

LONDON CONFERENCE

JUNE 3rd—6th, 1933

SATURDAY EVENING. *Prayer Meeting*, 6.30 p.m.

Hymns sung : 368, 270, 321, 194, 248, 370.

Scriptures read : Heb. xiii, 5-8 ; Prov. xviii, 10.

LORD'S DAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.30 a.m.

Hymns sung : 14, 195, 428, 5.

Breaking of Bread, 10.45 a.m.

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

Hymn 84. Exodus xv.

This is the first occurrence of singing in the Bible, and it takes place for something God has done : it is a song of redemption. They were purchased (*ver.* 16) and redeemed (*ver.* 13) by blood. After leaving Egypt they were guided into God's habitation (*ver.* 13), and now in relationship with God they can talk of holiness, a word which does not occur in Genesis.

Israel's redemption foreshadows the work of Christ : so we belong wholly to the Lord, and should not serve sin nor Satan. We are redeemed by blood and by power, and preserved from all evil till the Lord comes to take us to Himself. As the power of Jehovah triumphed over Pharaoh, so by the power of His

LONDON CONFERENCE

resurrection the Lord has triumphed over sin and annulled Satan's power (Heb. ii, 14, 15).

As God made a difference in Egypt by putting the Israelites under the blood, so we are redeemed first, and then taken out of the power of the world. In Rom. vi we see the power of sin within, though the believer is delivered by the power of Jesus Christ from sin's bondage and sin's wages, death.

If the Lord is our Master, we make a habitation (*ver.* 13) for Him in our hearts: this dwelling-place collectively was established in the church at Pentecost. He is the Centre of all, the great wheel into which we are all fitted as parts.

Faith is often progressive, but when the mind has been stored with truth from infancy, its manifestation may be sudden.

It is not till the middle of Romans (chap. v) that we read of rejoicing in God. All our salvation is in Him.

We read in Ps. cvi, 11-15, that Israel soon forgot His works. The Lord requires our whole service, and as we dwell in Him, He dwells in us, and we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ.

Hymn 258.

LORD'S DAY EVENING. *Preaching of the gospel*, 7 p.m.

Mr. J. Weston.

Hymns: "He left the brightness of His home,"
"Come thou weary, Jesus calls thee."

Gen. iv, 1-16: "*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin (or, a sin-offering) lieth at the door*" (*ver.* 7).

These words were uttered by God to the first man born in sin, a sinner by nature and practice. On the

LONDON CONFERENCE

3

surface, they contain no message of hope or mercy, but when we understand that the words may also mean, "If thou doest not well, *a sin-offering* lies at the door," we exclaim, "This is Godlike grace!" God here declares that there are only two ways in which a man may be accepted by Him: (1) on the ground of perfect righteousness, or (2) through the person and work of another.

The man whose soul has never been blackened by sin, whose heart is purer than unsullied light, need have no fear of meeting God. Job said at first, "I am clean, without transgression . . . His way have I kept." But God put him under His searchlight, and then he cried, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." "Well-doing" means sinlessness, perfect purity from birth till we meet God. Only such conduct will be accepted without atonement. Comparative sinlessness will not do: a murderer could not ask for acquittal because he had committed only one murder. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. One sinful thought, one dishonest act, will change "accepted" into "rejected." Isaiah, though one of the best of men, said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips"; and Peter cried, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," and threw himself at His feet for mercy. No, we have *not* done "well."

Our religious lives must go for nothing, as Cain's did. He presented the best of what he had to God, but his soul was blackened by sin. A man's service does not cleanse his guilt, for sin has entered into his vitals. Sin lies at the sinner's door. A lifetime's follies and vices are debited to his account. They are nailed to his door, and, like the blood-stained door in a recent murder trial, will be exhibited as evidence before the great white throne.

But, is there no remedy? Thank God there is—"a sin-offering lieth at the door." And as God's grace

LONDON CONFERENCE

reasoned with Cain in verses 6, 9, 13 and 15, so He is pleading with sinners to-day. There is mercy and pardon for the most guilty. God noticed that Cain's countenance had "fallen," and His grace went out to his sadness. "He is not willing that any should perish."

The sin-offering at the door points to Christ, Whose blood cleanses from all sin : it is at the door—where the sin was committed—"He came where he was." The way of acceptance, through substitution, was pointed out to Cain, but he refused to avail himself of it. Jude presents the way of Cain as one of the characteristics of the last days. Cain rejected mercy, and this led him to despair of mercy. He cried, "My sin is too great to be forgiven" (R.V. marg.), in his reaction from self-righteousness, believing the alternative lie of the devil. Yet the Sin-offering is greater than the greatest sin ; its infinite worth cannot be reckoned.

God spared Cain's life, in long-suffering mercy giving him space to repent. But he who rejects mercy hurries to perdition : "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord," and, to use the words applied to his awful parallel in the New Testament, "it was night." Judas Iscariot repented of his sin, and made restitution to the last farthing. He confessed that he had betrayed innocent blood, but he refused to turn to Christ—he rejected the sin-offering—and so went to his own place.

God did not turn Cain away, but "*Cain went out.*" There is no hope for the Christ-rejecter. "Woe unto them," cries Jude, "for they have gone in the way of Cain." Turn to the Sin-offering and accept Him Who stands at the door and knocks.

Hymn : "Just as I am, without one plea," followed by a few words of exhortation and appeal by Dr. Wreford.

LONDON CONFERENCE

5

MONDAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.30 a.m.

Hymns sung : 56, 11, 5, 1, 370, 341.

Scripture read : Acts i, 14.

Open Meeting, 11 a.m.

Hymn 103.

J.N.V. Eph. iii, 14-21.

" For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man ; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Christ is the Centre of all the ways and counsels and thoughts of God. Every family in heaven and earth—not the *whole* family, but *every* family—ranges itself unto the name of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ : the Jews, the Gentiles, the assembly, the angels.

Now the apostle asks on his knees that the Ephesians might be enabled, firstly, to apprehend the whole import of the counsels of God, and, secondly, to know the love of Christ as the centre of their hearts. Christ Himself fills the heart more than the glory He gives. He, Who fills all things, fills above all our hearts.

But then we must lose ourselves to find ourselves in

6

LONDON CONFERENCE

the love of Christ, a love, not narrow, but passing knowledge, filling us with all the fullness of God. Let us see how the apostle shows the saints the greatest thing in the world, the greatness of the love of Christ, the love of Christ that passeth knowledge.

This love is greater than faith and hope: "the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. xiii, 13): but not our little love—*His* great love. "Perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John iv, 18): but not our love—*His* wonderful love. Of that love Paul writes, "To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." That love is the greatest theme of God's word. Of God's counsels it is said in this passage that its dimensions cannot be measured: who can tell how broad, and long, and deep, and high they are? But the same is true of the love of Christ. The breadth, the length, the depth and the height cannot be measured. The love of Christ is so deep that He went into the horrible pit of death for us; it is so high that He brings a sinner into heaven's glory; so broad, that it spreads itself over the whole world; so long, that it goes out to all men, during all the ages, especially to His own: it is a love for the disciples unto the end (John xiii, 1). That love alone can satisfy our hearts and be our resting-place: not our weak love, but His eternal, perfect love. The knowledge of that love gives peace and joy, also strength in the sorrows of this world, while it fills the soul with longing for Himself.

The love of Christ passeth knowledge because it thought of us before the foundation of the world, knowing our sins and shame. It is an infinite, *eternal* love.

The love of Christ passeth knowledge because it is *personal*. Christ loved the church, His bride; but we may also say, with Paul, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii, 20). The gospel tells of personal judgment, but it speaks also of a personal love,

LONDON CONFERENCE

7

and calls for a personal response. In John vi, 39, 40, 44 and 54, we read four times of a personal raising up at the last day. First we learn that not one of Christ's redeemed will be lost ; every one will be raised. But the Father must draw us ; it is His will that we see the Son and believe on Him ; and then we must be united with a Christ that died for us, eat His flesh, feed upon Him. It was all the work of the Father, Who sent the Son from glory, and wrought in our hearts by His Spirit, so that we saw and believed : but it would have been impossible if Christ had not died for us.

Again, Christ's love that passeth knowledge *did not seek its own* (1 Cor. xiii, 5). The Lord became a man, and humbled Himself, in a manger, as a carpenter, *mocked by men*, the poorest of the poor—what wonderful love ! The Prince of life humbled Himself to the death of the cross, and we see Him wearing the crown of thorns (John xix, 5). Therefore God has raised Him to His own right hand, and He is to reign as King. We see Him crowned with glory and honour now (Heb. ii, 9), but He is coming with His saints to this earth with many crowns on His head (Rev. xix, 12), and the daughters and young men of Zion will see Him Whom they crucified, and crown Him in the day of the gladness of His heart (Song of Solomon iii, 11).

Further, His love is *divine*, not only going out to sinners without strength, but to enemies. Christ died for us while we were yet sinners (Rom. v, 6-8). And this divine love gives us spiritual blessings of the highest type. Every day He Himself is with us as Shepherd of the sheep, brings us to the knowledge of the truth, and gives us joy in fellowship with God's children.

Moreover, this love is *long-suffering*. In spite of our erring ways, it comes to us, as to Peter, always the same. Christ's love gives contentment, even though He shows us our mistakes, our sins, and how full of pride and

love for this world we are. What has He done for us—and we do so little for Him ! His love always thinks of us—and what has He found in us ? There is so much to judge, but most of all that our love is so weak and feeble. As we know Christ, and realise the feebleness of all we are doing in view of what He has done for us, then He will bless us even more, and we shall know this wonderful love that passeth knowledge:

And His love, passing knowledge, *takes care of us*, too, for our temporal as well as for our spiritual needs. We all know what care is—everywhere, especially in our day, there is sadness, bereavement, and the like. The world is saying that God has unjustly brought it about. But this is a lie, for man has brought it on himself. But even the believer is prone to say, as we read of Martha, “ Carest Thou not ? ” (Luke x, 40). Yet He, the Son of God, takes care of every soul of His own till the end, as we read of the good Samaritan (Luke x, 34, 35). When we grow hard in our hearts, let us remember this care, that He gives us help for our need. He once took our hand (Heb. viii, 9), He has held our hand (Is. xlii, 6), and He will never leave go till the end (Heb. xiii, 5). If we are in trouble, the wonderful answer is, “ He careth for you ” (1 Pet. v, 7). Do not, then, keep your trouble to yourself, but bring it to God, casting all your care upon Him, and He will show you His care for you.

Then, this love that passeth knowledge *will never cease*: we shall be kept to the end. We are here as pilgrims, dependent, but we shall not always be here. We shall see His love in eternity, always with us, bringing us into His presence. What will it be when the Lord comes ? The church will be seen without spot, and His love, that came from eternity, will go on into eternity. The Lord Jesus will present the church to Himself, a glorious church ! The future will manifest the love that passeth knowledge !

LONDON CONFERENCE

9

To *know* this love that passeth knowledge is not a contradiction. We see the sun and every day we enjoy it more, and yet we never can know the sun fully. So it is, perfectly, with the love that passeth knowledge. We taste that love, trust that love, receive from its fullness, and we discover that it does pass knowledge. Soon the Lord is coming to give us fuller knowledge of it, but we shall never know its dimensions—we shall just enjoy it, for ever.

What joy it is to think of Christ's love, to rejoice in it and to speak of it to one another! And as we do so, we shall have blessing for ourselves and love for the souls of men and for the brethren, and shall walk in love.

“ Lord and Saviour, we remember
Somewhat of Thy love,
All its fullness do Thou teach us
From above.”

Hymns : 194 (last verse), 142.

W.J.H. Matt. xi, 25–30.

“ *At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘ I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father : for so it seemed good in Thy sight.’ All things are delivered unto Me of My Father : and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father : neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.*”

LONDON CONFERENCE

In these verses we have an instance of the unexampled love of Christ in this world to the disciples. The Lord Jesus was speaking at a crisis in the ministry of His love down here. In Matthew He is portrayed as the King of Israel, Who presented His claim, His title, to the throne of David, and in this Gospel we have, too, a full exposition by the Lord of the particulars of that kingdom He came to set up. In chapters v to vii, He unfolded its special character, a kingdom of peace rather than power, of love and lowliness rather than majesty and greatness. The evangelist then sets out the evidence that Christ was the King, with power over Satan's terrible works, banishing the diseases with His word, and showing His power over unclean spirits.

But in chapter xi we have a touching account of the outward failure of His ministry. No one was influenced by His words or works, and even the heart of His principal witness in the world was filled with doubts whether Jesus was the King of Israel. "Art Thou the Messiah—and Thy chief servant is in the dungeon, under a tyrant's power? Is this Thy love? or must we still look for Another?" The Lord sent him a message of comfort—"Go and tell John the things you see and hear." Then the Saviour's love for doubting John came out: He turned to those about Him, and what glowing words He spoke of John the Baptist! He was one upon whom God had put exceeding honour. Love for His failing servant made Him say this to the crowds. It is not necessary for us to fail in order to draw out Christ's love, but surely we have all proved how His love comes to us even in moments of weakness and despair. When we think of everything in ruin, we go to the Saviour, or, like John, send someone for us. We feel that He only can save us from despair by giving us a message of real comfort.

The Lord felt in His heart the burden: the privileged

LONDON CONFERENCE

II

cities of Galilee were worse than Sodom in unbelief, and with pain those loving lips, which opened the sermon on the mount with the reiterated word "blessed," framed now the word "woe." At this juncture in His service man's unbelief in Him had risen to its height, and in the hour of rejection the obedient, dependent Man sought His refuge and joy by lifting up His eyes to heaven—"I thank Thee, O Father." This attitude of our Lord has its voice for us in this present time of despair and failure, when spiritual organisations seem all ~~tottering~~ to ruin. Because failure is widespread around us, are our voices to be dumb in the choirs of God's praise? Nay, we shall find an inspiration of joy above. Let us lift our eyes to heaven where there is no failure, where ever shines the love that passeth knowledge, that hell's powers cannot shake, and that still remains the sure refuge of those that follow in the steps of the meek and lowly Lord.

The things of Christ were hidden from the wise and prudent of Jerusalem, who were lifted up with pride because of their knowledge of the scriptures. Only those who had become children could see the kingdom of God among them. And now only the lowly know the Lord. The Son of God has come down so low that we must come low also to have communion with Him. He dwells with the humble in spirit, with those delivered from, and with no thought of, themselves.

The secret of the joy of Christ was that He could say to His Father, "It is all right; the people will not listen to My words, but I know this is all of Thy ordering, that Thy love may go out to the ends of the earth without let or hindrance, and God may be glorified everywhere." Perhaps some prominent in Christian profession, upon whom we rested, have turned aside from the obedience of faith: there is a divine side to the failure: it is good in God's sight, Who is working out His purpose: and it is ours to look above to the love

LONDON CONFERENCE

that passes understanding, and say, "Even so, Father."

"All things are delivered unto Me." In the full consciousness of His rejection, the Lord joys that all is proceeding according to the Father's good pleasure, knowing that, as the Son presenting Himself as the King, He has infinite resources in Himself. In obedience, however, He waited the Father's bidding to take those things: but meanwhile He looked upon those pious souls struggling under the power of evil, and the rejected King had His largesse to bestow. To those who come unto Him, He now offers rest—rest both for sinner and believer. Are we not weary with unfruitful labour?

The world is crying out because of the burden of life, and its god provides exciting occupations and amusements to prevent people feeling the pressure. But have we not got burdens in our meetings, in the things appertaining to Christ's glory in us? We try to help others, and they do not want it; or there is a brother we cannot get on with. Do not let us be over anxious, or despair of help from others: the Lord says, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

But there is another rest, to be had upon conditions: we must take the yoke. The Lord might have taken His kingdom, which was His right, then, but in perfect obedience He waited until it was His Father's pleasure to give it to Him. Let us take the place of subjection of which He set us an example, and commit all things to our loving God, Who has His own purpose; and all will be well. It is difficult to bear, but it is Christ's yoke, and He bears the burden so that it becomes easy, and we do not feel it: and then we find rest to our souls. Though the burden may still be there, the yoke will not gall our shoulders: it is well fitted to give us just what we are able to bear.

May God give us to learn more of the fullness and

LONDON CONFERENCE

13

resource in our Lord Jesus. Around is failure, but in Him there is no change. He is absolutely true, He loves His own fully, and He loves them to the end.

MONDAY AFTERNOON. *Brothers' Meeting*, 2 p.m.

Young People's Meeting, 2.15 p.m.

Hymn 128.

Address by Mr. W. G. Turner. Ex. xix, 5 ; Deut. vii, 6, xiv, 2, xxvi, 18 ; Ps. cxxxv, 4 ; Tit. ii, 14 ; 1 Pet. ii, 9.

In these scriptures God's people are referred to as His "peculiar" treasure, or, as J.N.D. renders it, "a people for His own possession"; or as a "special enclosure." The only other occurrence of the phrase "peculiar treasure" (in Ecc. ii, 8), while confirming the customary meaning of a treasure for one's own possession, is quite apart from the general rule applying it to God's redeemed people. The context of each mention of the blessing of being His "peculiar treasure" shows us the privilege and responsibility attached to it.

It is clear from Ex. xix, 3-6, that an accomplished redemption, wholly God's work, is the basis of the first mention of the "peculiar treasure." The solemn introduction of the subject arrests us. All is pure grace: "What I did . . . how I bare you . . . and brought you unto Myself." All rests on a redemption known by the redeemed: and as it did for Israel, it does for believers, for whom an "eternal redemption" by the blood of Christ has been found (Heb. ix, 12). In Ex. xix, *perfect obedience* based upon known redemption was to be the mark of correspondence with the grace shown them. So to-day obedience is the first mark of one conscious of redemption, since our Redeemer is also

LONDON CONFERENCE

our Lord, Whose word is our law. "There is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

In Deut. vii, the emphasis is on the first result of full obedience, viz., *outward separation from evil* associations, and antagonism to evil in every form. No religious compromises, social entanglements, or communion with surrounding idolatrous peoples must be tolerated by the obedient. But, lest Pharisaism breeds proud thoughts in our hearts, because of a measure of faithful testimony, Deut. vii, 6-8 shows that it was not intrinsic greatness nor personal merit, but the love of the redeeming God, that made the difference between them and other nations. So, the love of Him Who first loved us should join our wholehearted obedience to our grateful humility.

In Deut. xiv, 1, 2, *inward separation from evil* as affecting personal habits is shown correspondingly to mark the "peculiar people." This was based upon a realised relationship to God—"Ye are the children of the Lord your God." Relationship regulates our personal responsibilities, hence the reminder.

In the next mention of "peculiar" (Deut. xxvi, 17-19), a comprehensive mark is given, summing up the preceding passages. "Thou hast avouched (accepted) the Lord this day to be thy God . . . and the Lord hath accepted thee this day to be His peculiar people." The whole matter is shown to consist in a *wholehearted acceptance of, and dedication to, God*, met by His gracious acceptance and consecration of their offering. Happy indeed is the believer who thus avouches God; for what we wholeheartedly offer, He accepts and consecrates.

Ps. cxxxv, 4 shows the outcome of such an experience, for here the mark of His "peculiar treasure" is *praise*. Experience and expectation stir the heart to praise Him for His greatness and goodness. The verse is a characteristic one for Israel, looking backward to their

LONDON CONFERENCE

15

election, and forward to their fullest blessing : but the life of obedience, separation and avowal of our Redeemer is bound to be a life of praise, and this marks the people for His own possession.

Perfect *conduct*, based upon sound faith and love to Christ, is the thing specially marked of the "peculiar people" in Tit. ii, 14. They are zealous of good works, the fruit of faith—not works *for* salvation, but salvation worked out in daily practice. Here Paul and James agree, for unless there is something to show for a profession of faith, its presence may well be doubted.

The last mention of a "peculiar people," though singularly like the first, has one great difference. While Moses said, "Ye shall be," 1 Pet. ii, 9 says, "Ye are." Between the two, the Lord has passed by way of His cross to His glory, and hence the apostle of Jesus Christ can confidently affirm what Moses, the man of God, could not say. Perfect *character* based on perfect privilege is the final mark of God's peculiar people. "Ye are . . . a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." When His excellences find full expression by lip and life, then the ideal of His "peculiar treasure" is realised.

So may we obey, live, confess, praise and conduct ourselves that, when men see or hear us, they may be reminded of Him, our holy Redeemer and gracious Lord.

Hymn 262.

Address by Mr. J. Weston. 1 Pet. ii, 1, 11 ; Ps. xix, 7.

An additional point to bear in mind is that we fail. We have had wonderful truths brought before us during the last few days, but the difficulty with many of us is that it is all so contrary to our experience. It is

possible for the Christian to be guilty of "malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speakings," or "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." How many times some of us have had to thank God, when thus guilty, for the cleansing power of the word of God! "*The law (or word) of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.*" This is a very good text for preachers, but "converting" also has the sense of "restoring." If you have wandered away from the Lord and things are not as they used to be, get back to God's word. It is "perfect," and it "restores the soul." It brings the soul back into communion with God. It is possible to be a backslider, even though you attend the meetings—a "backslider in heart." Let us, then, read the word of God daily, for "the law (or word) of the Lord is perfect, converting (restoring) the soul."

Hymn 316.

Foreign Work, 3.15 p.m.

Hymn 228.

Mr. Dolamore spoke of his visit to the *West Indies*, and read a letter from Mr. Sewell.

Hymn 208.

Mr. Burgess spoke of the work in *Madeira*.

Hymn 323.

Mr. Voorhoeve spoke of the work in *Holland, Germany and Russia*.

Hymns : 62, 5.

Letters from *Egypt* and a message of greeting from *Holland*, quoting Matt. ix, 36-38, were also read.

LONDON CONFERENCE

17

MONDAY EVENING. *Address* by Mr. W. J. Hocking,
7 p.m.

Hymns : 351, 210.

Eph. iv, 1-16.

This scripture speaks of the practical duties of saints, as belonging to the church of God. We are apt to look upon church truths as intellectual, and therefore the concern only of those who meditate a great deal on the Scriptures, but these verses show that they involve practical questions which concern all the members of Christ's body. Moreover, the unity of the Spirit is a matter not simply to think about and praise God about, but one which enters into our relationships one with another, and is associated with our walk. The common function of our beings is to walk, and God's children are exhorted in this passage to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called.

But we cannot walk worthy of our calling unless we know what that calling is, as for instance Abraham did, who at God's word left Mesopotamia to dwell in Canaan. He was told that God's purpose in calling him was to make him the centre of blessing to the whole earth, and so, though he did not possess a foot of the land, he remained there with his tent and his altar, showing that as regards his calling he was in living touch with God, and acted accordingly. So Paul says, "I beseech you from my heart, as one who has preached this truth for years but whom the Lord has now made a prisoner, to walk worthy of this calling." He had been speaking to them in the previous chapters about the calling. It appeals to our hearts, that God has taken us out of this world and blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and as it is "in Christ Jesus" it is all right for us to be there. Though we may not fully

understand it, we may, like some Welsh shepherds, read it over and over again, and find it every time "blesseder and blesseder."

The Lord met that mad blasphemer who was giving all his religious zeal and intellectual prowess to crush His name, and said, "Saul, I am in glory, but when you persecute My saints in Jerusalem and Damascus, you are persecuting Me"; and Saul saw there and then the truth of the church, associated with Christ now, and also in the coming day, when God will head up all things in Christ. Those who believe on the Lord and confess His name in the hour of His rejection, He will own before His angels in the day of His glory.

Thus we are called, not to be an earthly people, nor to blessedness upon the earth in that day when the whole earth bows to the Lamb, the Light of the temple in the heavenly Jerusalem. Our place is for ever with the Lord in heaven, and we find from Eph. ii that this calling of the church has disturbed God's earlier arrangement that the Jews should be first in Messiah's kingdom, and the Gentiles, though there, should have the leavings of the feast. But when Christ was crucified and glorified, the middle wall of partition was broken down, and believing Jews and Gentiles, previously separated, were made one new man in Christ Jesus.

But though this oneness was God's purpose for them, they hated and despised one another naturally, and their old racial prejudices were likely to arise when they were called as believers to sit together at the Lord's table, to say Amen to one another's prayers, and to be associated in all their ways. How was the unity of the Spirit to be brought out practically? Chapter iii shows us the way, and it is summed up in one word which we have in the beginning and end of our passage, "love." Divine love in Christ is beyond our finite minds to grasp in its fullness, but yet we can feel its

LONDON CONFERENCE

19

blessedness, just as the sun's rays warm and invigorate us, though the sun itself in its vastness is so utterly beyond us. So the love of Christ forms the atmosphere of His assembly, whether the complete organisation, or only two or three, enabling it to walk in love.

In the early verses of chap. iv practical virtues are connected with this love. First, there is the spirit of "*lowliness and meekness.*" Love produces this self-forgetfulness, but, apart from Christ, a consciously humble person can become a bigoted Pharisee. If we look at ourselves and think of our humility, we are growing towards self, and not towards Christ, Who emptied Himself. The one golden recipe for meekness of spirit is an intense preoccupation with Christ's person, beauties and excellences; and this leaves no time for occupation with self.

Many believers find a difficulty in pulling together with their fellow-believers. There are so many differences of opinion that they think about one another, and the Lord is forgotten. The remedy for this disunion is "*long-suffering.*" In the assembly we must bear and bear, as God bears with the sinner, and with us, His children. The long-suffering of the Lord is salvation, and He calls us to have that same spirit of patience with those who do not see eye to eye with us. Further, there is "*forbearing, or enduring, one another in love.*" Jewish believers were particular concerning meats offered to idols, while Gentile ones were taught that their idols were nothing at all, and could not affect food offered in sacrifice to them. Such differences called for forbearance. They were to endure one another's idiosyncrasies, and only love enables us to do this, and walk in unity.

This exhortation is the necessary prelude to keeping "*the unity of the Spirit.*" God's Holy Spirit has made out of Jewish and Gentile believers a new thing in this world. This unity is glorious in His eyes, and the

LONDON CONFERENCE

Spirit holds together the unity He has made. But we are to walk in accordance with it, taking this truth as a compass and guide in the perplexities of these times. God's assembly in this world has externally a despicable appearance in the world's eyes, because the world knows that believers should be together as one. Are they not split to shivers in the most reprehensible fashion? Is not Christendom and its divisions the scoff of Mohammedanism, Hinduism and the rest? But despite this confusion and conflict among the professors of Christ's name, there *is* the unity of the Spirit for us to keep, by the grace of God, "*in the bond of peace.*" God will make a national unity on the earth by and by. It failed in David's and in Nebuchadnezzar's day, but unity will prevail in the world when Christ reigns. He will in mighty power subdue all the nations and they will all come as one man to Jerusalem to render homage to the Prince of peace, Who has brought peace to the earth by the power of His sword. Now in this day of grace the unity is to be kept "*in the bond of peace.*" This unity is revealed in God's word. Looking around, we see divisions and sects, but in this scripture we find a great deal about unity, not only that of the Spirit, but other unities of God as well.

There is "*one body and one Spirit.*" "The wind bloweth where it listeth," and so the Holy Spirit in His sovereignty works in a poor sinner and puts him into the one body of Christ, where all the members are united with Christ in glory.

There is also "*one hope of your calling.*" If we look ahead, we see Christ in glory on His throne and by His side His bride, the church. The earthly hope of the Jews was the reign of the Lord Jesus here, but the church's hope is glory with Christ above. This hope of our calling is certain, and there are no divisions there. The church in glory is beautiful in its symmetry, perfect in the eyes of its Owner. And in order to walk

LONDON CONFERENCE

21

worthy of this calling, our eyes must ever rest upon this heavenly goal.

"*One Lord, one faith, one baptism*" brings us back to this earth, where the Lord is sovereign in His assembly. He has given us His mind and will in His word as the "one faith." Paul completed God's revelation, and in the scriptures we have "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Then there is "*one God and Father of us all.*" However diverse, He is the God and Father of every family in heaven and earth. In *vers.* 4-6 we have the one Spirit, the one Lord and the one Father in connection with the church, as also in 1 Cor. xii, 4-6. These holy unities are secured to the assembly in spite of the confusion that Satan has brought in.

God's children are apt to suppose that power to help in the church belongs to others rather than themselves, but "*unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*" This gift is not the grace of salvation given to sinners, but the grace given to saints, as Paul received grace and apostleship for service (Rom. i, 5). We are not in the body of Christ as inert, useless members, but as living parts of a life acting for the welfare of the whole. We cannot alter or escape our individual responsibility in the church. A wrong action not only hinders Christ's work in the individual, but affects the whole body: if one member suffer, all suffer. What disorganisation in the entire physical frame a diseased tooth can bring! So all in the assembly suffer because of those who are standing aloof from their duties as members. If, because of divisions in an assembly of (say) one hundred, ten have to act together without the ninety, they are obviously hampered and hindered. So we must not, in this day of ruin and confusion, say, "All hope is over; let things take their course." Each has a gift from Christ, and each must give to Him an account of his stewardship.

LONDON CONFERENCE

The gifts bestowed upon the assembly are bound up with the resurrection and glory of our Lord. The apostle quotes from Ps. lxxviii, 18, referring to Christ's exaltation when, as the Man Who had done God's will on earth, He went up into glory. There, as a Man, "*He received gifts for men,*" the gifts of Acts ii. The disciples spoke with tongues and all Jerusalem was electrified by the news coming from the apostles' lips. God had glorified His Son; as the Man Christ Jesus, He had received and poured out the Holy Spirit, so that the gifts were at work in Jerusalem that day.

Also, "*He led captivity captive,*" that is, Christ went up on high as the universal Conqueror. Everything that hitherto had held men captive had been subdued by Him: all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. There is nothing in this passage about releasing captives from Hades—the results of His victory are not yet for the world, but for the church. In the future He will bestow His gifts in the world and to Israel, but we have the benefits of His ascension now.

Moreover, Christ Who went to the lowest has now ascended to the highest place "*that He might fill all things.*" The church may be poor and afflicted and make a sad exhibition outwardly, but the Christ of God, the glorified Man, will fill the universe with His glory, and we are associated with Him there. The glory of His person flows down, like the anointing oil on Aaron's beautiful robe, to the earth where we are.

"*He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.*" Though the church may be taken on high at any moment, there is the fullest provision till Christ comes. Here He gives the men to the church: in 1 Cor. xii, He gives the gifts to the men for the church. If a man has a gift, he cannot use it without wisdom; so we have the Spirit to tell us how to use the gift for the

LONDON CONFERENCE

23

Lord's glory and the saints' blessing, and not for personal exaltation nor for spreading disaffection. But here the Lord selects the person to have the gift.

The apostles and prophets laid the foundation when the assembly began, and are not needed now we are nearing the topmost stone. But the evangelist still has to go into the world, to lay hold of men red-hot in sin and bring them into the church. The Lord alone can make an evangelist. You may teach a man elocution, but that is of no more use to an evangelist than a good bedside manner to a doctor who is unable to cure the patient. Paul felt the continual burden of souls upon his spirit, so that he cried, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel."

Pastors and teachers have a necessary service in the assembly, too. The shepherd of old had to protect his flock from evil beasts and all enemies, as well as to find food for them. So God has set those in His church who care for the souls of others. Pastors cannot be made by human means, though we are thankful for those who do their best. May the good Lord and Head multiply those who care for the sheep and lambs in their disasters and troubles, and who can advise them for their good. Their object is "*for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*"

The main object before all should be the faith which is preached and believed. We can never fulfil our function in the body of Christ unless our faith is complete, and we know it in its unity, Gospels, Acts, Epistles and all. None of us can say we have no more to learn, so these gifts are assured to the assembly in its entirety "*till we all come . . . unto a perfect man.*" "*The unity of the faith*" is for the understanding: but there is something for the heart, too—"the knowledge of the Son of God." We all desire to know more about Jesus, nothing but Himself will satisfy us, so the Holy

Spirit and the gifts remain in the assembly till we all come "*unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*"

Next, we are to "*speak (or rather hold) the truth in love.*" The world recognises the value of truthfulness, but we are to hold fast the truth in love, not with a sword like Peter. We are to hold it tenaciously, but to remember that what we understand is due to God's infinite patience in teaching us. We may be rebellious and refuse to believe a truth we see, and only the patience of our great Teacher overcomes our obstinacy. So we must have patience with those who have not reached the same measure of truth as we. Hold the truth firmly, but gently.

"*The whole body,*" because of the connection of all with the Head in glory, is "*fitly joined together*": that is, all the members are in their proper position. Some of us may think we are overlooked by our brethren; and then there are the difficulties because of the ruin and confusion: but none should despair, for amidst all the personal trials and ecclesiastical confusion, Christ the Head is in glory, and therefore the church, in His arrangement, is perfectly ordered and every member is placed beside the member it can help and bless best of all.

It is "*compacted,*" too. The Head harmonises the whole. The members must not only be in their place, but must carry out the functions that the Head wishes. Then it is that the body "*maketh increase . . . unto the edifying of itself,*" that is, the whole body grows and develops, as a child develops into a man with a corresponding growth of all his members. So the Lord has organised His assembly for the benefit and blessing of all His members.

This growth is to be "*in love.*" Love was at the beginning of this passage and comes in again and again throughout. Love can only come into operation

LONDON CONFERENCE

25

through being filled into all the fullness of God, as pointed out in iii, 17-19. There is the great ocean of love, enough to fill every heart individually and all the members of Christ's body, and to supply what we need in our homes, in our gatherings, or in our business. Our faith can lay hold upon those eternal resources: we shall never know its fullness; let us draw on it more and more, if we would lose our spiritual weakness and lack of progress. The law commanded the love of God and of our neighbour with threats and thunders, but Christ opens His heart of love to all His church. Let us ask Him to fill us, as empty vessels, with His love. Christ's love is like living water coming down from heaven, which will ascend again in active service to Himself and to all His saints.

Hymn 29.

TUESDAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.30 a.m.

Hymns sung: 3, 312, 74, 270: "Praise God," etc.

Open Meeting, 11 a.m.

Hymns: 318, 414.

A brother gave a short word of exhortation.

T.W.B. John i, 19-34.

We must not suppose that the priests and Levites were unaware of John's personality. His father was a much respected priest, for none but the most honoured priests were allowed to burn incense in the temple; also his birth had attracted so much attention that "all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea." The genealogies of the priests were kept in Jerusalem with meticulous care,

and John had a right to officiate in the temple and receive tithes, but faithfulness to the Lord had led him to renounce his claims and retire into the wilderness.

What, then, was the object of their questions? I think they wished to see if it were not possible for him to work together with them. Those sent were of the Pharisees, who professed to honour and keep the law, not of the Sadducees or Herodians, with whom he would have had nothing to do. When God uses a man in His service, the religious world seeks to profit by his gifts, and makes advances to him if he will only conform in some degree to their ways and respect their susceptibilities. Many dear servants of the Lord have, in this manner, been drawn away into wider paths.

We can thank the Lord for the grace given to John in refusing to speak about himself; for the question, "Who art thou?" is a dangerous one to put to a servant of the Lord. He wisely answers, "I am not the Christ." Now if their hearts had been right with God, they would at once have said, "You speak of the Christ, John, can you tell us anything about Him? We are longing for His coming." But it is remarkable that they were so callous to his repeated references to the promised One, of Whom John was so eloquent. "Art thou Elias?" If they had received him, John would have been the one that turned the hearts of the fathers to the children, but this was not accomplished and therefore he said, "I am not." "Art thou that prophet?" (see Acts iii, 22.) And he answered, "No." The enemy is very persistent; he wanted John to speak of himself and think of himself, and he pleaded the necessity of giving a definite answer to those who sent the messengers. "What sayest thou of thyself?" Now the Lord gives John the victory, he claims to be only a voice. What can you make of a voice? You hear it, and it re-echoes from the wood and is gone. But John gives his message, "Make straight the way

LONDON CONFERENCE

27

of the Lord ” ; that was what he was sent from God for.

Now instead of asking John about the One that was coming, and what they should do to welcome Him, they put a question which implied some blame of John : “ Why baptizest thou then, if thou art a person of so little importance ? ” But John has got upon his right theme and does not trouble to resent the tone of their question, but tells further of the Lord : “ There standeth One among you, Whom ye know not ; He it is, Who coming after me is preferred before me, Whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose.”

“ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him.” What a proof of God’s faithfulness to His servant, who had resisted the temptation to speak of himself and spoken of his coming Lord ! What honour for a man in this world to see the Son of God coming to him, and giving him the privilege of bearing testimony to the person of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world ! John had known the Lord Jesus as a man more worthy than himself, but he had not known Him as the Lamb of God and Son of God till God gave him the sign from heaven.

May we all be as successful as John in resisting every temptation to speak about ourselves, and in seizing every opportunity to testify of the glories of our soon-coming Lord and Saviour.

T.R. Psalm xlvi.

“ God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. . . . There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. . . . The Lord of hosts is with us ; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”

This psalm is, and has been, a resource for God’s people in days of trouble and anxiety. It is said that,

in the days of his sorrow and trial, Martin Luther often called upon his friend Melancthon and said, "Let us sing the 46th Psalm, Philip," and together those two champions of the truth sang this psalm. Doubtless this is the psalm that will be in the mouths of the Jewish remnant during the tribulation, but "the God of Jacob" is our refuge, too. Though Jacob was a crooked stick, yet in the end of his life he came to know what faith really was, and bowed to the will of God. In the midst of trouble and sorrow we can say, "Because God is our refuge, therefore will we not fear."

What is "the river" mentioned in *ver.* 4? There is no river at Jerusalem now, but prophecy shows there will be one. And that river flows out from us now, by the same grace which led God to allow Himself to be called the God of a crooked stick like Jacob, for the Lord said, "He that believeth on Me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," speaking of the Holy Spirit (John vii, 38, 39).

Although the Lord seems to take away from us those who are most needed, yet we must not despair. "There is a river"—the Holy Spirit is still here. May God give us to understand this, and make us so to walk in Him that we may, in our little sphere, remember that the one source of strength is in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who by the undiminished power of His Spirit is ministered to us.

Hymn 171.

T.E.R. John i, 29.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

In spite of the outward ruin of the church, the Lord

LONDON CONFERENCE

29

Jesus Christ is still the same. All the grace which came in His divine person is the same to every one of us. Many to-day want to know what they have to do. The world in all its sin is going on to destruction, but we can point on to a Man, the Man Christ Jesus, Who stood there before John the Baptist. And we shall not be wrong if we continue to tell people that He is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." We need not be afraid to preach Him, Who is our Saviour, Who has accomplished the work of redemption on Calvary's cross.

Not only does God reveal Him to John as "the Lamb of God," but the Father, recognising in Him a Man Who was here for His glory in this world, seals Him with the Holy Ghost. In the Old Testament we see something of what the Saviour was to Jehovah in those thirty years of His life—the meat offering mingled and anointed with oil.

Let us press on and persevere in the proclamation of the Person, the glory and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Lord will give us blessing. Irrespective of everybody and anybody, we can proclaim Jesus our Saviour as the Lamb of God and that He is the Son of God.

Hymn 150.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON. *Young People's Meeting*, 2.15 p.m.

Hymn 78.

Address by Mr. J. Weston. 1 Pet. ii, 2.

Each one of us that believes in Jesus has received everlasting life—the life of Christ. We become, therefore, partakers of the divine nature: so we have two natures within us. The new nature needs cultivating,

in order that we may grow. "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." We are not to remain babes, we are to grow. Some Christians remain spiritual babes all their lives, but the Lord's desire is that we should grow and bring forth much fruit.

This everlasting life needs nourishment, in order that it may develop. The Lord said, "I am the Bread of life," and, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." If we form the habit of regularly reading the word of God and meditating upon it, there will soon be spiritual growth. The more we read it, the more we shall want to read it.

First we receive the life; then the life *must* receive nourishment, that it may grow. It receives nourishment from the One Who said, "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life," and, "I am the Bread of life." The Lord grant that we may have appetites for His word, for feeding upon His word produces strong Christian men and women. God bless us all and help us to know what it is "as new-born babes" to "desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby."

Address by Dr. H. Wreford.

The good seed of eternal life is often manifested in its progress very early in life—even at as young an age as two or three. It brings happiness with it—the happy assurance of believing the Lord's words in John x, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."

But often a testing time comes in our lives, when we have to decide between Christ and what is contrary to Him. To the question, "Which is it to be?" may we always answer, "Christ for me!"

I do press it home upon you, young people—never

LONDON CONFERENCE

31

marry an unconverted person. Instead of your bringing them to Christ, they will be more likely to draw you away from Him. To come to Christ is to give up everything ; He must be first, or nothing. Christ will not have a second place ; He must be first. God grant He may be so in all our lives !

Bible Reading, 3.15 p.m.

Hymn 52. John i, 29-51.

The “ days ” mentioned in this passage are days of special testimony to Israel. The first day (*vers.* 29-34) is one in which John’s testimony is that God should be manifested to Israel in the person of His Son—the Lamb of God. The second (*vers.* 35-42) sets forth the present time as the period of testimony when saints are gathered to Jesus, as thus proclaimed : Israel, filled with pride, having rejected Christ because His love went out to the whole world. The third day (*vers.* 43-51) prefigures the time to come, when Israel, like Nathanael (a new spirit within them), will own Him as Son of God and their King.

The condition attached to Christ’s manifestation to Israel (*ver.* 28) was John’s baptism in Jordan of those who confessed their sins : but Israel as a nation would not submit to this.

Ver. 29 looks on to the new heavens and the new earth for its fulfilment, for only then will all trace of sin be removed. Sin, not being openly punished, prevents the display of God’s righteousness in the world ; the present danger is that man does not understand the terrible character of sin because God is long-suffering. The object of the Lord’s coming was to take away every form of sin, and also its effects in the world at large.

Ver. 36. This attitude of contemplating the Lamb

of God should characterise our walk through the wilderness ; and such a walk will have its reward.

Ver. 37. The proof that John's ministry was good is that his disciples left him to follow Jesus.

Ver. 38. The interpretation of the title of Rabbi as Master shows that John was writing particularly for the Gentiles. The disciples had not yet got so far as to call Him Lord. (See John xiii, 13.)

Ver. 42. Here Peter finds Jesus, but in Luke v, 8, he finds himself. Peter was converted when he first came to Jesus, but afterwards he learned of Christ's work. Jesus exhibits Himself as the true Prophet in giving Simon the new name of Cephas. Peter was one of the living stones of which he himself wrote afterwards (1 Pet. ii, 4, 5).

Ver. 44. Bethsaida was a doomed city (Matt. xi, 21) ; but Jesus went and brought Philip out of it.

Ver. 47. Cf. Ps. xxxii, 1, 2. The law was written in Nathanael's heart ; but it was as the result of his repentance that his transgression was forgiven and his sin covered. Cf. Ps. li, 6, 7.

Ver. 48. This is a millennial scene, for the fig-tree (figure of the chosen nation) had already developed leaves. Cf. Matt. xxiv, 32. The 144,000 in Rev. xiv, 1-5, the Jewish remnant who follow the Lamb, have been redeemed from among men, and in their mouth is found "no guile."

Hymn III.

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

Hymns : 406, 405. Eph. i, 15-23, ii, 1-10.

Much of the teaching in the religious world to-day with reference to what is here written is a complete reversal of God's order. The current number of a well-known religious weekly makes use of Eph. ii to

LONDON CONFERENCE

33

support a kind of Christian internationalism. The writer interprets "the middle wall of partition," not as the once divinely-ordained separation of God's earthly people, the Jews, from the surrounding nations, but as the international hatreds which divide the world to-day. He then proceeds to develop a "world-view," namely, that all men should be brothers, and that the nations (not the church) should be knit together. Modern Christendom seems convinced that the influence of Christian people can secure international unity and maintain a steady upward movement of humanity, until the kingdom of God is fully established. The real enemy of the cross of Christ is entirely ignored.

But what is God's revelation? God gave a man a perfect beginning in the garden of Eden, but all was spoiled through sin. The unrepentant race grew worse and worse until God had to visit the world with a flood. In the new world thereafter, sin wrought still, and invented idolatry. At this stage God separated a man, Abram, a family, a people, Israel, to witness for Himself, disciplined them in Egypt and the wilderness, and then planted them in Canaan under the most favourable circumstances (Is. v, 1-4). Nothing could have been done more favourable to the production of good in human nature, even according to the latest laws of human science, than the way God took. Yet when the clock struck the hour for the kingdom, they killed the King.

This is the central fact in human history, for the whole world was involved in it. And now, what of humanity? For the world, as such, the cross of Christ spells doom, for they crucified the Man of God's right hand. But if the culmination of human depravity is a cross for the God-sent King, God found His own glory in that very cross, and the foundation whereon all could be securely built which He had designed for good concerning this poor world. Him God raised out from

among the dead, Who bore the cross and thus fulfilled the will of God, and finished the work God gave Him to do. He is seated to-day on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The glory of the Father broke in upon the multitude of the world's dead and singled out One for resurrection. To have left Him there in all His peerless worth would have been (we say it reverently) a dishonour to God—and therefore impossible. To the scientist one dead body is the same as another. He has no evidence of resurrection as a "law," and he acknowledges no exceptions to "laws." The resurrection of Christ refutes the scientist and absolutely shatters all evolutionary schemes of world-betterment. Nevertheless, it demonstrates to the universe that God is perfecting His way in spite of the worst that man has done. For Him all is won, but by and in Christ alone.

As the Lord Jesus was raised from, or out of, the dead, so He has chosen us "out of the world" (John xv, 19) which rejected Him; and as the Father had sent Him to declare the Father, so Christ has sent us to declare Himself (John xx, 21), to a perishing world in all the present activity of His grace. That is why our blessedness lies "in the knowledge of Him" Whom the world has rejected; we are not to suppose that we can reform the world. If my Lord had no greater success than to be crucified, my "success" will be on parallel lines, if I am faithful. We are to take up our cross and follow Him.

There are several verses in Eph. i which show how far astray from the mind of God is any intermingling of world politics with the doctrine of the church. The terms used are not political or official, but family terms. All is founded on personal relationship with the Lord. Not only are we accepted because He is accepted, but in the same intimacy and nearness; we are taken into favour with God in the Beloved (*ver.* 6). Then as a

LONDON CONFERENCE

35

consequence of our sonship (*ver.* 11), we are heirs. The inheritance is, of course, all one and the same. It is said to be ours (*ver.* 14); it is also God's (*ver.* 18), Who will take possession of it in His own time in (by means of) us; also we have it "in Christ," Whose it is by His sacrifice of Himself (*ver.* 11). With such an inheritance before us, as "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ," should we not be guilty of spiritual adultery if we let our hearts wander after schemes of men, which exclude the living, risen Son of God and are formed to gain the applause of the scientific world?

The power spoken of in *ver.* 19 is *toward us*, but it is the power "which He wrought in Christ in raising Him *from among* the dead." That power has wrought also in us, so that we might be completely identified with Him in all the effects of that power in His case, even to being "made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." We no longer belong to the old creation, any more than He (ii, 10). We have been made to live in Christ's risen life; already our place is in Him in heaven. Far from the church being mixed up with the nations, God has visited the nations to take *out of them* a people for His name (Acts xv, 14). When the kingdom of God is established, the bride, the Lamb's wife, is a holy city apart; the nations shall walk by its light (Rev. xxi, 24); it is still a city apart, even in the eternal state, when nations no longer divide mankind. This shows the error of any confusion of the church with the displayed kingdom of God that is to be in the world.

Finally, as to *vers.* 22, 23, though the marriage relation also symbolises the union between Christ and the church which is here spoken of, all the figures derived from human relationships are imperfect and are all surpassed in describing "His body" as "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." It is His love

which has brought about the stupendous fact therein revealed.

With these terms of holy intimacy—words of truth—in mind, what shall we say of our personal loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ? Shall it break down? Shall we seek to expand or to modernise? Let us rather take heart from this precious word of God. Let it fill us, and make us glad and rejoicing—to be sons of God, accepted in the Beloved, and called to share with Him as His bride when He takes possession of all in His Father's name. In the world He refused earth's kingdoms, for it was Satan who offered them on the condition, "If Thou wilt fall down and worship me." The religious world is bowing down to the enemy; shall we? We will bow down only to our Lord—Him alone will we worship. We will forget our father's house and worldly interests and life itself, will we not?—and take up our cross daily and follow Him.

Hymns : 344, 368, "The Christian's Good Night."