified in them; He is our Example and we are all to have the same mind as He;

In *Colossians*, once more His fullest glory shines forth; He is the Head of the church, in us the hope of glory, the Head of the new creation in Whom all fulness dwells;

In *1 Thessalonians*, we see Him as the Hope of the church, coming to bring us where He is, to deliver us from the wrath to come;

In *2 Thessalonians*, He is coming in judgment from heaven with His mighty angels, and He will also be glorified in His saints and they all will share His glory;

In *1 Timothy*, He came into the world to save sinners; the greatest sinner can get remission by His blood, and He is our Hope;

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In *2 Timothy*, He brought life for the soul and incorruptibility for the body to light through the Gospel ;

In *Titus*, He is the hope of eternal life ;

In *Philemon*, He is mentioned as Lord, and Paul's spirit reminds us of our Lord and His work ;

In *Hebrews*, He is the Son, the express image of God, Who made purification for sins and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high ;

In *James*, a crown of life, through Him, is given to all that love Him ;

In *1 Peter*, we are begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ;

In *2 Peter*, grace and peace are multiplied by Him, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus, our Lord ;

In *John's three Epistles*, a blessed family relationship is set forth, as the children of God, having fellowship with the Father and the Son, and each other, through Him ; we have also the doctrine of Christ in which the believer must abide ;

In *Jude*, we are told that we are preserved by Jesus Christ to be presented faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy ;

In *Revelation*, all the blessedness and magnificence and completeness are connected with Him, and we behold Him in His matchless beauty between the candlesticks !

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The first chapter of the last book of the Bible makes Him known as no other part of the Scripture does. It is one great testimony—at the end of the great New-Testament-testimony—of Him that loves us, that washed us from our sins, that made us kings and priests unto God and His Father!

Alone in Patmos, John's heart in that difficult time is occupied entirely with *Christ* in all His glory and beauty. It is about Him that John speaks, to Him that he listens, about His love that he is singing, for Him that his heart is longing. In preaching we may remember to point out not only that a sinner is in danger of going to hell, but also of missing all the blessings of eternal life in Him. John's heart—however dark the times were in which he lived—is full of joy (Rev. i. 4). And coming to speak of Jesus Christ, he calls Him first, as in iii. 14, the faithful Witness. Christ was the faithful witness before Pilate, for God and man, for believers and unbelievers. John continues that He is not only the only begotten Son, but the first-begotten from among the dead, with rights over them, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. And then he begins to sing the new hymn of the assembly, similar in thought to chapter v. His adoring heart is singing a glory song, and we join!

“Unto Him.” We must have Him before our eyes: if we think of His wonderful love in giving Himself, we cry, What a Saviour! Let us cling to Him, let us listen to those alone who say that all is to be found in His Person. We want Him in this world with all its sin, its difficulties, its troubles; in our families, our business, our meetings. We want Him personally. We want His fellowship, God and man in one Person.

And we want to preach Him. John in Patmos was far from his loved ones and the assembly, a prisoner, but he was singing of the One Who had done all for him, Who loved him every day. He was full of the thought of sharing in His dominion and kingship, not bewailing the bad and difficult times.

“That loveth us.” He loved us once, and He is still the same—a wonderful truth in the Revelation that shows His magnificence and holiness, that shows us Him Who is walking among the golden candlesticks. Though it may look as if He is against us, all things are always for our best. Let us look upon Him as the One Who loves us.

“And washed us from our sins in His own blood.” We were sinners, but now we are washed. Our lives are changed, not because of His character or ours, but because He died for us.

“And hath made us a kingdom of priests unto God and His Father, to Him be all the glory and the might and the dominion from age to age.” Not only washed from our sins and loved by Him in the present, but brought into such a wonderful relationship and having received such an eternal glory and blessing; kings and priests unto God our Father!

Christ is all! May we listen to the Holy Spirit Who speaks to us of Him, and Him alone. All doctrine and experience must stand aside for Him. *“Jesus alone.”* He is all for the Father’s heart, He has to be all for us. Only in Him do we have full peace and can we glorify God. And from Him is all our hope in connection with the past, for the present and for the future.

Being a few weeks ago in the Isle of Wight, I saw

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in an old cemetery a gravestone with these words, giving the thoughts of him who was buried there:

“By faith in Christ he trusts to rise
Thro’ His all-powerful sacrifice.”

What all people want is such a Saviour. Our teaching should be simple *about Him*. Let us give a great testimony about *His Person* through the Holy Spirit! And may we who love Him, cling more to Him, sing of Him, look for Him! Now in this time we are living in separation from evil, from this world, for His name, but soon He shall have the dominion, and we shall be with Him, and share His glory.

Let, then, our walk be a testimony to His loving Person. We ought not to be troubled about many things, but we must do “one thing”; look at Him, listen to Him, see His beauty. May He be our Shepherd and Friend every day of our lives! Soon we shall bow our knees in His presence; and then it will be with us all to say together, “Unto Him be the glory!”

Hymn 368. Prayer.

Message of greeting from Winchester, quoting Col. iii. 12-17.

TUESDAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.45 a.m.

Hymns sung: 52, 276, 321, 5.

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Open Meeting, 11 a.m.

Hymn 287. Prayer.

J.N.V. Col. iii. 12-17; Matt. ix. 36-38.

Yesterday we were exhorted to have real brotherly love, embracing not only brethren with whom we are in fellowship but all real Christians: the message from Winchester was in the same direction. I think we are needing such godly thoughts of love. And we must at the same time remember there is a godly love towards all men.

In 2 Peter i., we are exhorted to add to our faith seven virtues; and among them are brotherly love and love.

In Col. iii. 12-17, we read three times of Christ, His forgiveness of sins, His peace, and His word. He was the Elect of God, holy and beloved; we too are elected and beloved. He was full of mercy, goodness, humbleness, meekness, long-suffering, long-forbearing, forgiveness; we ought to learn from Him to show these attributes. We are not to make an effort to get them, but if we fix our eyes upon Him, we can do as He did. Brotherly love is the perfect bond (Col. iii. 14). Let us take the wonderful thought as a message from our Lord, that we need *Christ*—Christ for our sins, for our family and business life, in our meetings. If all, in love, looked at Christ, and saw each other in Christ, what a different thing it would be amongst Christians!

We must have brotherly love. It is difficult to love one who is not walking with us, but if we remember that Christ died for him, and think how the King of kings bowed Himself for His disciples, so full of faults (John xiii.), we may be the same by looking at Him (2 Cor. iii. 18). Let us not only sing hymns and say

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“How beautiful is He!” but learn from Him not to think anything of ourselves, but seek to be a help to other children of God. Let us see all our fellow-brethren in Christ, Who loved each of them in giving Himself for them. Let us add to other virtues *brotherly love!*

We must also have love to all men. The Lord Jesus says we should “pray the Lord of the harvest, that He will send (thrust) forth labourers into His harvest.” It is the duty of all of us as labourers to bring the gospel to all, but labourers are also wanted who can go out and visit the people in their houses. The first thing we must have to bring this about is *love for souls*. When the Lord Jesus saw the crowds in Matt. ix. 36, He saw there was no spiritual blessing for them, and had compassion. When we look at Christianity around, we must confess our times are similarly sad, and we must have compassion, thinking of the lost and looking for what we and others can do for them.

But we must not only see the misery, we must, like the Lord, see that the fields are white unto harvest, and that we have only to go and gather in what He has wrought. There *is* a harvest! In the darkest times we see the goodly blessings to come! But there have to be labourers. The Lord uses labourers, and we ought to pray for more of them! We need not concern ourselves about providing for their temporal needs: we have only to ask for labourers, and He will take care of them. *But we must supplicate for them, because we see so many unsaved children and grown-up people.* It is not easy to be a labourer: real labourers hesitate to accept their call, and have to be thrust forth, not by ourselves, but by the Lord. But if the Lord is calling, one must listen to His voice,

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Let us have real brotherly love for all believers, praying for them, seeking to help them, perhaps by sending them magazines containing God's truth. Let us also have love for all men, that they may come to our dear Lord and Saviour, believe in Him and be saved. Now we can only have and show this brotherly love, this love to all men, by fixing our eyes upon Him and by following His beautiful example!

Hymn 174.

H.L. Matt. xi. 25-30.

Service is very important in these days, but how can we be equipped as labourers? God sends forth His servants in the Master's spirit, exemplified in the above scripture, otherwise the service will not be helpful to souls.

The condition of soul needed for service is set out in our Lord's teaching here. We are not to be burdened with it, losing touch with the energy that makes it effective with others. Let us learn our place before going out, being inspired by the Lord for the service for which He has fitted us, and then He will force us out. From Isaiah we see that, though His service did not seem to be appreciated by others, He left everything with God, and so could rejoice (Is. xlix. 4). The Lord was never rightly appreciated, even by His disciples, so we need not be over-anxious about the appreciation of our brethren, so long as our ministry is scriptural. If we get our mark first, our shots will hit their target.

Our Lord is our Master in service, and His service was apparently without result, but His resource was

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that what was hidden from the wise was revealed to babes. Think of the compassion of the One Who embraced little children, in fulfilment of Is. xl. 11, and get His care and disposition. We want nurses rather than doctors among saints and sinners. Though doctors are necessary sometimes, food is more constantly needed than medicine. Take His yoke, Who is meek and lowly, and you shall find rest. He *gives* rest to a heart burdened with sins, and those who come to Him about their failures *find* rest, for He is gentle. He does not excuse, but He shows us how to treat our failing brethren, with meekness and lowliness. We should wash our brethren's feet with cooling, not scalding, water; and we should get into the right attitude of meekness and lowliness ourselves before seeking to put our brethren right.

Hymn 403.

A.W.R. Song of Solomon i. 15, iv. 7, viii. 5, 12.

Are we ready to think of our brethren as He thinks of us—"Thou art fair, my love"? If we realise His wondrous love, we shall be more ready to seek to answer to it.

In iv. 7, He adds, "There is no spot in thee"; of course that is through the shedding of His precious blood. The Bridegroom is speaking to the bride. She has failed Him at least twice, once sleeping, and once taking her ease, but His love never alters. Though she thinks a great deal about herself, He does not speak about Himself—all His words are of her.

But she progresses under the sense of His wonderful

love. "We love Him, because He first loved us," and the more we get hold of the way He bears with us, the more we shall bear with and show love to our brethren. At the end, the bride is coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved (viii. 5). We are still in the wilderness, and the more we lean on Him, the greater is our rest. In i. 6, the bride says, "Mine own vineyard have I not kept," but now (viii. 12), we find she is able to give back to the bridegroom a Benjamin's portion, five times as much as she gives to the others. May our hearts prove that Christ is everything to us, and give Him the answer He expects to His love, the Benjamin's portion.

Hymns: 248, 334. Prayer.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON. *Bible Reading*, 2 p.m.

Hymn 172. Prayer. 1 John i.

Young People's Meeting, 2 p.m. Address by Mr. W. G. Turner.

Hymn 370. Prayer. 1 Kings xviii. 30-39.

Elijah's times resembled our own in the conditions prevailing among God's people. He was a typical "man of God," called specially to witness for the faith in difficult days. In verse 15 he speaks of himself as standing before God, which may perhaps be taken as implying that he was conscious that God was behind him in the great matters with which he was engaged. Three messages mark crises in his life and work.

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“Hide thyself” (xvii. 3). Much exercise of spirit on account of Israel’s condition had already been noticed by God (Jas. v. 17), but he needed further retirement from outward affairs, fuller experience of God’s all-sufficiency, and deeper communion to deal with the difficulties of those evil days.

“Shew thyself” (xviii. 1). This is complementary to the former command, a further stage in his equipment for his service and testimony. So we must first learn humility and dependence and then we can testify boldly with the assurance of God’s confirmation: “I will send rain.”

“Go, return” (xix. 15). Sometimes we, like Elijah, are disheartened by the apparently little permanent result of our testimony. We wake to the fact that we are not better than our fathers, and declare things 7,000 times worse than they actually are. Then “Go, return” comes ringing into our hearts—the Lord still has somewhat for us to do, or we should not be left here. Humility, intrepidity and perseverance are necessary to-day, as then.

In xviii. 30, Elijah builds an altar at God’s orders, using twelve stones to show the unity of God’s people, however divided and apostate. His action in drenching the sacrifice and altar thrice with water teaches that there is to be no working up of a flame, but dependence upon the Lord to act, and the descent of the fire shows that divine principles, whatever the desperate conditions, have divine sanction. We cannot work up worship, or command spiritual results of service, but we can be real before God: He desires truth in the inward parts. What is psychical and emotional is not spiritual. The poured-out water suggests our utter

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weakness, but God owns whatever is of Himself. He wants neither our learning nor our ignorance but our obedience.

Hymn 358.

Open Meeting, 3 p.m.

Hymn 184. Prayer.

A brother read 2 Thess. ii. 8-11, 15; Heb. ii. 1, and spoke a few words of exhortation.

J.M. Gen. xxii. 7, 8; Ex. xxi. 1-6; Psalm xxii. 31; Luke xxiv. 15; 1 Thess. iv. 15-18; Heb. ix. 23-26; Rev. xxi. 1-4.

In each of these passages, Christ Himself is referred to. In Genesis, God will provide Himself a lamb, and in Exodus the perfect Servant, Who came in by Himself, could go out by Himself, for death had no claim on Him. But if He had gone without dying, we could never have been brought to Him: but by faith we can see Jesus, with His hands and feet pierced, like the servant's ear. From the passage in the Psalms we see that Christ has done the work Himself, and in Luke, Jesus Himself, on Whom all the hopes of these two disciples centred, was alive and speaking to them. 1 Thess. iv. 16 shows that the Lord will not send the highest created intelligence, but will come Himself to take His own to be with Him for ever, whilst from Hebrews ix. 26 we learn that the sacrifice of Himself was so complete that nothing more requires to be done to bring the vilest sinner into God's presence. Finally,

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in Rev. xxi. 3, He Himself will dwell with men in the new heaven and new earth which will succeed this dreary scene.

T.E.R. Psalm cxxxiii.

How blessed it is to be together in one mind, occupied with Christ! This Psalm is the last but one of the fifteen Songs of Degrees, speaking of the journey's end, for in the next Psalm we find ourselves in the Lord's presence. But here we have the unity which we cannot produce by our own efforts. Its complete fulfilment will not take place until all the twelve tribes of Israel are joined together under one King, but its principles are precious for us to-day. This unity can be produced only by the possession in our souls of two things from God. The first is the blessing of life for evermore (ver. 3). We have eternal life by God's sovereign grace through contact with Christ in the glory, giving eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him (John xvii. 2), and glorifying the Father in that very act. Secondly, as possessors of eternal life, we have the capacity to enjoy Christ; and resting upon His finished work, we are sealed by the Holy Ghost dwelling in our bodies, corresponding with ver. 2 of the Psalm. By the power of that Spirit we are able to enjoy the sweetness of communion with one another and fellowship with God.

But we cannot have this unity unless we are in the right condition of communion with God, described in the preceding Psalms. In Ps. cxxx., the conscience is met and sins are forgiven: in Ps. cxxxi., David does not exalt himself, but is waiting for the Lord as a

weaned child, utterly dependent on others to provide its food—may we walk in becoming humbleness of mind before God. In Ps. cxxxii. 4, 5, David speaks of awaking out of sleep and giving the Lord His place in the midst of His own—may we not rest till we are assured that Christ has His due place in the midst of our little assemblies, and that He is dwelling in our hearts by faith. Is He not worthy of the highest place, not only in glory, but in our hearts?

David had to search for the ark : he went to Ephratah, and finally found it in the woods of Kirjath-jearim (Ps. cxxxii. 6; 1 Sam. vii. 1). Then he enquired what he should do with it (cxxxii. 8) and the answer is in ver. 13. David was in the current of God's mind, determined that the Lord should have His right place in the midst of His people: are we ready to go forth as servants of the Lord?

The salvation and joy in verse 16 are the answer to verse 9, but in a more intense form, for God always gives more than we ask.

Hymn 274. Prayer.

TUESDAY EVENING. *Address* by Mr. T. W. Bayly,
7 p.m.

Hymn 192. Prayer. Luke x. 21-42. Hymn 414.

There is a connection between verses 21 and 25 of this chapter. The lawyer was a wise and prudent man according to this world's standard, but a wise and prudent man is often unwise in God's things. This

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lawyer gave a remarkably wise answer to the Lord's question; indeed, he gave the best answer possible. He was also prudent, for he did not want to lose the world to come. But he lacked faith, and so he wanted to test the Lord Jesus, to see if He would give a wise and prudent answer. Present-day critics are testing the Bible, for they do not like the truth: they are doing what they can to upset it, and so the truth is withheld from them.

The lawyer asked about inheriting eternal life. Inheritance is not something one can work for. Everyone knew that in order to inherit eternal life it must be a free gift of God, but they thought they could make themselves worthy. God had told them fifteen hundred years before to keep the law, and no one had done it; but the Lord answers the lawyer's question because he wanted to know what he could do. He showed his acquaintance with scripture by completing his answer to the Lord's question from Deuteronomy by a further quotation from Leviticus.

What characterised this man most of all was anxiety to justify himself; and many to-day think that, if they do their best, it will be added to Christ's work, so that they will get to heaven, even if it is only just within the door. The Lord did not reprove him openly, but He drew a representation of his own condition in the eye of God, wounded, robbed, and without strength. The lawyer probably understood the picture: he needed mercy, for all his righteousnesses were as filthy rags. What he needed was a Helper, a Saviour; not to do something himself. Mary, on the contrary, did not justify herself (ver. 40), when criticised rather sharply by her sister: but the Lord justified her, as He did the

woman when some found fault with her for breaking the alabaster box to pour upon the Lord (Matt. xxvi. 7).

The road from Jerusalem to Jericho drops over three thousand feet in about fourteen miles. It is a rocky, downhill road, dangerous on account of banditti even to-day. Jerusalem was the holy city where God was worshipped: Jericho was a city of pleasure, a city of palm trees. How the story reminds us of the fate of many a young man who has left godly restraint and has been robbed by sin and Satan on the downward road: but the Lord Jesus is ready to help such. He shows that His heart is full of love and that He possesses all a lost soul needs.

The Lord does not imply that the priest and Levite were hard-hearted. An Israelite was unclean seven days if he touched a dead body; but the outward observances of their religion formed such an important part of their lives that they forgot the first duty, namely, to love God, and their neighbour. And this is the lesson which the lawyer needed to learn. Many to-day think outward observances, about which they are so particular, will help them to heaven.

The Samaritan did not belong there, and so is a type of the Lord Jesus, Who was a stranger, but is moved with compassion towards perishing sinners. When Jesus told the Jews the truth that they did not do the works of Abraham, they called Him a Samaritan (John viii. 48). The reason we dare take the place of being saved by grace is because the Lord Jesus had compassion on us when He saw us going down the broad road to destruction. This man could not have been worse, or he would have died; and that is our condition by nature.

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The blessed Saviour has plenty of experience in binding up wounds and administering the oil and the wine; and very natural things they are to do; for wine is a natural antiseptic and germicide. The gospel is very simple, but very effective where it is believed. The Lord Jesus has brought us just what we need for time and for eternity.

The Samaritan did not leave him unprovided for: two silver pennies were good wages for to-day and to-morrow, for the lord agreed with the labourers to work in the vineyard for a penny a day each (Matt. xx. 1-16). And so the Lord Jesus takes care of us all during the time of His absence, though we try His patience many a time: but neither has He forsaken, nor forgotten us. Lying on his bed next day, the wounded man was doubtless thinking about how soon the Samaritan would return, so that he could thank him worthily. To the message, "Surely I come quickly," is not our response, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus"? The long-suffering of God is salvation, but one day the Lord will come. He is not neglecting His promise, but is waiting for the last one to come, that His Father's house may be full. Then, the Master of the house will rise up, and shut the door. May the Lord be the centre of our attention, as He was Mary's in ver. 39, and everything done to Him will meet its due reward.

Hymn 92. Prayer.



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