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ONE GOD, ONE LORD, ONE SPIRIT

The articles in this issue, except the last, were first published in these columns serially in 1912. Subsequently they were published in book form under the title, "The Christian's Comforter." This book is now out of print. The subject being one of the most majestic—not to say vital—of all that can engage the attention of the people of God, and enquiries for the book being frequent, it has seemed desirable to republish the series. The final article in this issue, which gives the title to the whole, was first published in the N.C.A. for May, 1933. May Divine Grace attend and Divine Power speed the spreading abroad of these sacred truths!

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY for the very existence of God's people as such, both individually and in congregations, the Holy Spirit is one of the least well known of all the gifts which God has graciously given His people through Jesus Christ, our blessed Redeemer and Mediator. And whereas in the Word of God we are told the most wonderful and beautiful facts about the Holy Spirit, many fantastic impossibilities are ascribed to the Holy Spirit by such as are not careful to compare their imaginings with the sober realities of the Word of Truth.

That the Holy Spirit should be sent to God's people, to abide with them, had been foretold by prophets of old and promised by our Saviour. Joel had said, indicating a time future from his day*—

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.—Joel 2: 28, 29.

Only a short while before His crucifixion the Saviour said to the disciples (John 14: 16, 17, 26)---

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth: . . .

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, . . .

15: 26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

*Joel prophesied about 800 B.C.

The fulfilment of Joel's prophecy and of our Lord's promise began on the Day of Pentecost following our Lord's ascension, and the great event that there took place was so alluded to by the Apostle Peter, who was himself one of the recipients of the heavenly blessing. He said—

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;—Acts 2: 16.

Then he quoted the prophecy above referred to, following it with a discourse on the death and resurrection of Jesus, announcing that "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Near the end of this discourse, Peter, referring evidently to the precious promise of the Master given but a few weeks before, said—

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.—Acts 2: 33.

We have therefore to distinguish between the Holy Spirit of God and the manifestations or operations of His Spirit. That which descended upon all the waiting disciples was the power of God through Christ, and its operations were various, as described in the book of the Acts and in the apostolic Epistles. Since Pentecost the Spirit has been given to every one who becomes a sincere believer in Jesus, as Paul wrote to the Ephesians (1: 13)—
". . . in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise;" though not all received the same "gifts."—1 Corinthians 12: 4-14; Romans 12: 3-8.

The Holy Spirit's presence with the Church being evidently of such vast importance, it is most certain that it behooves us to acquire all the information available concerning the Spirit and the Spirit's work. And while these studies are not undertaken with the expectation that in them all will be presented that would be profitable to consider, it is hoped that the way to acquisition of additional knowledge may at least be so opened up and pointed out that the further pursuit of the study will have been somewhat facilitated for all searchers

of the Scriptures. The examination will begin by an inquiry into the various operations of God's Holy Spirit as described in the Old Testament.

The Holy Spirit as Divine Creative Power

In the very first pages of the Bible, the Holy Spirit is mentioned (Genesis 1: 1, 2)—

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved [*literally*, was brooding] upon the face of the waters.

Here the Spirit of God was manifested in His creative power or energy, directed by Him to the bringing of order out of the chaos which prevailed while the earth was without form, and void. Light was brought in; an expanse, to separate the waters above from the waters beneath, was formed; the dry land was caused to appear when the waters beneath the expanse or firmament were gathered into seas; vegetation was brought forth from the earth; the heavenly bodies began their rule over the day and the night; the waters brought forth fish and fowl, each with power to reproduce its kind; the earth brought forth creeping things and four-footed beasts and cattle, also with reproductive powers. And, last of all, the human pair was created in the divine likeness and of substances furnished by the earth, to rule over all these wonderful creatures, and also to fill the earth with their own progeny. All this was done by the power of the Divine Spirit as the creative energy of the Almighty, this statement being made without prejudice to the fact that the Son of God was intimately associated with the work (John 1: 1-3); and there were present heavenly angels who rejoiced in His work. (Job 38: 4-7.) The Holy Spirit is thus seen to have been associated with the very beginning of this earth and its affairs.

The Holy Spirit as Contending Power

And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.—Genesis 6: 3.

When God by the Holy Spirit, manifest as creative energy or power, created man, He created him in His own likeness. (Genesis 1: 26.) It is evident that the likeness spoken of was not that of bodily substance, because God is a Spirit, whereas man is flesh, and these two are separate and distinct from each other. There are natural, or fleshly, bodies, and there are spiritual bodies, but the two are not the same. (John 4: 24; 3: 6; 1 Corinthians 15: 40, 44.) The point in which man—though a little lower than the angels (Psalm 8: 4-8)—was made in the likeness of God was, we apprehend, that his mental and moral faculties resembled those of his Creator. He had a mind similar to God's mind, able to appreciate the things which God approved, and to abhor the things which God condemned. This being so, it is not difficult to understand that the perfect obedience required by God from the man in the garden of Eden was a condition in which the man was

able to acquiesce as just and reasonable, and against which he would feel no resentment.

But the test came, the man fell from his estate of obedience into a condition of disobedience, and immediately the likeness to his Creator was less distinct than it had been. It was as though the keen edge of a blade had become dulled, and a small nick made in it by striking it against a substance it was not intended to cut. Man being dismissed the Garden, the effect of disobedience became more noticeable in succeeding generations; the edge quite lost its keenness, while the nicks multiplied and became larger, and many of them had ragged edges, so that the general state of the blade was altogether disgraceful.

About one hundred and twenty years before the flood was brought upon the earth, God looked down and saw how far astray man had gone by that time, and He said, "My spirit shall not always strive [or contend] with man, for that he also is flesh."

God's attitude toward men in respect of sin is indicated by the fact that when sin entered God did not give men over to unrestrained evil doing. Having made man in His own image, God's desire was, notwithstanding the fall, to see that image retained in the mind and conduct of men; and to that end God ruled over men and punished them for their sins, as demonstrated in His dealings with Cain and Lamech. (Genesis 4: 9-16, 23, 24.) Some few walked with God, Enoch and Noah being named, and possibly the second Lamech (Genesis 5: 21-24, 29), but the vast majority became so sunk in iniquity that God would no longer contend for His rightful position as Ruler, yet gave them another 120 years before He destroyed that evil world or order of things in the flood. Meantime Noah and his people who had found favour in His sight had built the ark by divine direction. These were favourable to the Divine rule, so with them God started the new dispensation after the flood. God's Holy Spirit was a Spirit of Righteousness, and He was grieved to see the earth corrupted and filled with violence. (Genesis 6: 6, 7, 13.) Noah was preserved because he was righteous, and would, after the flood, be the beginning of a righteous order of things in which the true God would be worshipped. Noah was not sinless, but God counted his faith for righteousness. (Genesis 7: 1, 5; 8: 18-22; 9: 11; 2 Peter 2: 5; Hebrews 11: 6, 7.) God's punishment of sin, by the destruction of the "world that then was," has served since as a warning to all who know the history of those times. (2 Peter 3: 5-12.) And God's Holy Spirit through the apostle Peter tells of a new heavens and a new earth* (a new order of things yet to come), in which will dwell righteousness (verse 13); a Kingdom in which God will instruct

*For further references to the three "heavens" and three "earths" mentioned in 2 Peter 3, and explanation as to what they stand for, please see "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind," chapter 2; also "The New Era."

and extend mercy to many who in the present life have followed their own evil ways.

The Holy Spirit Conferring Wisdom in Arts and Crafts

(1) And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, (2) See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: (3) And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, (4) To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, (5) And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.—Exodus 31: 1-5; also vs. 6-11; 35: 30-35; 28: 3.

When the Israelites left Egypt, they had among them no skilled artists or craftsmen. Having been the slaves of Pharaoh, they had no opportunity to learn anything better than rough labour. Therefore, when the tabernacle had to be erected and its furnishings prepared, the children of Israel had among them none who had been trained for such work. But God, the great Artist and Craftsman of the Universe, the Designer and Creator of all things, including man with his wonderful body, and his mind in the likeness of that of his Creator, had the necessary wisdom and skill, and He had also the ability to transfer some of it to Bezaleel without requiring him to serve a long apprenticeship at the trades. The need being present, God met it by filling Bezaleel with His Holy Spirit—a Spirit of power, with wisdom, understanding and knowledge, to devise and execute all manner of cunning works. This manifestation of the Holy Spirit was very similar to the divine creative power manifested at the beginning.—Genesis 1: 2.

The Holy Spirit Giving Power to Prophecy and Wisdom for Judgment

And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; . . . and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. . . . And the Lord . . . took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. . . . would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.—Numbers 11: 16, 17, 25-29.

Moses was perhaps the one exception to the generally degraded condition of the children of Israel, for he had been educated as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, and we are told that he "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." (Acts 7: 22.) Yet it was not by this wisdom that he was enabled to lead the Israelites and judge them, but by the Holy Spirit which God put upon him. According to the account in Numbers 11, it was the Spirit of God, granted to Moses to empower him for his great task, which was given also to the seventy elders that Moses presented before the Lord. The seventy were not learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians as Moses had been; but that fact was no obstacle

to God when the time came for them to be used as assistants to Moses in the work of bearing the burden of the people. The Spirit was placed upon them, and forthwith they were able to prophesy, and were given wisdom to act as judges over the people, to relieve Moses of much of that labour. Not by worldly education, nor by ignorance, but notwithstanding worldly wisdom and in spite of ignorance, were Moses and the seventy elders enabled by the Holy Spirit put upon them to bear the great burden of the murmuring multitude.

The Holy Spirit Imparting Muscular Strength

13: 24 And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him.

25 And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorak and Eshtaol. . . .

14: 5 Then went Samson . . . and came to . . . Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him.

6 And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: . . . —Judges 13: 24, 25; 14: 5, 6. See also vs. 19; 15: 14.

It is not stated that Moses and the seventy were made more muscular than they had been before the Holy Spirit was put upon them to give them wisdom; and it is readily seen that Samson, although the Holy Spirit moved him to feats of immense strength, was not by that Spirit made very wise.

This indicates that the Lord has bestowed His Spirit at times for specific and definitely limited purposes. The Spirit put upon Moses and his seventy assistants could have made them strong as well as wise; but it was not so done because the intention at the time was to bestow only wisdom. The same Holy Spirit could have made Samson wise as well as strong; but the Lord did not interfere with the manifestations of Samson's folly, nor deliver him from the evil consequences of it.

The fact that the Spirit of the Lord moved and strengthened Samson at times to kill men—as when he slew thirty men of Ashkelon in order to get their apparel, when he slew a thousand with the jawbone of an ass, and, finally, when he slew several thousands of the nobility of the Philistines by pulling down the pillars (Judges 16: 23-30)—has been a difficulty to many minds, and the question has been asked, Why did not the Holy Spirit move Samson to work for the conversion and salvation of the Philistines, instead of strengthening him to kill them? The answer to this reasonable query is in the fact that God has not forgotten these heathen, but has appointed another time in which He will deal with them to enlighten them and give them the opportunity for salvation which they did not have in the past. God's then dealings with the "evil neighbours" of His people were on different lines and for other purposes; not prejudicial, however, to His purpose to make the way of salvation known to them in due course. What He proposes to do for those "evil neighbours" when He raises them from death is foretold in Jeremiah 12: 14-17, which all should read carefully.

The Holy Spirit Moving Saul and His Messengers to Prophecy

20 And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

23 . . . and the Spirit of God was upon him [Saul] also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. . . . Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?—1 Samuel 19: 20-24.

If the biceps of Samson could be controlled by the Holy Spirit and their strength magnified; if extraordinary wisdom could by the same Spirit be conferred upon Moses and his seventy assistants, we now see that the vocal organs of Saul and his three bands of messengers could be used, even against their wills, by the Holy Spirit; so that those who set out to capture David were made to prophesy, and were thus prevented from fulfilling their and Saul's evil desire.

This need not seem surprising. Do not the Scriptures say that the Spirit of God was exercised in creative energy to make the first man? If so, it might only be expected that the Spirit could—and would on occasion—still exert a power over men's bodily organs, as in the case of Saul.

The prophetic utterances of Saul and his messengers are not recorded, hence we may gather that they did not specially concern us. Excepting the prophecy of Caiaphas, the wicked high priest (John 11: 47-53), the prophecies for the instruction of God's people were not (as far as we can recall) given through evil and unwilling prophets, but by means of men who were devoted to God, and were seeking faithfully to do His will. The New Testament will tell us more about these.

A Lying Spirit from the Lord

Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.—1 Kings 22: 23; 2 Chronicles 18: 1-22; see also Ezekiel 14: 6-11.

In the Jewish age, if a sincere Jew made inquiry of the Lord in the appointed way about any matter concerning his welfare, he was given a true answer covering every thing he needed to know for his own benefit. (Exodus 18: 15, 16; Leviticus 24: 12, 13; Numbers 27: 1-5; Psalm 27: 4.) But if any one had become idolatrous and worshipped other so-called gods besides Jehovah, the only true God, and then came through his false priests or prophets to inquire of Jehovah, God would not answer them. If the false prophets claimed to be prophets of the Lord, the Lord would not guide their thoughts or words by His Holy Spirit. On the contrary, He would allow them to prophesy according to the spirit of their vain imaginations and desires, and so both prophet and enquirer would be entangled in the net of their own self-deception; and evil would befall them in accordance with the prophesyings of His own inspired prophets, because He would desire the downfall of the idolater or wicked person.

The general principle governing such cases in Old Testament times is stated in Ezekiel 14: 6-11, and a case in point is that of Ahab, like whom there was none that sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of God (1 Kings 21: 25, 26), whose experience in being deceived by false prophets is described in 1 Kings 22.

Micaiah, God's prophet, was given a symbolic dream in which the lying spirit was shown, and this lying spirit must not be misunderstood as an agent of the holy God, but as representative of the false prophets—such as the 400 mentioned in 1 Kings 22: 6—ever ready to lead Israel astray, with whose wrong determination God did not always interfere, but often led them to disaster.

Nevertheless, even if a prophet in Old Testament times gave a sign or wonder, and it came to pass as he had predicted, the people were to have sufficient knowledge and stability of character to refrain from following that prophet if he incited them to go after other gods. They should *know* that there is no other god than the One Who led them out of Egypt, and should take the experience as a test permitted by the Lord their God to try and prove them. As for the wicked prophet who thus incited them, he was to be put to death.—Deuteronomy 13: 1-8.

The Holy Spirit Moving Holy Men of God to Prophecy

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.—2 Peter 1: 21.

It is not claimed that the holy men who were moved by the Holy Spirit were perfect men. In fact, the Scripture frankly points to some of the manifestations of their imperfections, and thus assists us to see what we should avoid. But these sometime exhibited wrongdoings were not the rule and practice of the lives of the prophets. Their rule of conduct was to do God's will, their sincerity therein being demonstrated by their faithful endurance of much persecution and tribulation for righteousness' sake.

The authority of Scripture therefore rests not upon these imperfect men, nor even upon their evident sincerity of heart, but upon the fact that the Holy Spirit "moved" them to speak or write, so that the Bible is not the word of man but the Word of God, and therefore "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The Holy Scriptures are "able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—2 Timothy 3: 15-17; 1 Timothy 4: 16.

As a test of its divinity, Scripture itself proposes something that is bound to be accepted as conclusive; namely, the ability to predict or foretell events (Isaiah 41: 21-26)—

Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods. . . . Verse 23.

The Saviour proposed the same test of His claim to acceptance as the Messiah—

Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.—John 13: 19.

It is extremely difficult among imperfect men to secure from eye witnesses of an event two versions that will exactly agree. If, then, it be so difficult for men to agree as to matters of fact in the past, it is certain that the ability to predict future events is quite out of their range. Any one who can foretell events hundreds and thousands of years before the time, and can also indicate when these events are to occur, is manifestly in the enjoyment of superhuman power. The gods of the heathen could not give this power to their priests and devotees; certainly not, since the gods themselves were created by the devotees, and it was a toss-up as to which end of the log should warm the man and roast his meat, and which—if there happened to be any residue—should become the idol for him to worship. (Isaiah 44: 14-20.) Neither were the evil spirits reliable who were behind all false worship.—1 Corinthians 10: 19-21.

But the God of heaven, Who by His Holy Spirit created man, could also by the same Holy Spirit move the prophets to say and to write things that were beyond their natural ability to know and understand, and He has done this from time to time as His purposes required, this inspiration of the Holy Spirit applying not only to the Old Testament human agencies, but also to those of the New Testament.—1 Corinthians 7: 40.

If it be inquired, How did the Holy Spirit move the prophets of God? the answer is found by noting the various ways in which the will of God has been communicated through the holy men—(1) By direct word, as from God to Moses in the giving of the Law; (2) by dreams which they would relate to the people; (3) by granting visions of extraordinary and unnatural creatures, such as Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and John on Patmos described; (4) by direct action upon the mental and vocal organs of the one who was for the time being used as the agent of communication, causing him to say things that he did not understand, and perhaps (as in the case of wicked Caiaphas already mentioned) did not sympathize with.—Exodus 19: 24; 20: 22; 21: 1; Isaiah 7: 3, 4; 6: 1-13; Genesis 37: 5; 2 Corinthians 12: 1-4; Acts 2: 14-36.

The Holy Spirit Anointing our Lord Jesus Christ

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.—Acts 10: 38.

The time was come when the Law of Moses must be superseded by the grace and truth of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 1: 17.) Moses by inspiration of the Holy Spirit had foretold the raising up of the Great Prophet, who was to be obeyed in all things by the people. (Deuteronomy 18: 15-19.) But the Law Covenant had endured for so long, and the New Covenant was to be so diffe-

rent from it in such a number of particulars, and, moreover, the Jews had so hardened their hearts, that the acceptance of Messiah, and His better sacrifice and better covenant based upon better promises, must be a matter of no little difficulty to that people. And the same difficulty would be more or less a hindrance when Christ would be preached by the apostles and earliest believers (who were Jews) among the Gentiles, who were somewhat acquainted with Jewish history and with the Old Testament writings.

It was obligatory under the law to anoint the High Priest, and later on the Kings also, with a specially prepared oil used for no other purpose; its first use having been to anoint the tabernacle and its furnishings, as well as Aaron the high priest and his sons. (Exodus 30: 22-33.) At God's command Samuel anointed Saul to be king over Israel. (1 Samuel 9: 16; 10: 1.) The coming of Jesus Christ as God's Anointed to be King over Israel was foretold by the prophets, also His anointing as High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. It was necessary, therefore, that Jesus should be anointed in fulfilment of the prophecies and as a credential in the eyes of the people who were looking for Him. This anointing was done, not with the oil kept at the temple, but with that which the oil typified. He was anointed with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven at the time of His baptism by John.

By the Holy Spirit made visible to John in the form of a dove, John was enabled to recognize Jesus as the Son of God and the promised Messiah. Messiah means Anointed, also the Greek-derived word Christ. Jesus the Christ means Jesus the Anointed. Following this manifestation of the Spirit, a Voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.—Matthew 3: 13-17; John 1: 29-34.

Therefore, beginning with the earthly ministry of the Saviour, we find the operations of the Holy Spirit extraordinary both as to number and variety. The miraculous works which the Father thus did through the Son were offered by the Lord to the people as His credentials to support His claim that He had come from God: "believe me for the very works' sake," was His pathetic appeal. (John 14: 11.) And their rejection of Him notwithstanding the mighty works was one of the sins He denounced against them—"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." (John 15: 24.) Yet some understood, and believed, and confessed—"Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." (John 3: 2.) The Holy Spirit in miracle-working power was conferred by our Lord during His ministry upon the apostles (Matthew 10: 1-20), and upon seventy other believers. (Luke 10: 1-16.) But after His ascension, when He had obtained the promise from the Father, the Holy Spirit in miracle-working power was poured out on the day of Pentecost upon all the waiting believers,

and from that time it was the privilege of every believer to receive such a testimonial from heaven.

The Holy Spirit Moving the Members of the Early Church

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.—1 Corinthians 12: 4-11.

As the power to work miracles was one of our Lord's heavenly credentials, so was the same power a heavenly testimony on behalf of the early Church, that they were right in accepting Jesus as their Mediator instead of Moses, and the New Covenant instead of the Law Covenant, and that their preaching of His resurrection and exaltation was the Truth—"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will" (Hebrews 2: 4). It is to be noted, however, that aside from the general out-pouring on the day of Pentecost upon the Jewish believers (Acts 2) and a similar demonstration on the occasion of the Gospel being first preached to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10), the Holy Spirit as a miracle-working power was not conferred upon believers except by the laying on of the hands of an Apostle of the Lamb. (Acts 8: 14-17; 19: 1-7.) This served to distinguish the apostles in their high position, and also to show that the presence of these gifts in the Church was to be only temporary, the power to bestow them passing away with the last of the apostles, and the gifts themselves "failing," "vanishing," and "ceasing" from the Church at the

decease of the last believer who had had apostolic hands laid upon him.—1 Corinthians 13: 8.

"A More Excellent Way"

Of our Lord it is written that "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 3: 34.) Of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit so far mentioned in others, most were mechanical. Excellent and desirable as these manifestations of divine power were, the human agents through which the power operated were not necessarily better or worse in character for the experience. Aside from these, there are other manifestations of the Spirit in the character and lives of His disciples. After enumerating various gifts, the Apostle said—

But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.—1 Corinthians 12: 31 to 13: 2.

Love is the "more excellent way" of manifesting the possession of the power of the Holy Spirit operating in us. And this is not something aside from the Holy Spirit, but another manifestation of it, a manifestation of the same disposition as is possessed by and manifested in God and His dear Son. The "more excellent way," then, is that God's people should have the Holy Spirit in them developing a character and disposition of love, and producing the blessed fruit of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance [self-control]," against which there is no law. (Galatians 5: 22, 23.) "A good moral character," says some one. No: this is far above a good moral character, which does no more than pay its debts and abstain from injuring any one. A good moral character may be demonstrated by a heathen unbeliever, but he will not gain everlasting life for that. Moreover, the Christian virtues have to be *added to faith* (2 Peter 1: 5-15), so the unbeliever is quite on the outside, however good his morality may be.

The Holy Spirit as Comforter and Guide

BEING intimately associated with our subject, the teaching of Scripture concerning the exceedingly important part that the Holy Spirit bears in the operations of God's providential over-rulings on behalf of His people requires consideration. In this capacity, the Spirit is symbolized by "seven eyes." The "Lamb as it had been slain" has "seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth;" the Lamb has also "seven horns," symbolizing probably the fact that the risen Lord has all power in heaven and in earth, and that He is therefore authorized to send the "eyes" into all the earth to behold the state of

God's people and to watch over their welfare.—Revelation 5: 6; Zechariah 4: 10; Matthew 28: 18.

The Holy Spirit as the "Eyes" of Divine Providence

In the midst of the throne which John saw in his vision, and round about the throne, were four "beasts" (literally, "living creatures"). These were full of "eyes" before and behind, illustrating the fact that nothing escapes the observation of the providential oversight of God's Spirit. The "living creatures" represent the providence of God in action—mighty as a "lion," patient as an "ox," intelli-

gent as a "man," and with the swiftness and certainty of direction of a "flying eagle." (Revelation 4: 6-8.) It is not only the province of God's providence to glorify Him, but also to observe with the "eyes" (the Holy Spirit) the condition of His people and, when necessary, to act on their behalf. Such action took place when to the "woman" (church) were given "two wings of the* great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time [fulfilled as 1260 calendar years], from the face of the serpent."—Revelation 12: 14.

But the "eyes" see more than the needs of God's people collectively. They also observe His people individually, and every item of their welfare is looked after by God's providence, so that the Saviour could say—"the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matthew 10: 30.) How delightful it is to be assured that the risen Lord sends the "eyes" to watch over us and the "living creatures" to do for us, so that all things must "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8: 28.) How conducive to repose to realize that we may cast all our anxiety upon God, for He careth for us. (1 Peter 5: 7.) And how glad we should be to realize the part taken by the Holy Spirit in all these operations of divine providence.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place,

Beholding the evil and the good.—Proverbs 15: 3.

Nevertheless, this is not all of the Holy Spirit's work in ministering to God's people.

The Holy Spirit as Comforter

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost [or, Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.—John 14: 16, 17, 26.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:—John 15: 26.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.—John 16: 7.

These are all the places in which the Holy Spirit is entitled the "Comforter." The Greek word *parakletos*, translated "Comforter" in the above passages, occurs only one other time in the New Testament. The best rendering for *parakletos* has been a good deal of a question among the translators, and the word has been variously rendered: "Comforter," "Advocate," "Helper," "Teacher," the

greatest number favouring "Advocate" as the best expression of the original thought. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance defines *parakletos* as "an intercessor, consoler."

The Comforter was to be sent by the Father in answer to the petition of the Son; which is the same as saying the Son would send the Holy Spirit from the Father. (John 14: 16; 15: 26.) The Comforter could not come unless the Lord departed; therefore it was expedient that He go away; but, having come, the Comforter would abide with God's people for ever. (John 16: 7; 14: 16.) One naturally wonders why the Holy Spirit could not be sent unless Jesus went away. The answer to this question is that, in God's order, redemption must first be accomplished by Christ's death on Calvary, the Redeemer must be raised from death, and must ascend to the Father's throne, before the Spirit could be sent upon the believers.

Two Advocates for the Saints

If the definitions of *parakletos* as given in Strong's Concordance be adopted, it is not difficult to realize how the Spirit acts as both "intercessor" for, and, "consoler" of, God's people in this age. We read (Romans 8: 26, 27)—

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because [margin, that] he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

The very fact that God's Spirit is in the believer, who has come to Him through Jesus Christ, the only Mediator (John 14: 6; 1 Timothy 2: 5; Hebrews 8: 6), constitutes an intercession or a plea with God on behalf of the believer when overtaken in a fault. This was an unfortunate slip of the tongue or manifestation of fleshly weakness and sinfulness; it was not what he would have done had he had a new body as well as the new, indwelling Spirit. Therefore let the Lord be gracious, and let Him not hold this against the erring one, who regrets his error, and will endeavour to avoid doing so again. Being rightly exercised by this experience, he will be more watchful and prayerful, and will be stronger to resist the next time he is tempted. Let not the "new creature" be destroyed on account of the fault of the "old man." The Lord heeds this unspoken groan of the Holy Spirit in the believer, and gives it His favourable consideration, for this intercession is "according to the will of God." And the fact that the presence of the Holy Spirit in the child of God is an unspoken intercession on his behalf gives him great consolation, and so the Holy Spirit, the *parakletos*, is both Intercessor for, and Comforter of, the saint.

But if any saint sin—as all do—and will confess the sin, as John instructs us to do (1 John 1: 6-10), "we have an Advocate [*parakletos*] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2: 1, 2.) His advocacy of our cause is effectual because

*The Greek has the definite article here, so that the correct reading is, as given, "THE great eagle," referring, we believe, to the "living creature" so described in Revelation 4: 7.

He has shed His blood for us as the sufficient offering for our sins. He is "the propitiation for our sins," but this gives no licence to continue sinning. His blood, accepted by us as the true atonement for sin, is able to cleanse us from all sin. (1 John 1: 7.) And so, "If we confess our sins, he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John 1: 9.

Thus we have two Advocates, Jesus with the Father, and the Holy Spirit within us; one Advocate in heaven, the other on earth. We need both. Each works into the hands of the other, so to speak. Of what avail would the intercession of Christ's blood be if God saw no prospect of ultimate reform in the transgressor by the "new creature" overcoming the "old man?" None whatever. Or how could we benefit by the intercession of the Holy Spirit, had there been no sacrifice of Christ on Calvary to make propitiation for our sins? Obviously we could not benefit at all in that case. It is very clear that the two Advocates who intercede for the saints, who have in the first place been reconciled to God by the one Mediator, Jesus Christ, are not too many, but are both required according to the will of God. Would it be with this thought of two Advocates for God's people that the Saviour said to the disciples (John 14: 15, 16)—

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you ANOTHER Comforter [*parakletos*—"Advocate"], that he may abide with you forever.

What a consolation to realize how thoroughly God has provided for our every necessity in order that we might be acceptable with Him!

The Holy Spirit as Guide

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.—John 16: 13-15.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, . . . shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.—John 14: 26.

It may come as a surprise to readers who have not previously observed it, to learn that in the above passages the words "Spirit" and "Ghost" are from the same Greek word, *pneuma*. When the Authorized Version was published (in the year 1611), the office of a minister of religion was described as "ghostly," in the sense of "spiritual." Among the superstitions of the time fostered particularly by the Church of Rome was the belief in "ghosts" as "disembodied spirits" of deceased human beings, and the fear of "ghosts" was inculcated, the better to hold the people in subjection. Just why in John 14: 17 the Translators rendered *pneuma* by "Spirit" and a few verses further on (vs. 26) by the word "Ghost" can only be surmised. Scrutinizing these scriptures carefully, no

reason for the distinction can be seen. The word "Spirit" should always be used, and "Ghost" never. This can be clearly seen by comparing John 14: 26 with John 16: 7, 13; the former describes the Comforter as sent to "teach you all things," while the latter says the Comforter "will guide you into all truth." In both texts the Revised Version has "Holy Spirit." To be consistent the Revisers should have followed the same practise of rendering *pneuma* by "Spirit" wherever it refers to the Holy Spirit, but they have not done so. In Acts 2: 33 and 38 they revert to "Ghost," as also in Acts 10: 45 and other passages. It is to be regretted that the Revisers missed so fine an opportunity to make clear to the reader that "Ghost" is misleading and "Spirit" is correct.

Misleading "Guidance"

Crude ideas as to the guidance of the Holy Spirit have gained acceptance in the minds of some Christians. It has been claimed, for instance, that the Holy Spirit's presence in the believer may be realized as it were a burning flame (fortunately not painful to or destructive of the person); or as a moving power causing the body to shake and tremble and thrill; or as a speaking voice; or as an inner illuminant. And it is further claimed that these demonstrations—alleged to be done by the indwelling Holy Spirit—are particularly appropriate and peculiar to these last days of the Gospel age.

That the persons making these claims are mistaken is evident. The Holy Spirit is described in 2 Timothy 1: 7 as "of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." Anything out of harmony with this is not the Holy Spirit, whatever else it may be. Spiritualism claims to be an instrument of good, whereby unseen powers take possession of a medium and deliver messages claiming to emanate from dead persons. But this is only a modern form of the ancient spirit-possession which the Old Testament denounced and which our Lord condemned by casting out the evil spirits responsible for the condition.

Another body of people claiming to be moved by the Holy Spirit in a mechanical manner has existed from the days of George Fox (1624-1691), a religious reformer in England, who founded the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers. Their idea carried out in their assemblies is that the Holy Spirit is an "inner light," and that no one shall speak until a power "moves" him or her to speak; and what is said is taken as inspired. This method, however, finds no sanction in the Word of God. Later still, in America, Ann Lee founded the sect known as the "Shakers." As the name indicates, shaking and trembling are taken as evidence of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Joan of Arc, canonized as a "saint" by the Papacy in 1894, was burned at the stake as a witch at the age of 19, in the year 1431, by the same "never changing" Papacy, because she heard "voices" within her under the inspiration of which she acted. At all times Satan and the fallen angels have been on the watch

to lay hold of high-strung, nervous persons, misleading them into supposing that they were being honoured by having the Holy Spirit thus acting in and through them. Such phenomena, though they occur now-a-days, are not peculiar to these times, inasmuch as they have been more or less frequent throughout the entire age.

Neither are the phenomena of these days to be regarded as of the same order as the "gifts" of prophecy, tongues, etc., that were granted to the church in apostolic days. There is at least one striking difference (really there are more) between the "gifts of the Spirit" and the phenomena of to-day which demonstrates the vast difference between the two, and shows that they cannot be identical. The difference is this: In apostolic days the spirit of the prophet was subject to the prophet, the miraculous "gift" was under the control of the one who had it (1 Corinthians 14: 32); whereas in these days the recipient is under control of the so-called "gift," which he imagines is a "gift of the Spirit" such as those that were given only in apostolic days by the laying on of apostolic hands. In apostolic times, the believer "stirred up" and used the gift that he had (1 Timothy 4: 14; 2 Timothy 1: 6); in these days, the supposed "gift" stirs up and uses at all hours of day and night the person that it has.

The Holy Spirit Guides into Truth

According to John 14: 26; 16: 13, above cited, the Holy Spirit would—

1. Bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you;
2. Guide you into all truth;
3. Shew you things to come.

It is also stated in John 14: 26 that the Spirit would "teach you all things," and in John 15: 26 that the Spirit would "testify of me;" these are regarded as being included in the guidance into all truth mentioned in No. 2, and therefore have not been particularized.

1. *Bringing to Remembrance.* This precious promise evidently belonged to the immediate disciples only, as no one else heard the Master, and therefore none else could have His words brought to remembrance. This operation of the Holy Spirit would be mechanical, assisting their memories to recall things already heard and known. John 2: 22 would appear to record a fulfilment of this promise. (See also Luke 24: 5-8.) But while the words quoted in No. 1 must be limited to the disciples, a blessing of similar nature is granted to other believers. Probably there are few Christians that cannot recall times when their memories were marvellously assisted—how they could not tell—so that they were able to speak of the truth to others and readily refer to passages in the Bible. But it should be noticed that these occasions were not bringing forth things hitherto unknown; they were helps to *memory* only. Something of this sort seems to be implied in the promises of Matthew 10: 19, 20; Mark 13: 11; Luke 12: 11, 12. Since the Holy Spirit aids to the re-

membering of things already learned, how industriously we should store our minds with the good things of the Word, for ready use when required.

2. *Guiding into all Truth.* Since the Holy Spirit is not an "inner light," as the Quakers suppose, but has moved holy men of old to put down *in writing* all that is necessary for God's people to know in order that they may be wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3: 14-17), and similarly moved the apostles and evangelists in the writing of the books of the New Testament; and has in this manner revealed "the deep things of God" concerning the favours "which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Corinthians 2: 9, 10), it follows that the Holy Spirit's guidance of God's people into all truth would be accomplished by *assisting them to an understanding of the things written* for our learning that we might be thoroughly furnished. This aid might be vouchsafed to any of God's people in their solitary study of the Scriptures, diligently comparing them together, or it might be sent through another brother or sister by word of mouth or by written or printed page. The Lord has expressly given such human instruments for the assistance of His people into the "unity of the faith."—Ephesians 4: 11-13.

"Ye Need Not that Any Man Teach You"

If Paul tells us that the risen Lord has expressly ordained that some of His people shall assist others, as pastors, teachers, etc., why does another apostle say (1 John 2: 20, 21, 24, 26, 27)—

20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning.

26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.

27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him [margin, in it].

The answer is that the Holy Spirit was not inspiring the apostle John to write something contradictory of what had been written by the apostle Paul under inspiration of the same Spirit. Consideration of the context shows that John was writing of some seceders from the truth and from the company of God's people. These seceders were denying that Jesus is the Christ, and they were therefore antichrists, denying the Son, and at the same time also denying the Father Who sent the Son, and has made Him to be both Lord and Christ. (1 John 2: 18-26.) It is of these and such persons that the Apostle writes when he says, "ye need not that any man teach you:" Having been already taught the truth by the Apostles and their helpers, there was no need for them to listen to or seek instruction from the teachers of error. The anointing of the Holy Spirit, which you have received from God through Christ, was not to be a transitory, but

a permanent experience; "the anointing which ye have received abideth in you," and teaches you to abide in Christ, and to beware of leaders astray and keep away from them. So John and Paul do not contradict each other, and the Holy Spirit is not self-contradictory.

3. *Showing Things to Come.* In visions and revelations the apostles were shown things to come, as the many with which Paul was favoured, and those shown to John on Patmos. Some of these they may have understood at the time of receiving the visions; but it is likely that many of them remained not understood, because the time of fulfilment was too remote to make the complete knowledge profitable to the saints. It is likely, though, that Paul knew more than he was allowed to tell, for he writes of having heard things not lawful for him to utter. (2 Corinthians 12: 4.) As a rule, the understanding of a prophecy is withheld from God's people until about the time of fulfilment; and sometimes prophecies are understood only by the Holy Spirit pointing out the fulfilment as having occurred. This latter was the case on the day of Pentecost, when Peter was enabled by the Holy Spirit to understand and explain a portion of the prophecy of Psalm 16, as then recently fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus.

Says the Apostle, "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:" and in these times it is not to be interpreted or understood by the will of man. (2 Peter 1: 20, 21.) The prophecy came anciently by the Holy Spirit, and the same Spirit in due course enables the children of God to understand the several prophecies as from

time to time they become due to be understood. "Interpretations" devised without the aid of the Holy Spirit are "private," and therefore vain.

The Holy Spirit does not show us "things to come" by showing us visions and revelations as to the apostles, but shows us the future things by enabling us to understand the Spirit-inspired, written prophecies concerning future events. The Holy Spirit does not assist us to the understanding of these things a long time before their fulfilment, but, as a rule, helps us to the knowledge about the time the prophecies should be fulfilled; sometimes while the prophecies are being fulfilled; occasionally just after fulfilment. Many and important as were the prophecies concerning Christ's death and resurrection, the disciples understood not one of them until after their fulfilment.

It is obvious that the wonderful promises of guidance into all truth and instruction concerning things to come, and of aiding the memory by the Holy Spirit, and the intercession for and consolation of God's people by the Spirit, *cannot be fulfilled to those who are only partly His.* There must be a complete giving up of oneself to the will of God before these extraordinary blessings can become ours, and can work through us to the blessing of others. Let us, then, not be half-hearted and therefore unstable; for such a man shall receive nothing from the Lord. (James 1: 7.) Let us have a complete change of tenancy as far as our hearts are concerned, casting out the old taskmasters Sin and Self, and acknowledging fully, and in every detail of life, the New Master, Christ Jesus, who bought us with His precious blood, and to whom therefore we by right belong.

The Holy Spirit as Convincer, or Convicter

—John 16: 7-11—

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove [margin, *convince*; R.V. has *convict* in respect of sin, etc.] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

CONVICTION of the world in the matters of sin, righteousness, and judgment is the work of the Holy Spirit, as well as are the comforting and guiding of God's people. Therefore a right understanding of this feature of the Spirit's activity is of the greatest importance, particularly since the Lord has taken pains, in the above statement quoted from John's Gospel, to set out the three counts on which the world is convinced or convicted, along with the evidence in support of each count. Such right under-

standing, it is hoped, may be demonstrated in the explanations of these "convictions" that shall presently be given.

The "World"

The word "world," used in John 16: 8, 11, is translated from the Greek word *kosmos*, which means "orderly arrangement," or "order of things." According to Strong's Concordance, this word is used "in a wide or narrow sense, including the inhabitants of the world, literally or figuratively [morally]." The word *kosmos* is found many times in the New Testament, especially in the Gospel and First Epistle of John.

Regarded in its narrow or restricted sense, the word "world" (*kosmos*) signifies the Jewish arrangement, or sometimes the inhabitants of Palestine. In its wider sense, the word "world" signifies the general arrangement, the order of things, or the people, of the whole of mankind. Our Saviour lived His earthly life in Palestine. He spoke to the

people of that country, was persecuted by them, and finally was crucified at their demand. But the disciples of Jesus were not to be restricted to Palestine. They were commanded to go into every nation for the purpose of preaching the Gospel and of making other disciples. They have spoken in the Master's Name and as His representatives to the "world" in the larger as well as in the smaller sense in which that word is used. And as the smaller "world" of Palestine persecuted the Master, so both larger and smaller "worlds" have persecuted the Master's servants. As the smaller "world" called for the death of the Master, so both "worlds" have caused many of His disciples to be killed.—John 15: 18-22; 16: 33; 2 Timothy 3: 12.

The "World" in its Smaller Sense

In the following instances the word "world" (*kosmos*) is used in the restricted or limited sense, referring either to the arrangement or order of things existing in Palestine at the time of our Lord's ministry or to the people of that country at that time.

John 7: 1-9—. . . If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. . . . The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

John 12: 12-19—. . . The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him.

John 15: 19—If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 16: 19, 20—Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of what I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

John 18: 20—Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

Galatians 4: 3—Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: "Elements of the world" here means the Law given to the Jews, and probably the same in Colossians 2: 8, 20.

The "World" in its Larger Sense

Following are some instances in which the word "world" (*kosmos*) is used in the larger sense, meaning the arrangement "or order of things" comprised in the institutions and peoples of the Roman Empire, or of the whole earth, ancient or modern.

Luke 11: 50, 51—That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias,

Luke 12: 30—For all these things do the nations of the world seek after:

John 1: 9—That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 1: 29—The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh [or beareth] away the sin of the world.

John 3: 16—For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him . . .

Romans 1: 8—. . . your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

Romans 5: 12—. . . by one man sin entered into the world.

1 John 2: 15—Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. Also vs. 16, 17.

1 John 4: 4—. . . greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Romans 5: 13—(For until the law sin was in the world:

Romans 11: 12—Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

1 John 2: 2—And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

The "world" which was to be convicted by the Holy Spirit would include the people in the larger definition of that word as well as the Jews who were the "world" in the smaller sense of the word. Wherever the Lord Jesus spoke the Word of truth given Him by the Father—and He spoke only to the Jews, being sent to no others (Matthew 15: 24); wherever the Apostles and other believers during the age have carried the message—and they were commanded to go into all nations (Matthew 28: 19); there have been the inevitable conflicts resulting in the conviction of the "world" of Judaism and heathendom.

Concerning His own mission to the Jews, the Lord said—"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." (John 15: 22-24.) Thus were the Jews already convicted of sin against the Light that the Father had sent to illumine their darkness. But this was not all. Favour would still be extended to the Jews for a while through the preaching that would be done by the apostles and believers after the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, at Pentecost. Through this ministry of the Spirit, supplementing that of our Lord by the same Spirit, the Jews would demonstrate their hardness of heart still more, and the end would be the destruction of their city and the complete dispersion of the people constituting their little "world." It is of the convicting ministry of the Spirit against Jews and Gentiles after Pentecost, rather than of that before, that John 16: 7-11 speaks, and toward this must our inquiry now be directed.

The Holy Spirit Convicting of Sin

"Of sin, because they believe not on me," was the word of the Saviour. It is a favourite saying in "revival" meetings that the Spirit is "working," "striving," and "wrestling" with unconverted persons in the audience with a view to bringing them into a state of "conviction," in which they will acknowledge that they are sinners. But this is rather beside the mark as far as the statement of our Lord is concerned. Doubtless all men are sinners, and undoubtedly they must all be brought to the acknowledgment of their need of a Mediator between God and themselves—each one in due time,

whether in this life or after the resurrection (1 Timothy 2: 4-7); but the fact still remains that this is not what our Saviour was speaking of when He said that the Holy Spirit should convict the world of sin. The particular sin He mentioned was the sin of unbelief—"because they believe not on me." Now unbelief could not be brought as an accusation against an ignorant person. One who has never heard cannot be charged with unbelief as a sin. Only he who has heard the truth can be convicted of sin, if and because he believes not on Jesus.

Besides this, the Holy Spirit is not given to unbelievers, but only to believers—"after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." (Ephesians 1: 13.) It remains then that it is not the Holy Spirit in unbelievers that convicts them, because the Holy Spirit is not in the unbelievers; it is the Holy Spirit *in believers* that convicts the unbelievers—the conviction being sometimes acknowledged by the unbelievers and sometimes not.

How is the convicting done? The Holy Spirit in God's people guides them into truth and energizes them to speak forth the truths which they have learned from the Word. The unbeliever hearing the truth thus proclaimed is convinced or not, as the case may be, this depending considerably on the state of mind he is in at the time of hearing. If convinced and he acknowledges it, well; if convinced and he hardens his heart against it, the Holy Spirit of God using the preaching believer has thus proved the unbeliever to be guiltily so. His unbelief is no longer a misfortune due to natural darkness; it is now a sin against light; as we read in John 3: 18, 19—

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

No one who has heard the truth with any measure of appreciation of it as truth can continue to occupy the position that he was in before he so heard. It is simply impossible in such circumstances to maintain the *status quo ante*. The hearer may be glad that this is so, and may greatly rejoice in the light; or, he may rage and storm against it; or, he may with specious thoughts lull himself into a state of indifference and fancied security. But whether he like it or dislike it, whether he follow the light or fall into the stupor of indifference to it, the fact remains that one who has seen the true Light and has recognized it as Light has been by that circumstance profoundly affected in his whole life. The entry of the Light into his mind has removed him from his former position; but it has been for him to say in which direction he should be shifted. These facts are stated in a few words by the Apostle, when he speaks thus about the "savour" of the knowledge of Christ and its effect wherever he preached (2 Corinthians 2: 15, 16)—

15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

The knowledge of Christ, realized and obeyed, helps the obedient one by so much on the way to *life*; the same knowledge realized and disobeyed helps the disobedient one by that much on the way to *death*; i.e. the Second Death. The principle is unfailing, and its operation cannot possibly be evaded by any one who comes into realizing contact with the knowledge of Christ. It is therefore the part of wisdom to be "willing and obedient" when the knowledge of Christ is placed before us.

Examples of Conviction

On the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter, speaking by the Holy Spirit, placed the knowledge of Christ before an immense audience of Jewish hearers, the very persons who, only a few weeks earlier, had joined in the cry, "Crucify him." (Mark 15: 6-14.) Many of them were now greatly exercised by what they heard and the miracles they had seen; they were convinced, and they inquired what they must do. (Acts 2: 37.) Three thousand believed on this occasion. (Acts 2: 41.) Soon after, as a result of Peter and John's miracles and preaching at the temple, the number had increased to five thousand believers. (Acts 3: 1 to 4: 4.) But others—by far the majority—remained hard of heart, unwilling and disobedient, notwithstanding the knowledge of Jesus which they realized. (Acts 4: 13-22.) These, and others like them in the small "world" of Judaism, were convicted—by the Holy Spirit working through the Apostles and brethren—of unbelief *as a sin*. Light had shined upon them, and they loved the darkness rather than the Light. They were convicted of sin because they believed not on Jesus. This went on in Palestine, and also among the Jews in other parts, the climax coming when their city was destroyed as a demonstration of the divine wrath against their hardness of heart.—1 Thessalonians 2: 14-16.

Among the Gentiles to whom the truth has been preached during the Gospel age the experience has been similar. Some coming in contact with the truth have been "convinced" (*elegcho*) or "convicted" (the two English words are often interchangeable), and have been obedient to it. (1 Corinthians 14: 23-25.) Others, though convinced and trembling, have been disobedient, and so the Holy Spirit has convinced these disobedient ones of the sin of unbelief. They remain professedly ignorant, but the Apostle declares their ignorance to be wilful because they prefer to walk after their own desires. (2 Peter 3: 3-5.) But as the small "world" of Judaism was convinced and destroyed, so the larger "world" of the Roman Empire was also convinced and destroyed; and the nations its successors will be similarly dealt with. Scoffing concerning the pro-

mise of Christ's presence* will not postpone, much less prevent, the evil day when God's judgment against the unrighteousness of the present order of things shall be manifest in swift destruction. But, thanks be to God, "we, according to his promise, look for" a new order of things, which will be righteous.—2 Peter 3: 13.

The Holy Spirit Convicting of Righteousness

"Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more," was the next item of which the world was to be convicted. Of Righteousness? How could the world be convicted of both sin and righteousness? Here it will be well to call attention to the word translated in the Authorized Version "reprove" (margin, "convince"), but in the Revised Version rendered "convict." The word is *elegcho*, which, according to Strong's Concordance, means "to confute, admonish." It is not, therefore, as though the world were spoken of as a prisoner before the court, convicted, but rather as though a demonstration were being made, and the world confuted and admonished on the subjects of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Nor is it the world's righteousness that confutes or admonishes the world. It was the world's sin that was demonstrated—"of sin, because they believe not on me;" but it was Christ's righteousness that came next in question—"of righteousness, because I go to my Father."

Christ's righteousness was demonstrated by His ascension to the Father, because the ascension showed that He had been raised from death, which fact in its turn proved that He had not died for sins of His own, but for the sins of the whole world. Had He died for sins of His own, death would have been to Him a penalty under which He must needs have remained unless He had been redeemed. The fact that He was raised from death by the power of the Father showed that His death had not been as a penalty, but as a voluntary sacrifice for the sins of others; hence in himself He was righteous.

But while all this is well understood by Believers, and was thoroughly believed by the apostles and brethren at the time, this in itself would be no conviction, confutation, or admonition to the world, because the world did not see Christ after His resurrection; neither was His ascension to the Father advertised as a public spectacle which the world was invited to attend. Besides, this was not the way in which the world was to be convicted, or convinced. The world's conviction on the subject of Christ's righteousness was to be accomplished by the Holy Spirit; it could not therefore have occurred at the time of Christ's ascension, but must wait until the descent of the Holy Spirit, which took place on the day of Pentecost.

On and after Pentecost the apostles and brethren gave eloquent and powerful testimony that Christ

had been raised from death, and that He had ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high. For uncultured persons, such as the most of them were, to give such testimony with however much of native eloquence would have accomplished only to bring upon themselves the derision of the scoffers. But the power of their preaching concerning Christ's resurrection, ascension, and righteousness lay not in themselves; the power came from above by the demonstration of the Holy Spirit in the miracles and wonders which the apostles and the believers were able to perform. These miracles backed up the preaching; they were a witness or testimony from heaven as to the authenticity of the message which the apostles and believers were declaring, having received the same from the Lord (Hebrews 2: 1-4); they mightily testified in their incontestable manner that the preaching was true and faithful, and that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1: 4); and thus the Holy Spirit, working through the Church, furnished, by means of the miracles and signs, an irrefutable confutation or admonition to the world, Jewish and Gentile, concerning the personal righteousness of Christ, and the substantiation of His claim to be the Son of God.

The "world" of Judaism by its most notable men—"rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest" (Acts 4: 5, 6)—acknowledged the irrefutable nature of the testimony, saying, "What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it." (Acts 4: 15, 16.) But instead of submitting themselves to the Truth, which they admitted they could not deny, they hardened their hearts still more, and took what steps they could to hinder its further spread among the people.—Acts 4: 17.

The larger "world" is equally heedless of the testimony. They generally profess to believe that Jesus Christ was a "good man," but they at once belie their profession and besmirch His goodness by making Him out a falsifier, inasmuch as they deny that He died as the propitiation for our sins, which was the very thing He claimed He had come into the world to do. (Matthew 20: 28; 26: 28.) What miserable inconsistency! What unspeakable folly! are exhibited by the "world" when they reject the claims of the Son of God.

"Ye See Me No More"

This expression in John 16: 10 is not to be taken as meaning that after His ascension to the Father the disciples would never see Jesus. The expression evidently applies only to the Gospel age; for the Lord said that if He went away He would come again and receive His people to Himself, that where He is they may also be, and that they may behold His

*For further explanations on this subject, please see the book, "Christ's Prophecy on Olivet." Paper covers, price 1/- (25 cents); in cloth binding, 1/6 (35 cents), post free.

glory, being themselves changed into His likeness so that they might "see him as he is." (John 14: 3; 17: 24; 1 John 3: 2.) The saying, "the world seeth me no more," is evidently intended to have a permanent application beginning at the time of our Lord's death, inasmuch as He was not shown to the world after His resurrection, nor at His ascension, and now He dwells in light unapproachable—"whom no man hath seen, nor can see." (1 Timothy 6: 16.) The Lord added, "but ye see me" (John 14: 19); yes, because "ye" are to be made like Him, so that "ye" may be able to see Him.—1 Corinthians 15: 49, 50.

The Holy Spirit Convicting of Judgment

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." How would the Holy Spirit convict, confute, or admonish the world "of judgment" by means of a judgment on "the prince of this world?"

The descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost proved Christ's resurrection from death and His ascension to the Father, hence His personal righteousness and the righteousness of His claims, as above shown. The work of the Holy Spirit, of writing the law of God on the mind and heart of the believers (2 Corinthians 3: 3; Hebrews 8: 10), also convinces the world in respect of righteousness, leading them to contrast the holiness and purity of the believers with their own unrighteousness. Our Lord said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 5: 16.

But more than this was proved by the descent of the Spirit; viz., that Jesus was exalted to the position of "a Prince and a Saviour." The Holy Spirit is particularly mentioned as a witness to this. (Acts 5: 31, 32.) If Jesus has thus been exalted to be the Prince, that fact is in itself a judgment against the "prince of this world;" and so the very presence of the Holy Spirit, granted to them that obey Him, was and is an admonition that Jesus has indeed been exalted to the Father's throne. (Revelation 3: 21.) It is only necessary for us now to inquire how this judgment affects the "world" and its "prince."

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." (John 12: 31.) So our Lord prophesied shortly before His crucifixion. The effect upon the Jewish high priest, the "prince" of the "world" of Judaism, is already a matter of history. Jesus was exalted not only a Prince, but also a High Priest—"a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec," and Mediator of the New Covenant, better than that of the Law. The Jewish high priest, the "prince" of the "world" of Judaism, was therefore cast out of office, and he will never again occupy it. The judgment has already been summarily executed against him; the temple was left without one stone upon another, and the Law itself, under which the Jewish High Priest held office, was done away in Christ.—Hebrews 7: 11-13, 21-26; 8: 1-6; Colossians 2: 14, 15; 2 Corinthians 3: 7, 14; Matthew 24: 2.

The effect upon the secular princes and kings of the larger "world" is not yet as marked as in the case of the Jewish high priest. But it will come. The kings have not been wise; the judges of the earth have not suffered themselves to be instructed; they have not "kissed" the exalted Son of God set upon His holy hill of Zion; they have not bowed down and submitted themselves. Therefore they also must be cast out; their institutions must be broken with a rod of iron, and must be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel, by Him Who is King of kings and Lord of lords, when He comes forth to make war against those who have the impudence, which would be sublime were it not so foolish, to resist Him. During the Gospel age He has not shown Himself very much in His capacity of King of kings and Lord of lords, because He has had in hand the work of calling out a special people to become His joint heirs. But the time is now very near for Him to show Himself as the mighty Potentate in the affairs of earth, and He will do this in a manner that will leave no room for doubt; for He must reign until all enemies are put under His feet.—1 Corinthians 15: 25.

Still Another Prince to be Deposed

There is another "prince" of this "world." He has been "the god of this world," blinding the minds of them which believe not (2 Corinthians 4: 4), and the whole world has been under his wicked influence for thousands of years. (1 John 5: 18, 19). He made to the Lord the spurious offer of all the kingdoms of the world, if our Saviour would but bow down and worship him. (Matthew 4: 8, 9.) He is called by our Lord "the strong man." (Matthew 12: 29.) This great one must also be cast out, and very soon the Lord will bruise him under the feet of His saints (Romans 16: 20), and will relieve the world of his rulership over them and the deceptions with which he has deceived them. All the evil arrangements and systems which he has invented shall be destroyed when Satan, "the strong man," is bound, and then will be established the new arrangements, the new "world" or order of things—under our Lord Jesus Christ. The present "prince of the power of the air" is a wicked spirit, working in the minds of the children of disobedience; the Lord shall depose him from his empire of the "air" (dominion over the minds of men), and shall Himself rule over men. (Ephesians 2: 1-6; Colossians 1: 12-14.) In the present age those who believe are liberated from his tyranny; these are by the grace of God delivered from the power of darkness, and translated, or set over, into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

Thanks be unto God for all His precious promises; thanks be unto Him for the Prince and Saviour Whom He has provided; thanks be unto Him for the sending of the promised Holy Spirit the Comforter, to guide His people into Truth, and to convict, confute, and admonish the "world" of Sin, because they believe not on Jesus; of Righteousness, because the Son of God has ascended to the Father; of Judgment,

because—thank God!—the prince of this world is exalted Prince and Saviour, God's King upon His judged and must shortly be cast out. Hail to the holy hill, Zion!



The Holy Spirit as Demonstrator of Sonship

—Romans 8: 9, 14, 16—

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

DEMONSTRATION is rightly required for every proposition which is not self-evident. It is therefore a very good thing that nearly all propositions are demonstrably true or false. For instance, if it be agreed that 9 and 1 make 10, and the proposition be advanced that 6 and 4 make 10 just as 9 and 1 do, it is quite easy to demonstrate the correctness of this by starting with the 6 and counting four more to it—7, 8, 9, 10. If another proposition be advanced, that 5 and 3 make 10, it is equally easy to demonstrate the incorrectness of this by starting with the 5, and counting three more to it—6, 7, 8; by which we are convinced that 5 and 3 make 8; but not 10.

Not every proposition is as readily subject to demonstration as are these elementary ones; some require long and intricate calculations; others may require careful watchfulness for prolonged periods—a year, or many years. But if one be truly interested in a statement or proposition, he will not balk at intricacies of calculation or protractedness of waiting for the demonstration. If anything, the satisfactoriness of the demonstration will be rather enhanced by the difficulties in the way of reaching it.

If all this be true concerning propositions that affect only the temporal things which perish with the using, how much more satisfactory must it be to have a demonstration of that statement, the greatest that can be made of any one in the present life, and which affects not only the present life, but also that which is to come—that statement of the Apostle John in 1 John 3: 2—

“Beloved, Now are We the Sons of God”

It seems clear, from the use of the words “now” and “we,” that the Apostle does not speak of all men in his own day nor yet of any or all persons of other times, but only of some in a certain time. Is there, then, anything that sets out the conditions of sonship, and so furnishes a demonstration as to who are the “we” that the Apostle mentions? There is such a demonstration provided; it is one of the grand offices of the Holy Spirit to show who are the children of God, and to comfort those children by adequate testimony as to their relationship to the divine Father.

Our Father in Heaven

An idea that has found much acceptance, even among those who ought to know better, is that God is to be regarded as the Father of all men, and so the phrase “The Fatherhood of God” has become very popular. In a creative sense we are His offspring, for He made man in the first place; it is also true that God sustains the lives of men, and that all would soon perish did He withhold the sunshine and the rain. (Acts 17: 25-29; 13: 15-17.) But, apart from this, God does not acknowledge all men as His children or members of His family; He proclaims them as enemies to Himself, and recommends His love in that, “while we were yet sinners,” and enemies, Christ died for us. (Romans 5: 8-10.) Certain steps need to be taken before men can reach the position in which they may say of themselves—“Now are we the sons of God.” They need to realize their position as sinners and enemies of God, unreconciled, and contrary to God in both flesh and mind. (Ephesians 2: 1-3; Colossians 1: 21.) They need to recognize Jesus as the only One who, on account of His death as the satisfactory offering for sin, is entitled to mediate between God and men, and is able to accomplish the needed reconciliation. (Colossians 1: 20; 1 Timothy 2: 4-7.) They need also to come unto God through Jesus Christ the only Way (John 14: 6), confessing that He is the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God, the One also named Jesus, because He was sent to save His people from their sins. (1 John 5: 1; Matthew 16: 16; 1: 21.) Then God is prepared to recognize them as His people, and to adopt them as His children; but not before. The theory that God is the Father of all men is most misleading, which demonstrates nothing more than the willingness of its adherents to presume on the divine goodness.

Servants or Sons?

Not even all those who in times past showed a sincere desire to do God's will were permitted to regard themselves as sons of God. Moses was a man of God, enjoying many favours from the Almighty. God spoke with Moses face to face, and all but revealed His face to this favoured man, after communing with him forty days. Yet we do not read of Moses as a son of God, but as a servant. “Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant.”—Hebrews 3: 5.

Abraham was a marvellous man, whose faith in God and willing obedience to the divine commands are held up in the Scriptures as patterns worthy of imitation by all the ages. Abraham's faith was more

than a profession; it was evidently the genuine article, because God was pleased to count it to him for righteousness, and by it he "obtained a good report." (Romans 4: 3, 20-22; Hebrews 11: 2, 8-19, 39.) But we are not told that Abraham was regarded as a son of God. The highest description of Abraham's relation, granted after Abraham's faith had reached its climax of works, was expressed in the word "friend of God"—a goodly word, indeed, and doubtless one of the most treasured of Abraham's possessions. (2 Chronicles 20: 7; Isaiah 41: 8; James 2: 21-23.) Yet a friend—even a dear friend—is not in quite as good a position as the Son of the Father, nor as the Son's bride.—Matthew 3: 17; John 1: 33, 34; 3: 29.

The servant is not much in the confidence of his lord; but the son is enlightened concerning his father's plans. The servant is ordered to do this or that without being given to understand the whys and wherefores; but a father reveals many things to his son. In short, "the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth." (John 15: 15.) Being members of the house of servants over which Moses was faithful, the disciples of our Saviour during His earthly ministry were in the position of servants. Near the close of His ministry, the Master said they should no longer be called servants but His friends, because He had made known to them all He had heard from the Father. (John 15: 15.) But a little later they were given another promotion, and, even in anticipation of the heavenly demonstration, the Lord Jesus, their Master and Friend, was pleased to acknowledge them as "my brethren." (Matthew 28: 10; John 20: 17; Hebrews 2: 11-13.) How wonderful to be acknowledged by the risen, glorified Saviour as His brethren; as children with Himself of one Father—"my Father, and your Father;" as worshippers with Himself of the one and only true God—"my God, and your God."

In a short space of time the disciples advanced from their birth position as servants to the position of friends of Jesus, and soon after that again to the position of brethren of Jesus. But, according to Hebrews 2: 12, not the apostles only, but all the Church are honoured by being called the brethren of Jesus and sons of God. (Galatians 4: 5-7.) The apostles were not thus distinguished as "brethren" of Jesus, according to John 15: 15; 20: 17, until after the death and resurrection of the Saviour. And this fact helps us to understand why "some better thing" is provided for us than was provided for Abraham, the friend of God who obtained a good report (Hebrews 11: 39, 40), and why the least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist, who was the special friend of the Bridegroom, and most honoured of the prophets.—Matthew 11: 11; John 3: 27-31.

Having lived and died before the death and resurrection of Jesus, Abraham and John were not living in the time when they could be called brethren of Jesus and sons of God. Confession that Jesus is the Christ, and a heart-belief that God hath raised Him

from the dead, are necessary before one can be recognized as a son of God. (1 John 5: 1; Romans 10: 9.) Abraham manifestly lived too soon for these conditions to be fulfilled by him, and even John the Baptist did not live long enough to know that God had raised Jesus from the dead; therefore they could not enter into the privileged position of sons of God. But to others, since their time, this great privilege is granted of becoming brethren of Jesus, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ to the glorious heavenly inheritance to which God raised Him from the dead. (1 Peter 1: 3-5, 10-12.) "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," says the Apostle, thus confirming what has already been seen to be the testimony of the Scriptures before cited.—Galatians 3: 26.

The Holy Spirit Given to Sons

"And because [or, according to Dr. Ellicott's translation, "as a proof that"] ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Galatians 4: 6.

It is to be carefully noted that the Holy Spirit is not sent into the hearts of believers in order that by this means they might become sons of God. They become sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3: 26; 1 John 5: 1), they are recognized by the Father as such, and *because* He so recognizes them He sends His Spirit to them. It is not, therefore, that God may be enabled to recognize believers as His sons, but rather that believers may recognize God as their Father, and themselves as His adopted sons, that the Spirit is given them, crying, "Abba, Father."

Thus is granted to the believer a view of the Holy Spirit in one of the most comforting relations possible to exist between the Spirit and the believer—the Demonstrator of his sonship and of God's Fatherhood. The very presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart demonstrates that he is an adopted son of God. Conversely, the absence of God's Spirit from any heart demonstrates that that person is not an adopted son of God; and so the Apostle says—"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Romans 8: 9.

The Holy Spirit is received as a gift from God in the first instance "by the hearing of faith," and as the token of sins forgiven. (Galatians 3: 2; Acts 2: 38; Ephesians 1: 13.) The Holy Spirit thus given is called in Ephesians 1: 13, 14 a seal or pledge—"in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." The continuance of the Holy Spirit's presence in the believer's heart will be manifest by means of certain works, called "the fruit of the Spirit." (Galatians 5: 22-25.) If this "fruit" does not exhibit itself as an addition to the believer's faith (2 Peter 1: 5-7), this lack proves his blindness to spiritual things and his forgetfulness of the mercy of God in forgiving his past sins (v. 9); hence also it proves that he is no longer recognized as a son of

God, but is regarded as having turned back again to the pollutions of the world, from which he had been delivered through Christ.—2 Peter 2: 20-22.

Demonstration to Others

The Holy Spirit in the believer's heart is not only a comforting demonstration to himself of his sonship, but also a demonstration to others of that relationship between God and himself. If one have the Spirit in his heart, he will manifest the "fruit" in his daily life. Others must inevitably see this and take note of it; and so, by the Holy Spirit, the believer's sonship will be demonstrated to those who observe his walk and conversation. This "fruit" will not manifest itself as it were by compulsion, for the Holy Spirit is not a spirit of bondage and fear (Romans 8: 15), but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. It is a Spirit of liberty to love and serve God through Christ, and to bear an abundance of "good fruit." The sons of God are free to exercise this "sound mind," for against this "fruit" there is and can be no law.—2 Timothy 1: 7; John 8: 31-36; Galatians 5: 23.

"Led by the Spirit"

Many foolish and hurtful notions have been associated with this simple phrase found in Romans 8: 14. Some have professed to all but hear a voice directing them to do this or that, to go here or there. Others have felt themselves impelled—almost forced—to take a certain course, as though one pushed or pulled them. And these things they have claimed were "leadings" of the Holy Spirit!

Holy men of old were mechanically inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the Scriptures (2 Peter 1: 21), the writers of the Gospels, the Acts and Epistles, and the Revelation were also supernaturally guided by the Holy Spirit. But now the Scriptures are counted sufficient for all the needs of the man of God, and such inspiration by the Holy Spirit is no more known among the Lord's people. (2 Timothy 3: 15-17; 2 Peter 3: 15, 16.) Therefore, the "voices" and "impulses" which some profess to "hear" and "feel" are not "leadings" of the Holy Spirit, but of another spirit, or even the natural activity of their own brains.

But when Romans 8: 14 is considered in connection with its context (v. 13), with which it is connected by the word "For," signifying "Because," the Apostle's meaning in using the words, "led by the Spirit," is at once discerned. In verse 13, he has shown that the work of the indwelling Spirit is to "mortify [kill] the deeds of the body." These deeds and desires of the flesh are all unholy and contrary to the will of God, as may readily be seen by perusing the list of them given in Galatians 5: 19-21. By "the flesh" is not meant the physical body as such, but the sinful mind which uses the body in a selfish and unholy manner. This carnal or fleshly mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, and cannot be. (Romans 8: 7.) The only thing to do with it is to kill it. The Holy Spirit in the believer has to do this, and also to

bring forth, instead of the vices, the "fruit" mentioned in Galatians 5: 22, 23. If the Spirit be successful in doing this, "ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8: 13, 14.) To be "led by the Spirit" means just what the Apostle describes in v. 13; viz., to have one's mind informed on the will of God by whose Spirit the life pleasing to Him has been set forth for our learning. This requires that we put to death the desires and deeds of the fallen flesh, and that we bring forth instead the virtues of the divine character. May God help us to follow this leading, and to avoid the snares and pitfalls into which our natural imaginations, aided and abetted by an unholy spirit, are too ready to lead us. So shall our following of the Holy Spirit's leading be a demonstration to ourselves and to others that we are indeed the sons of God.

The Spirit Bearing Witness

Many well-meaning Christians have been led into great difficulties in their Christian experience by the supposition that the Holy Spirit dwelling within them means that they must have a constantly happy feeling. Perhaps they have heard some say how "happy" they were, and have thought, without inquiring into the Scriptures, that they must have this happy feeling all the time. Such a Christian will sometimes express his conception of the witnessing of the Holy Spirit in the words, "I feel that I am a child of God." But if the person be asked on what foundation does this feeling rest, it comes out eventually that the *feeling* is both foundation and superstructure. As long as the *feeling* is present, the person is ecstatic and emphatic in his realization and insistence that he is a child of God. But let the *feeling* diminish or disappear, and the poor unfortunate is as woe-begone as he was formerly ecstatic; now he is as certain as can be that the Almighty has cast him off, and perhaps he insists that he has committed the sin unto death, although he has probably no idea whatever as to what that sin might be. All this stress laid upon *feeling* is a tremendous error, and one of the most successful of the delusions engendered by the Adversary. The Scripture never tells us that we are children of God because we *feel* we are; or that we are not children of God because we do not *feel* something. The scriptural teaching concerning the witness or testimony of God's Spirit as to the sonship of believers is based on solid truth, not on emotional excitement.

The manner of the Holy Spirit's witness or testimony is twofold. In the first place, the very presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart is a testimony that he is a son of God. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father.'" (Galatians 4: 6.) If it be asked, How may we be assured that the Spirit of God is in our hearts, the answer is—"By their fruits," added to the initial faith. The fruit of the Spirit is the group of Christian virtues. The love of God can be shed abroad in our hearts only by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 5: 5.) If the love of

God is in our hearts, it proves that the Holy Spirit is there, and the presence of the Spirit is a proof that God regards us as His children by faith in Christ Jesus.—2 Peter 1: 5-15.

The other method of the Spirit's witness or testimony to our spirit concerning our sonship is by means of the inspired Word. The conditions on which we may become sons of God are clearly stated in the Word. (John 1: 11-13; 1 John 5: 1; Galatians 3: 26.) If we have complied with those conditions, we are to *believe* that we are sons of God. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." (1 John 3: 1, 2.) This is a glorious fact, testified to in black and white by the Holy Spirit, and we have to believe this testimony just as implicitly as we should believe the testimony of any other credible witness.

Having received this twofold testimony of the Holy Spirit as to our sonship, we are entitled to feel, and should feel, happy, joyful, and spiritually uplifted. These feelings will not be based on an ignorant frenzy, but upon a solid and proved fact, and will

therefore not be fanciful but reasonable feelings. But if seasons of trial and weariness of mind come, as come they must (Hebrews 12: 5-11), the *fact* of our sonship still remains, and helps us much in the bearing of trials, knowing that God has promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love Him, "who are the called according to His purpose"—sons of God, "conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8: 28, 29.) Insane persons sometimes imagine themselves to be royal princes, but it is only a *feeling*, and they have have nothing to show for it; the *feeling* is all they have. If we think of ourselves as sons of God, let us do so on the basis of *facts*, convincingly set before us in the Scriptures, and, so far as they relate to what is required of us, demonstrated by the Holy Spirit in us. And finally, by loving our brethren (1 John 3: 14; 5: 1, 2), let us, by the Holy Spirit's aid, demonstrate to others the fact that we are indeed the children of God.



The Sin Against The Holy Spirit

—Matthew 12: 31, 32—

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world [literally, "age"], neither in the world ["age"] to come.

EVERYTHING thus far considered about the Holy Spirit has shown forth God's love in providing and sending such a wonderful Comforter and Guide for His people. The Spirit has helped God's people to understand the Word; has guided them into all truth; has brought to their remembrance items of truth formerly learned; has interceded for them with unuttered groanings; has witnessed to them that their sins are forgiven; has been a demonstrator that sincere-hearted believers in Jesus are regarded as God's children, members of His family by adoption. All these gracious offices have been fulfilled by the Holy Spirit to the people of God severally and collectively since the great day of Pentecost, the same Spirit is still showing divine grace to the obedient believers, and they are exhorted to "be filled with the Spirit."—Ephesians 5: 18.

It has been well for us to realize, in our experience as well as from the teaching of Scripture, the Holy Spirit as the promised Comforter, because such realization must appreciably assist us to understand another phase of the Spirit's relation to God's people.

The Spirit of God occupies a position of the greatest dignity, which must needs be minutely observed by us, for offence against the Holy Spirit is fatal. If one were to speak blasphemously against the Son of man, the Saviour said, forgiveness of the offence is

possible; but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not forgivable, neither in this age, nor in the age to come. All manner of sin and blasphemy is forgivable, except that against the Holy Spirit. It becomes us then to consider well this matter, that we may realize the circumspectness which must govern our daily walk, and the carefulness which must watch over our words, so that we may avoid the wrong course.

Origin and Effect of Sin

The original sinner, who "abode not in the truth" (and from this statement we must acknowledge that he was once in the truth), was the devil. (John 8: 44.) But, as far as the human race is concerned, sin entered by means of its very first members. Sin is transgression against law, and our first parents took upon themselves the responsibility of disobedience to the command which God had given them concerning a certain tree. (Romans 5: 12; 1 John 3: 4; Genesis 2: 17; 3: 2, 3, 6.) In itself, and as far as the value of the property taken was concerned, this offence might appear to be no greater than that of irresponsible boys in an orchard. But man is ever prone to judge by the outward appearance, and such judgment is seldom just. In Eden, the value of the fruit taken did not enter into consideration; God was no poorer because of it, nor would He have been wealthier had the fruit not been taken. The question was not of material, but of moral values. Would Adam and Eve obey God, or not? They disobeyed.

The first effect of this disobedience was to bring upon themselves the penalty of death which had been associated with the command. (Genesis 2: 17.) The

inquiry was held, and the guilty pair acknowledged their sin, aggravating the offence by seeking to shift the responsibility for it onto others, Adam not fearing even to try to involve God Himself when he said—"The woman whom THOU gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." (Genesis 3: 12.) The sentence of death was duly pronounced, and it was explained that its fulfilment would be in Adam's return "unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3: 19.) This would mean nothing short of the complete destruction of the sinful ones. Before Adam was formed of the dust of the ground (Genesis 2: 7), he was nothing; returning to the ground he would become nothing, as he had been before creation. Adam was not told that he should live forever in a state of anguish, mental or physical; he was told that he must die, and special measures were taken to insure that he should die, and not live forever.*—Genesis 3: 22-24.

The effect of the sin in Eden was not restricted to the sinners; it was passed on to their posterity, and all the race is involved therein, as the Scriptures assure us. (Romans 5: 12, 15-19; 1 Corinthians 15: 21, 22.) This is the reason why all die, whether the infant which could not have sinned, or the aged person that has sinned repeatedly during a long life. The infant does not die on account of its own sin, for it has not sinned; but neither does the aged person die on account of his own sins,† though they be many; all die on account of the original sin, having been constituted sinners by that one disobedience of their ancestors.

For that Edenic sin and for all of our individual sins that arise out of it Christ has died, giving a ransom for all men, and dying for *our* sins, according to the testimony of many Scriptures. (1 Timothy 2: 4-7; 1 Corinthians 15: 1-3.) By this it is seen that God has not dealt hardly with us in decreeing that we should have the penalty of our first parents passed on to us. It is a foregone conclusion that we would have done as they did, and so would have brought the penalty directly upon ourselves, in which event each separate sinner would have required a separate redeemer if he were to be rescued from the consequences of his sin. By causing all to be constituted sinners on account of one transgression, God has been able to arrange justly and equitably that all should be redeemed by the one sacrifice—that of His Son, and freely justified through faith in His blood; "that

he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—Galatians 3: 22; Romans 3: 23-26.

All this teaching of Scripture is considered old-fashioned and out of date by the "wise" men of to-day, at whose feet sit those who are to stand as professedly Christian ministers in the pulpits of Christendom; and so it has come to pass that the Genesis account of the Creation of man and his Fall into sin is said to be "legendary" and "unhistorical." By the "wise" the Cross of Christ and the Sacrifice on Calvary have been "interpreted" out of all the meaning attached to them in the divine purpose, which was and is that Christ's blood was shed as a *propitiation*, or propitiatory sacrifice, for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2: 2.) This foolishness of the "wise" need attract no more than passing notice by way of pointing out how foolish they are thus to oppose the central truth, which stands as the foundation of man's relation to God and of his prospect for eternal life. Nevertheless, we are bound to feel sorry that men will so deceive themselves and others in regard to these fundamentals. But we also feel glad and thankful for the promise of a time near at hand, when deceptions will not be allowed for a thousand years, and when men shall be brought to that accurate knowledge of fundamental truths which is part of the divine will for them.—Revelation 20: 3; 21: 3-7; 1 Timothy 2: 4-7; John 1: 9.

Forgiveness of Sins and How Obtained

The death of Christ as the sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world does not in itself procure the forgiveness of sins for even one member of our race. It provides, however, a *basis* on which the forgiveness of sins is possible for those who *believe in Jesus*, so that when one becomes a believer in Jesus, God is righteously and justly able to forgive such an one's sins that are past. All this, including the necessity for faith, is clearly set forth by the Apostle—

"... Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: ... that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—Romans 3: 21-26.

But the believer in Jesus, beginning his Christian life with a clean sheet, is not able to keep the pages of his life's record perfectly clear. He sins at times. However unwitting or unwilling, his wrong action in thought, word, or deed is nevertheless a sin, and something must be done to make things right again. As a "new creature," the believer is not God's workmanship for sin, but for good works. (Ephesians 2: 10.) Every sin committed by a believer in Jesus is therefore a departure from the program divinely marked out for him as a "new creature" in Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5: 17.) But if the believer confesses his sin, God can justly and will faithfully forgive, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse the confessing one from all sin. The Son of God in the Father's presence will intercede, the Holy Spirit in the believer will also intercede, and thus the relationship interfered with by the believer's sin will be re-

*Considerations of space forbid more than a mere mention here of the subject of the penalty for sin. It is certain that the Christians in apostolic times, when the teaching was pure, did not believe that unbelievers were on the way to everlasting torment. Had they thought such a thing, they would not have gone about preaching to Jews only. They could not thus have limited their efforts, but must have tried to save others from the awful fate. (Acts 11: 19.) The interested reader is invited to consult the book, "Everlasting Punishment," 112 pages, in which the subject is quite fully discussed. Cloth bound, 1/1 (29 cents); in paper covers, 6d. (10 cents), post paid.

†Some possible exceptions of mature persons will be noted in due course.

established.—1 John 1: 7 to 2: 2; Hebrews 7: 25; Romans 8: 26, 27, 34.

God is exceedingly gracious, longsuffering, and willing to forgive, and none need fear to approach Him in prayer through His dear Son to ask forgiveness. Under the New Covenant in Christ's blood, shed for many for the remission of sins (Matthew 26: 28), God can be merciful to our unrighteousness, and can forget our sins and our iniquities. (Hebrews 8: 12.) But before He can forgive us on account of His Son's shed blood, He requires to see in us a willingness to forgive any who may have trespassed against us, and He also requires confession on our part. (Matthew 6: 12, 14, 15; 1 John 1: 9.) If God's forgiveness means that He is merciful to our unrighteousness and that He remembers our sins and our iniquities no more, then He expects us to be similarly merciful toward those who have injured us and not to remember their sins and iniquities once they are regretted and acknowledged by the transgressor.

But confession to God is more than the parliamentary form of words—"I withdraw." Confession implies the recognition of the wrong thought, word, or deed as a sin, the abhorrence of it as such, and the endeavour to avoid the repetition thereof, this last being proof of the sincerity of the confession. If the wrong thought, word, or deed has been the means of injury to some other person, that person should also be approached and confession made, together with every effort to repair the damage done. (Matthew 5: 23, 24; James 5: 16.) It is nowhere commanded in God's Word that confession of sin should be made to a priest or other person not concerned, but confession to God is required, also to the injured person (if any); and before the New Covenant blessing of mercy to his unrighteousness can be realized and his sins and iniquities can be consigned to the land of forgetfulness, there must be (as already mentioned) in the confessing penitent the willingness to forgive any who may require it of him.—Matthew 18: 21-35.

Possibility of Death

Notwithstanding the willingness of God to forgive, and the fact that He has made every provision for, and offers every inducement to, the erring one, there are limits, and it is possible for the Christian—the "new creature"—so to live as to bring upon himself the utmost condemnation, even death. Says the Apostle to the saints (observe he does not address the "world" of unbelievers, but saints, "brethren"), "For if *ye* live after the flesh, *ye* shall die."—Romans 8: 13.

That this statement does not refer to decease in the ordinary sense of that word is clear from the fact that both saints and sinners die—the most saintly as well as the vilest. It is also evident that the Apostle is not here referring to the state of deadness in trespasses and sins sometimes mentioned in the Scriptures, as in Ephesians 2: 1-5. Had he wished, in Romans 8: 13, to refer to this, he would doubtless have written, If *ye* live after the flesh, *ye are dead*.

The Apostle in Romans 8: 13 speaks of death as a punishment; and as he is certainly not referring to the decease of the fleshly body of the Christian, it is evident that he is teaching that under certain circumstances, possible to occur in the present life, the "new creature" will die; and the circumstances are—"if *ye* live after the flesh."

What does it mean to "live after the flesh?" It means to live *according to* the fleshly mind and desires, which are at enmity with God; which are not and can not be subject to the law of God. (Romans 8: 5-8.) For the "new creature" to conduct himself in this manner is simply to invite destruction; because nothing that is contrary to God—willingly and wilfully so—can be allowed to remain alive forever—"all the wicked will he destroy." (Psalm 145: 20.) To adopt and persist in the course of living "after the flesh," i.e. according to the will and desires of the old life from which one has been delivered through faith, is manifestly to sin against the Holy Spirit which God has given to His people; it is a "grieving" or "quenching" (Ephesians 4: 30; 1 Thessalonians 5: 19) of the Holy Spirit in the Christian so acting, and in such circumstances nothing can be expected but the extinction of the "new creature."

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

In Romans 8: 13 the Apostle has given a general definition of the course which, if persisted in, must result in death to the "new creature." In Matthew 12: 31, 32, the Master himself has shown one of the ways in which such evil conduct may manifest itself. The Greek word *blasphemia*, in Matthew 12: 31, 32, means, according to Strong's Concordance, "vilification." Vilification of the Son of man is forgivable under certain circumstances; but the vilification of the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven, neither in this age, nor in the age to come. According to this statement by the Lord, the age to come will be a time of forgiving some sins; of all sins, indeed, except that of vilification of the Holy Spirit. Those who believe that the future age contains no possibilities of mercy and forgiveness should consider well these gracious words of the Saviour, to see whether their thoughts on this matter have been taken captive to Christ.—2 Corinthians 10: 5.

Vilification of Jesus might be done in more or less ignorance, or by reason of weakness of the flesh; and these would be mitigating circumstances if the sin were afterwards confessed and forgiveness sought. We feel satisfied in our own minds that ignorance is what has caused and still causes many to vilify the Father and the Son by promulgating the awful teaching that some human beings will be tortured for ever and ever. But the Holy Spirit cannot be vilified except after consideration and reasoning somewhat more extensive than that usually displayed by the advocates of the doctrine of everlasting torment.

What was either an illustration of such vilification of the Holy Spirit or something dangerously near it is recorded in Matthew 12: 24, and it was this incident that led to the Saviour giving out the teaching of vsa.

31 and 32. Jesus had just wrought a remarkable miracle in healing a man possessed with a devil, blind and dumb. The cure was immediate and perfect, so that the afflicted person was able to speak and to see. When the news reached the Pharisees, they said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." In this they spoke not only against Jesus, but also against the Holy Spirit which worked through Him to perform the miracles. (Matthew 12: 28.) Instead of acknowledging that the power of God was doing these things, they attributed the works to the power of Beelzebub.* In effect, therefore, they blasphemously said that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, was the spirit of Beelzebub, the god of the dunghill, and idol of Gentiles who continually led Israel astray, and hence an enemy of God—the holy Jesus in league with the prince of the demons! (Matthew 12: 24.) "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils," they said.—Luke 11: 15. See also Matthew 9: 34.

Is it surprising, in view of this, that our Saviour said concerning the hypocritical Pharisees—"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna?"—Gehenna being a symbol of the second death. (Matthew 23: 33.) The Pharisees had had extraordinary opportunities to hear Jesus, to see His miracles, and to consider them. Yet they were so wicked as to say that the miracles were done by the power of Satan. It was a terrible and perilous position that their awful hardness of heart led them to adopt, a position from which they would find it most difficult to remove. Whether the Pharisees actually perpetrated the unforgivable vilification of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Matthew 12: 31, 32, the Lord, the Judge of all hearts, knows. For us it must suffice at present to know that the attitude and words of the Pharisees on this occasion drew from the Master's lips those wonderful words which at once proclaim the liberality and define the limits of divine forgiveness of sins.

Falling Away After Enlightenment

4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world [literally, "age"] to come,

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.—Hebrews 6: 4-6.

Here the statement is made that those who fall away, after enlightenment and participation in certain New Covenant blessings, cannot be renewed again

*Baal-zebub was the god at Ekron of the Philistines, to which Ahaziah, of the Ten-tribe Kingdom of Israel (which had revolted against Jerusalem in the days of Jeroboam), sent messengers concerning his disease. The name means "Lord of the fly," and to consult this pagan god implied that they still regarded Jehovah, from whom they had turned away, as inferior to the heathen god, thus adding fresh insult to their former apostasy. Upon which Elijah the prophet was sent to demonstrate the superior power of Israel's God. (2 Kings 1: 2-17.) The Greeks by parody on the Chaldean name called this idol "Beelzeboul," meaning "dung-god."

to repentance. Their consciences have become so seared that they have lost the sense of right and wrong, and instead of being sorry and seeking forgiveness, they glory in their evil ways. (1 Timothy 4: 1, 2.) This is an intimation that such persons have sinned so seriously as to bring upon themselves the extreme condemnation. Such a falling away would be equivalent to a Christian crucifying his acknowledged Lord and Master and publicly putting Him to shame. A more horrible crime than such ungrateful mutiny could not be imagined, and the one who would do this would not be fit to live. But evidently it is to be understood that those who fall away after having been enlightened and blessed in the manner described are of the disposition that would traitorously rise up in rebellion against their acknowledged Lord, and would seek to accomplish His death. How careful we should be, lest our hearts become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin!—Hebrews 3: 12, 13.

Wilful Sin after Knowledge of the Truth

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.—Hebrews 10: 26.

The Apostle does not specify any particular sin of thought, word, or deed; so every kind of sin might be included, because every sin after enlightenment may be done wilfully. Done wilfully, the offence which in itself may be apparently of little consequence becomes very serious indeed. The sacrifice of Jesus was not offered for such a sin, and no sacrifice will be offered in the future on behalf of it. The Christian who sins in this manner has thus fastened upon himself a sin the consequence of which he must meet alone. Being a wilful sin, the transgressor cannot count on the intercession of the Holy Spirit, nor on that of our Lord in heaven, and so he is left not only without a sacrifice past or prospective, as before mentioned, but also without any Comforter or Advocate (*parakletos*). Without a shield, without an intercessor of any sort, he must face the Divine Judgment, and the Apostle says that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." He also says that the Christian who thus violates the New Covenant provisions, and does despite to the Spirit of grace, is more culpable and shall be punished more sorely, i.e. severely, than those who despised Moses' law. By taking this course against the New Covenant, by the blood of which he was sanctified, such transgressor demonstrates himself to be an *adversary of God*, and therefore he must be devoured by the fiery indignation of the Divine Judgment.—Hebrews 10: 27-31.

(Just here it is necessary to observe that some exhibitions of wilfulness in wrong doing are attributable to the transgressors' inherited imperfection and weakness. To the extent that this is so, the Lord can be merciful to our unrighteousness, as stated in the New Covenant provisions (Hebrews 8: 12), and can forgive if the sin be confessed. These partially wilful sins against a measure of light seem to be spoken of in Luke 12: 47, 48. Partially wilful sins are punished with few or many "stripes," according to the

circumstances of which the Lord alone is competent to judge righteously.)

If we have rightly apprehended the teaching of God's Word, it is that wilfulness is the very essence of an unforgivable sin, and that the wilfulness is the reason why the sin is unforgivable. This seems to be the meaning of "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth." The sin may be of any sort; it is in this case only the means for the expression of the wilfulness; and any sin in thought, word, or deed will serve the purpose. It should also be noted that a sin committed wholly through weakness can afterward become the means of wilful sin; for if there be an unwillingness to confess the wrong, and be converted from his error against truth and righteousness, the transgressor thereby associates his will with the unconfessed sin, so making it a wilful one and an instrument of death. (James 5: 19, 20.) If a Christian's will be associated with a sin, either in the first instance to do it, or secondarily to avoid confession of it, that is a wilful sin. It is a sin against the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as the carnal or fleshly mind has to some extent obtained the ascendancy over the Holy Spirit and the power of discernment between right and wrong which the Gospel gives to the believer. If the sin be fully

wilful, the old mind has completely gained the victory over the new mind, which means that the new mind or "new creature" is *dead* ("quenched") in that person. As the old or fleshly mind is not subject to the law of God, neither can be (Romans 8: 7), and the new mind in the transgressor is dead, it is easy to understand why the Apostle said that such a person cannot be renewed to repentance. It is also easy to understand why death is the only suitable punishment for a fully wilful sin, or deliberate sin of the will, committed by a Christian after enlightenment. Such a sin is not to be prayed for.—1 John 5: 16.

The position then is this: Sin against the Holy Spirit is most serious. It is not forgivable—neither in this age, nor in the age to come; whether that sin take the form of vilification of the divine Spirit in miracle-working power, or the other form of wilfulness in sin after enlightenment. In view of these things let us walk circumspectly; let us show ourselves children of the light; children of the day and not of the night, beseeching the Lord that He would grant us wisdom to avoid the snares, and strength to overcome the besetments of the adversary of souls, and as well the sinful tendencies of our own fallen nature.



One God, One Lord, One Spirit

TO SAY, "I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit," seems a very easy thing to do. The words fall quite naturally and readily from all Christian lips of every persuasion, and we too can say them as heartily and sincerely as any. Then why not leave it at that? has been asked. All Christendom with one voice can utter the short formula, and therein all Christendom can be united.

But there is something more to this great matter than the declamation of a few words. The utterance of this brief formula indicates merely that one believes in the existence of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and there it stops. Why one of the Three should be called the Father and another the Son, and what these designations should teach regarding the relations between these two; and why the other should be called the Holy Spirit, and what that designation signifies, is not at all explained in the mere statement of belief in their existence. And this is precisely the information desired, if it be obtainable.

"Canst thou by searching find out God?" was asked by one of Job's false comforters in regard to the reason why Job was afflicted. (Job 11: 7.) Yet subsequently God explained, and then Job understood.—Job 42: 1-6.

The apostle Paul exclaimed—"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways

past finding out!" (Romans 11: 33.) And this is so. But Paul said this just after he had by the Spirit explained God's dealings with the Jews. They could not of themselves have searched it out, but they could comprehend the answer when given.

And so it is with regard to other features of Divine Truth, some of which had been kept secret from the foundation of the world; "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;" we read in Ephesians 3: 5. If God wishes to reserve to himself the meaning of any item of information, no amount of searching will find it out. In such event the information has not been understood even by the prophet inspired to speak it, nor by any of God's people subsequently until the time for revealing arrived.—Mark 13: 32; Daniel 12: 8-10; 1 Peter 1: 10-12.

It is quite certain, also, that searching the writings of heathen philosophers and idolaters will not bring the searcher the true knowledge of God, or of His Son, or of the Holy Spirit. We are exhorted in Scripture to search for truth as men dig for hid treasures. What is necessary is first to locate the mine of wealth; and so we read: "he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11: 6.) Believing that there is a God, we may ask Him for enlightenment, not only in regard to Himself, but in regard to His dear Son, and also

the Holy Spirit; but, even so, this request will bring to light no truth not intended to be known and understood by God's people.

On the other hand, if there is recorded in the Scriptures any information about the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, more than the mere fact of their existence, such information is doubtless there for the enlightenment and edification of God's people. For such information we may reverently seek in the Divine Word, and we may feel assured that such seeking will not be rebuked; it will be rewarded. (Hebrews 11: 6.) Not only so; but we are expected to search the Scriptures for whatever may be there for our learning.—Romans 15: 4.

The "god of this world" has been very busy blinding the minds of people about the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and he has had immense success in his efforts. Many misbeliefs have been accepted in Christendom as sacred truths, and those who could not, on scriptural grounds, adopt these misbeliefs have suffered, sometimes even to martyrdom.

The doctrine that at present has nearly universal acceptance in Christendom, and has had for nearly sixteen centuries, is that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit constitute a trinity, each member of which is coeternal with the others, and exactly equal with them in power, majesty, and glory. Notwithstanding the reverence accorded this teaching in Christendom, we are satisfied that it is unscriptural, and that it is not a faithful saying worthy of acceptance.

The doctrine of the "Holy Trinity" is an endeavour to say something about the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit additional to the mere statement of belief in their existence. But the "god of this world" succeeded in misdirecting the searchers for information on this most sacred subject, and led them astray to a point reached in the fourth century. There he was content to leave the most of them as far as this subject is concerned, and there the greater part of their successors seem content to remain.

Development of Trinitarian Teaching

The word "trinity" is not found in Scripture, nor any such teaching as that which affirms the coeternity and equality of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each with the others. This being so, it will be interesting to trace in the early church the development of this teaching now almost universally in Christendom regarded as absolutely fundamental. Therefore, before undertaking to show what the Scripture teaching is, let us read some selections from "A History of Creeds" (1911), by William A. Curtis, B.D., D.Litt. Professor Curtis writes—

"The true Creed of Israel in the Old Testament, and ever since, is the 'Shema'—'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one.' (Deuteronomy 6: 4.) By our Lord Jesus the 'Shema' is joined (Mark 12: 29-31) with and made part of the first and greatest of the commandments.

"Our survey of the New Testament references to confession of faith has made it evident that at the close of the Apostolic age no particular creed or confession could claim to have been exclusively or even expressly ordained for use by Jesus or by His apostles. The explicit sanction of both Master and Apostles could be claimed only for the simple confession, 'I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,' or its equivalents.

"Four main forms or types of Creed emerged from the fluid tradition and usage of the Ancient Church, and established themselves as normative and peculiarly sacred in Christendom." (1) The so-called "Apostles' Creed, completed by the middle of the eighth century; (2) the Nicene Creed of the fourth century; (3) the Te Deum (a hymn); (4) the Athanasian Creed."

At the beginning of the second century, "IGNATIUS of Antioch appears to quote or echo a current summary of faith and doctrine. 'Be ye deaf, therefore, when any man speaketh to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, who was the son of Mary, who was truly born, and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and on earth and below the earth; who also was truly raised from the dead, His Father having raised Him, who will raise us also in like manner who believe on Him—His Father, I mean, will raise us—in Christ Jesus apart from whom we have not true life.'

"By the end of the second century, in spite of the reserve which deterred the early Church from committing to written form its symbol of faith and communion, we find it paraphrased and embedded in the writings of Irenæus and Tertullian. IRENÆUS (A.D. 180) writes—'The Church, though scattered through the whole world to the ends of the earth, has received from the Apostles and their disciples the faith in one God, the Father Almighty, who hath made the heaven and the earth and the seas and all that in them is; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who through the Prophets preached,' etc.

"TERTULLIAN (A.D. 200) quotes or paraphrases the 'Rule of Faith.' 'But we believe always, and now more, being better instructed by the Paraclete, the Leader into all truth, in one God, but under this dispensation, which we call economy, that there is also a Son of the one God, his Word who hath proceeded from himself, by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made: in him sent by the Father into the Virgin, and born of her, man and God,* son of man and son of God, and called Jesus Christ.'

ORIGEN (A.D. 230) writes: "The form of those things which are manifestly delivered by the preaching of the Apostles is this: 'First, that there is one

*This is the earliest occurrence noted in Prof. Curtis's History of the description of our Lord Jesus as "man and God." From then onward progress was rapid to the end.

God, who created and framed every thing, and who when nothing was, brought all things into being. . . . Then, second, that Jesus Christ himself, who came, was born of the Father before all creation. And when, in the formation of all things, He had served the Father (for through Him all things were made), in these latest times, emptying himself, He became man and was incarnate while He was God, and though He became man remained the God He was. . . . Then, third, they also delivered that the Holy Spirit was associated in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son.'

"GREGORY THAUMATURGUS (A.D. 270), pupil of Origen, and bishop of Neo-Cæsarea in Pontus, gives in a more rhetorical fashion a creed whose language points forward to, and anticipates, the so-called Athanasian Creed of the later Church.

"LUCIAN (A.D. 300), the martyr, left behind him a still more elaborate creed, with scriptural and theological expansions. It terminates with an anathema of all heretical false doctrine. It was submitted to the Synod of Antioch (A.D. 341), thirty years after his death, as a rival to the Nicene. 'We believe, in accordance with the Evangelic and Apostolic tradition, in one God the Father Almighty, the Maker and Provider of all things: And in one Lord Jesus Christ His Son, the only-begotten God, through whom all things were made, who was begotten of the Father before all ages, God of God, Whole of Whole, One of One, Perfect of Perfect, King of King, Lord of Lord, the living Word, Wisdom, Life, True Light, Way, Truth, Resurrection, Shepherd, Door, unchangeable and unalterable, the immutable likeness of the Godhead, both of the substance and will and power and glory of the Father; the first-born of all creation, who was in the beginning with God, the Divine Logos, . . . And in the Holy Spirit . . . clearly of a Father who is really a father, and of a Son who is really a son, and of the Holy Spirit who is really a holy spirit, these names being assigned, not vaguely or idly, but indicating accurately the special personality (hypostasy), order, and glory of those named, so that in personality they are three, but in harmony one.'"

Professor Curtis then describes the conditions leading up to the calling of the Council of Nicæa, as follows—

"So soon as CONSTANTINE embraced the Christian religion, and the restraints of persecution were withdrawn, the growing differences of Christian opinion issued swiftly in a conflict of sects so fierce and deadly as to demand the intervention of the Emperor himself. If Constantine had any theological preferences of his own, they were not unfavourable to Arius. But his great aim was the peace and unity of his empire, and the good name of the new faith which he had espoused; and in his eyes the doctrine which commended itself to the mass of Christians was the only true faith, whether in the event it proved to be Arian or Athanasian.

"Unanimity there was to be, if not in the Council, certainly after it: nonconforming bishops would be

deposed: the majority of opinion would thenceforward constitute orthodoxy: at a Council solemnly convened by imperial authority, and still more solemnly constituted by invocation of the Holy Spirit, Truth would surely be found on the side of the many, the voice of the majority would be the voice of God.

"In these ideas, Constantine, himself incapable of pronouncing judgment upon the points at issue, was simply with a statesman's instinct adopting the convenient but perilous principle that faith and doctrine are fit matters for legislation, that religious truth not only may be discovered after debate by counting and comparing the votes of a duly representative body of churchmen met in council, but may be thrust by authority upon the human intellect. Under his auspices, well-intentioned but essentially pagan, coercion entered the Christian Church, and invaded in the name of Christ the very shrine of Christian liberty of conscience. Under his auspices an exaggerated awe and authority attached themselves to the findings of so-called Ecumenical Assemblies, the occasions not seldom of disgraceful tumult and faction, of arrogant presumption, of gross uncharitableness. It was after the second Ecumenical Council* that Bishop Gregory of Nazianzus declared: 'I flee from every assembly of bishops, for I have never seen that a Synod has come to a good end, or that the evils of the Church have been removed instead of being increased; for indescribable quarrelling and rivalry reign there.' We do well to pause ere we commit ourselves to an unqualified surrender to the dogmatic and controversial utterances of the Councils of the fourth century, remembering the words of Bishop Westcott, no rash or narrow partizan: 'I should think there was no corruption in either doctrine or practice,—or I may add in text,—of which the roots cannot be found somewhere in the fourth century. Yet people talk with unction about the Saints of the fourth century! I am afraid that if they read their history, they would find that they were very ordinary men.' (Contemporary Review, December, 1903.) We may rightly honour the churchmen who carried on their bodies the scars and mutilations left by pagan persecution when they obeyed the summons of the Roman Emperor and assembled at Nicæa, but we need not forget that it takes more than mutilations and Christian courage and constancy to make a theologian and a master in the letter and spirit of Holy Writ. There was too often spiritual defeat and humiliation under the outward victory of a party in the Church. An ostentatious unanimity gained by threats of deposition or dishonour might impress the masses whose faith was wholly dependent on authority, and who could not find their way into the fold save in the middle of the jostling flock; but thoughtful men remembered the differences of opinion and the doubtful Scriptures which lay behind the decrees, and many Christian leaders who had little sympathy with Arius deprecated with

*Constantinople, A.D. 381.

good reason the thrusting of unscriptural phraseology into the sacred clauses of the Apostolic Faith, which were to be binding upon the universal Christian conscience. . . .

"The Nicene Creed was the first symbol of faith framed by a Council, enforced by the secular power, purely controversial in origin, theological as distinct from Scriptural in its peculiar terms, and furnished with a concluding anathema, a lash on the whip of discipline. It was the work of the Council of three hundred and eighteen bishops convened by Constantine at Nicæa, A.D. 325. The Emperor presided in person. The delegates, who travelled by the imperial command at public expense, were all from Eastern Churches except Hosius of Cordova, who had been sent by the Emperor to Alexandria on a preliminary mission to investigate into the disturbance which had arisen in connection with the Synodal deposition of Arius and his associates. After the rejection of a creed submitted by the Arian party, which set forth their Christology in terms which fell short of eternally-begotten divine Sonship and oneness in essence with the Father, the venerable EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea who led the mediating party in the Council brought forward the Creed of his Church as he had learned and taught it. The Creed of Cæsarea was accepted as the basis of the new formula, and with the distinctive additions of the Council regarding the person and dignity of Christ and the concluding anathema it passed out into the world as the Nicene Creed. . . .

"In the subsequent revisions of the Nicene Creed, both for theological and liturgical use, the anathema was omitted, either because it was felt to be an incongruous element in the symbol of catholic faith, or because it was implicit in the body of the symbol, or because it had done its work, and Arianism had received its death blow. . . .

"In the series of Catholic Creeds the Quicunque Vult occupies a place of its own and exhibits a character of its own. It is by far the longest. Its reception into general use came latest, and its retention has been most precarious, a fact which throws doubt upon its fitness to serve as a universal symbol. The Roman Church, in whose office of Prime it found a place, uses it on Sundays only, and these mainly in Lent and Advent. The Greek Church gives it no place in its service, and is content to place it, of course with the obnoxious words 'and from the Son' omitted, in an appendix to the Horologion, as orthodox in teaching and helpful for private use. The Anglican Church, outside Ireland and America, where it has been set aside, has maintained it, with some difficulty and not without misgiving and controversy, in use at Morning Prayer on the great festivals. The Lutheran Church gave it a place in the Book of Concord beside the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, in harmony with Luther's opinion, who doubted whether since New Testament times anything more 'weighty and glorious' had ever been written."

Creed of Nicæa (A.D. 325)

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made, both those in heaven and those on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh, entered humanity [enanthropesanta] and suffered, and rose the third day, ascended into heaven, is coming to judge the living and the dead:

And in the Holy Spirit.

But as for those who say that there was a time when He was not, and that before He was begotten He was not, and that He came into being from things that were not, or who affirm that the Son of God is of a different substance or essence, or created, subject to change or alteration, them the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes.

Quicunque Vult, or Athanasian Creed (About A.D. 450)

Whosoever would be saved [literally, "safe," "in a saved condition"] must above all hold the Catholic faith, which except a man have kept whole and inviolate, he shall without doubt perish eternally.

Now the Catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in a Trinity and a Trinity in a Unity, neither confusing the persons nor separating the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit, but of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit the divinity is one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

As the Father is, such is the Son, and such the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is infinite, the Son is infinite, and the Holy Spirit is infinite. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal, and yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal, just as there are not three uncreated nor three infinities, but one uncreated and one infinite. Likewise the Father is omnipotent, the Son is omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent, and there are not three omnipotents, but one omnipotent.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods, but there is one God. So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord, and yet there are not three Lords, but there is one Lord. For just as we are compelled by Christian truth to confess each person singly both God and Lord, so by the catholic religion we are forbidden to speak of three Gods or Lords.

The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. There is therefore one Father, not three Fathers, one Son, not three Sons, one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity there is no earlier or later, no greater or less, but the whole three persons are coeternal and coequal with each other; so that in all things, as is aforesaid, both a Trinity in a Unity and a Unity in a Trinity is to be worshipped. Let him, therefore, who would be saved think thus of the Trinity.

But it is necessary to eternal salvation that he also believe faithfully the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the right faith, therefore, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man.

He is God, of the substance of the Father begotten before the worlds, and He is man, of the substance of His mother, born in the world; perfect God, perfect man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting; equal to the Father ac-

cording to His divinity, less than the Father according to His humanity.

Who, though He be God and man, is yet not two, but one Christ; one, however, not by conversion of the divinity in the flesh, but by assumption of the humanity in God: one, altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as a rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ;

Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead, at whose advent all men are to rise again with their bodies, and render an account of their own deeds; and they who have done good shall go into life eternal, but they who have done evil into eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith, which except a man have faithfully and firmly believed, he shall not be able to be saved.

The foregoing quotations, including the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, are selections from Curtis's History of Creeds, pp. 30-89.

Confusion in Christendom

It would be impossible to imagine anything more directly contrary to numerous Scripture statements (some of which will be referred to) than the assertions of the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, the main ideas of which came from Egypt. The trinitarian teaching (not expressed in the Nicene creed as it is in the Athanasian) was not immediately acceptable to all Christendom such as it was in the fourth century; but after something like a see-saw experience it eventually secured general recognition. After this it remained unquestioned, unless by obscure individuals here and there, including Michael Servetus (1511-1553), who for his antitrinitarianism was burned at the stake under the auspices of John Calvin, until the rise, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, of Socinianism, based on the teachings of the Italian theologian, Fausto Socinus (1539-1604), and embodied in the Racovian Catechism, published at Rakau, a small town in Poland, which was the centre of the movement.

The "god of this world" was busy in this movement too, and succeeded in blinding the minds of those who confessed that the Trinitarian teaching was unscriptural, in that the Socinian doctrine denies the atoning value of the death of Jesus. Later development of the movement into modern Unitarianism involved it in yet more errors.

As far as concerns belief in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, it has to be said that, apart from the Socinians, the Protestant Reformers made no protest against the Nicene and Athanasian creeds. In every instance they (except the Socinians) emphasized, in their Creeds, Confessions, Articles of Faith, Catechisms, and other official documents, their firm belief in those creeds.

In every case of revolt from established authority or from an authorized establishment, the seceders are prone to fly off at tangents, each in his own way and for his own reasons. The Protestant Reformation was no exception to this.

The "Evangelicals" denounced the Roman doctrine of the Mass, and preached the sufficiency and

efficacy of our Lord's sacrifice on Calvary as the atonement for the sins of all mankind and for the unwillful sins of believers committed after they had begun the Christian life. But they continued to believe in the trinitarian teaching, and, because they also held the doctrine that the human soul is indestructible, they continued to believe in endless misery as the punishment for wilful sin.

The Socinians also denounced the Mass, and they saw that trinitarianism was wrong, also that the teaching of endless misery was an error. But they denied that our Lord's death was the atonement for sin, viewing His life and death as only examples; and because they continued to hold the error of the indestructibility of the human soul, and refused to believe in endless misery as the punishment for sin, they went to the other extreme of error, and said that no one would be for ever lost, but that eventually all would be saved.

And so we realize that, as the Prophet Daniel had foretold (Daniel 11: 34), the Protestant Reformation was but a "little help" to God's people. The time for the consumption of the Papal "little horn" had not then arrived, and would not until 1799, when the divinely foretold consumption did begin, is now proceeding, and will continue until completed. (Daniel 7: 25, 26.) For some centuries following the Protestant Reformation God's saints were still to struggle against the blinding influences of the god of this world, who skilfully utilized, and still utilizes with "great swelling words," Protestant as well as Papal systems in his machinations.

Was Jesus Christ God and Man?

In the foregoing quotation from Tertullian (A.D. 200) occurs what is perhaps the earliest known description of our Lord Jesus as having two natures ("man and God") at the same time, beginning with His miraculous Virgin birth.

Here is a great misbelief. It is easy to see, by applying the touchstone of the Ransom to this misbelief, that it was impossible for Jesus to have had two natures while on earth. Had He had two natures He would not have corresponded to Adam and his race, who have only one (the human) nature, and so would not have been a ransom, or corresponding price. Agreeable to the requirement of the touchstone, that the Ransomer must correspond with the beings to be ransomed, is the direct statement of Scripture (Hebrews 2: 9)—

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

The first man was made "a little lower than the angels" (Psalm 8: 4-8; Hebrews 2: 6, 7), and was crowned with the glory and honour of perfection of his being and rulership of earth. When he sinned, and lost his glory, his honour, and his very life, redemption could be accomplished only by the payment of a perfect Ransom corresponding to the man who had sinned. Therefore Jesus was made "a

little lower than the angels," was invested with glory and honour as the first man had been, in order that He might suffer death; "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Thus the direct statement of Scripture corroborates the requirement of the Ransom touchstone. It is shown that our Lord Jesus while on earth was a perfect man, as indeed He must have been in order to fulfil the purpose of His coming to earth.

The "Rule of Faith" quoted or paraphrased by Tertullian is thus proved to be in this particular not of Faith but of misbelief. So also the statement of Origen (A.D. 230), who said of Jesus, "He became man and was incarnate while He was God, and though He became man remained the God He was." Every statement that Jesus Christ was of dual nature is in irreconcilable conflict with the Ransom and with the plain statements of Scripture.

But it is quite right and scriptural to say that Jesus was God, if this be said in the manner of John 1: 1-3, which, read in English according to the presence or absence of the article in the text, says—

In a beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and the Word was a God. The same was in a beginning with the God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Here we are told about "the God" and "a God," the latter being with the former "in a beginning." What does this mean? The answer is that the Hebrew and Greek words translated "God" in the Scriptures mean "mighty one." These words are not exclusive but extensive in application, referring sometimes (1) to Jehovah, sometimes (2) to Jesus, sometimes (3) to angels, and sometimes (4) even to imperfect human beings. Instances of (1) and (2) occur in John 1: 1-3 above cited; of (3) in Psalm 8: 5, where the word meaning gods is translated "angels;" of (4) in Exodus 7: 1 and John 10: 34, 35. The word "god" is not the proper name of Jehovah, nor of Jesus, nor of angels, nor of men; but is a descriptive word applicable to any being describable as "a mighty one." This fact being understood, it is not difficult to realize that in John 1: 1-3 Jehovah is "the God," and Jesus in His pre-human estate is "a God."

Beginning of the Creation

The "beginning" mentioned in John 1: 1-3 refers to a time before the creation of the material universe, when only two Beings existed. Which of these Beings was before the other? may be asked in all reverence. The Saviour himself answers by His self-description in Revelation 3: 14—

These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD.

Similarly the Apostle Paul in Colossians 1: 15 (Revised Version)—

Who is the image of the invisible God, THE FIRSTBORN OF ALL CREATION.

According to these two statements our Lord Jesus was the very beginning of God's creation. Subsequently, as has already been seen in John 1: 1-3, He was the Instrumentality for the bringing into existence of all other created things; so that "with-

out him was not any thing made that was made." Truly He was "a God"—a mighty one.

Some there are who try to nullify the word "beginning" in Revelation 3: 14 by intimating that it should be understood as though it said "beginner;" their idea being that if our Lord was the "beginner" of the creation of God, he would not be part of that creation as the word "beginning" would declare Him to be. This suggestion is not allowable. The word translated "beginning" in Revelation 3: 14 means precisely that; it refers to place or position, and not at all to activity; as if one should say, "A" is the beginning of the alphabet, but not the beginner.

Then there is the inspired declaration in Colossians 1: 15, that Jesus is "the firstborn of all creation," showing that He is part of the creation of which He is the firstborn.

Without doubt we are obliged by Scripture to understand that our Lord Jesus was brought into existence by the direct creative act of Jehovah. At that time the Son was not a fleshly being, but was on a higher plane than that occupied by the heavenly angels, inasmuch as He subsequently created the angels as well as every other created being and thing.

Since we understand this we must say it, giving the Scriptural reasons to every one asking us (1 Peter 3: 15), fearing neither the anathemas of the Nicene and Athanasian creeds nor the present displeasure of those who speak against the divine Truth, and who denounce what they call our "blasphemy."

"He Emptied Himself"

Is it given to us to know what took place when our Lord, "the beginning of the creation of God," was made "a little lower than the angels" in order that He might taste death for every man?

The Athanasian creed says—

Who, though He be God and man, is yet not two, but one Christ; one, however, not by conversion of the divinity in the flesh, but BY ASSUMPTION OF THE HUMANITY IN GOD: one, altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

Probably it would be impossible to find a statement more directly contradictory of what Scripture says on this subject than are the capitalized words in this citation from the Athanasian creed.

The Apostle Paul (Philippians 2: 5-7, Revised Version) says—

Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the [literally, "a"] form of God, counted it not a prize [margin, "a thing to be grasped"; or even more literally, according to another version, "did not meditate a Usurpation"] to be on an equality with God, but EMPTIED HIMSELF, taking the form of a servant, being made in [margin, "becoming in"] the likeness of men.

We can not know every thing that took place in connection with our blessed Lord's miraculous Virgin Birth; but we can, at least, see how the Creed contradicts the inspired Word. The Apostle says that our Lord "emptied himself." The Creed says—"not by conversion of the divinity in the flesh, but by assumption of the humanity in God." Denying

that our Lord "emptied himself," or parted with anything, the Creed asserts that God ASSUMED something, viz., humanity, adding it to the divinity; and thus they say that our Lord was both divine and human, both God and man, while on earth.

Trinitarian theologians have always been in difficulties over the "kenosis" or "emptying" in Philipians 2: 7. Their creed requires them to say that something was added, not something emptied out, when our Lord came from heaven to be a perfect man on earth.

The fact, however, is that a real change took place in our Lord's physique when He was "made flesh," (John 1: 14.) He did not take on flesh as it were a garment or cloak covering some other nature; as the Revised Version correctly translates it, He "BECAME flesh." This change of physique did not in any way affect His identity; and He remembered and could speak of that which in His pre-human existence He had seen with the Father in heaven.—John 3: 11-13, 31, 32; 17: 5. It should be noted that the last four words in John 3: 13 are not found in the most ancient manuscripts.

The change from heavenly to earthly, from spiritual to human, estate was not permanent. We have already seen that our Lord "was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," that He might be, and so might give Himself, "a ransom for all." At His miraculous Virgin Birth "the days of his flesh" began; and at His atoning death "the days of his flesh" ended; and Jesus having obeyed the Father's will even unto death, God, in raising His Son from death, did not return Him to the plane of existence a little lower than the angels, but set Him in a heavenly, unfading, and incorruptible inheritance, very much higher than that of the angels.—Hebrews 1: 3, 4; 2: 9; 5: 7-9; 1 Timothy 2: 4-6; Philipians 2: 8-11; Ephesians 2: 20, 21; 1 Peter 3: 22.

The Beginning, the Firstborn from the Dead

In thus raising the Son from death the Father gave Him preeminence in all things. The Son was not only the beginning of the original creation of God. He is also the beginning of the new creation—"the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."—Colossians 1: 18.

Now we see that Scripture requires us to understand that our blessed Lord has experienced two changes of estate; one when He came from heaven to earth, the other when the Father raised Him from death, and made Him the exact image of His own (the Father's) person, or, as the Revised Version marginal reading has it, "the impress of his substance."—Hebrews 1: 3.

In saying these things about our Lord Jesus, as Scripture requires, we incur the great displeasure of all trinitarian believers. This we regret on their account, wishing only that they might see the won-

derful truth, and with us rejoice in it. But the Nicene creed says—

But as for those who say that there was a time when He was not, and that before He was begotten He was not, and that He came into being from things that were not, or who affirm that the Son of God is of a different substance or essence, or created, subject to change or alteration, them the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes.

How potent must have been the influence of the "god of this world," to bring about the astounding misbeliefs stated in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds! Let us be thankful that by divine grace we are not entangled therein.

The Son still Subject to the Father

Our Saviour who, in Gethsemane, prayed to His Father—"not my will, but thine, be done"—is still subject to the Father, and always will be. This is plainly shown in 1 Corinthians 15: 28—

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Note that the above words "subdued" and "subject" are translations of the same Greek word.

Thus is shown the supremacy of the Father. The Son is at the Father's right hand; and, at the very peak of His glory, all enemies under His feet, He is, and to all eternity will be, subject to the Father, who placed all things under the Son, and who is glorified by the subjection of all, acclaiming the Son as Lord.

What we have now seen in the Scriptures banishes for ever the credal teachings of coeternity and coequality as between the Father and the Son, which the Athanasian creed presumptuously proclaims must be believed in order to salvation. And we marvel that Christendom has been so firmly bound in these errors for sixteen hundred years. But while thankful on our own behalf for the truth that has freed us from the error, we are thankful also to realize that the time is not distant that shall witness the liberation of all who are held by this teaching, most dishonouring to God in denying His supremacy, and dishonouring to the Son in shockingly misrepresenting Him as willing to claim equality with His Father, His God.—John 20: 17.

The Holy Spirit

It will have been noticed that the Nicene creed merely mentions the Holy Spirit, defining nothing. In this the Nicene creed is much less elaborate than some of its predecessors, and than the Athanasian creed, which affirms the coeternity and coequality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. At the time the Nicene creed was formulated (A.D. 325) the burning question was as to the relationship between the Father and the Son; the teaching concerning the Holy Spirit was in the background.

In view of what has been seen in the Scriptures concerning the relationship between the Father and the Son, we are bound to say at once that the Athanasian creed is in error also in what it says concerning the Holy Spirit.

The Scripture teaching is that the Holy Spirit is the influence or power proceeding from (or, Revised Version margin, "goeth forth from") God. God, a Personality, is the Source of the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit itself is not a person, but a power, just as the spirit of a man is not a separate person, but is the influence or power of which the man is the source or origin; and just as the spirit of the world is not a person, but is the influence or power of which the world is the source or origin.—John 15: 26; 1 Corinthians 2: 11-16.

On the day of Pentecost the Lord Jesus, "having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost [Spirit], he hath shed forth [or poured out] this, which ye now see and hear." Shedding forth and pouring out can be understood of a power or influence, but not of a person.—Acts 2: 16-18, 33; 10: 45.

In Old Testament times the Holy Spirit acted for the most part in a mechanical manner, inspiring the prophets to speak and write, giving Samson physical strength, or enabling untrained men to make the finest jewellery for the tabernacle. Since our Lord's resurrection, the Holy Spirit has been, in the lives of believers, a guide to the understanding of Scripture truth, and a fruit-producing power to build them up in the likeness of character of God and of Christ. In addition to this latter have been the miraculous "gifts" conferred upon the early church, as already described on page 90.

The Argument from Pronouns

Trinitarian believers think the Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit is a Person, one of three co-eternals and coequals. They find apparent support for their belief when they read such passages as John 16: 7-15, a portion of which we now quote—

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: . . .

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. . . .

The constant use of the pronoun "he" in the above passage and some others is taken by the trinitarian believers as teaching that the Holy Spirit is a Person. When met in this way we first cite another well known passage, Romans 8: 16, and ask the trinitarian for his explanation of it—

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

We say to the trinitarian believer, You wish us to explain the passages in which the pronoun "he" is used, and we shall do so. But first we would like your explanation why the Holy Spirit is called "itself" in Romans 8: 16. The translation is quite correct in both places. We have never been favoured with the explanation we have asked for; though we fully believe that the explanation is quite well known to many trinitarians, particularly to such as have studied languages.

We are not meaning to set Romans up in opposition to John as though there were a contradiction and each believer must choose which he prefers. THAT WAY IS NEVER RIGHT, but is greatly dishonouring to God, whose Holy Spirit inspired the writers of both Romans and John.

The explanation is that in the passage in John the pronoun "he" has for its antecedent the noun *parakletos* (Comforter), which in the Greek is masculine, and requires a masculine pronoun. In Romans the pronoun "itself" has for its antecedent the noun *pneuma* (Spirit), which in the Greek is neuter, and requires a neuter pronoun. Therefore the use of the pronouns proves nothing at all in regard to the sex or personality of the Holy Spirit, and the passages in John are not proof texts in favour of the trinitarians, nor is the passage in Romans a proof text in favour of those opposed to the Athanasian creed.

If the use of the pronoun "he" in these passages is to be received as *evidence* or proof that the Holy Spirit is a male person, then a principle is established, and every use of that pronoun in the Bible must needs be regarded as referring to some male person. Hence an iron gate is a male person, because when Peter was being delivered from prison by the angel, the iron gate "opened to them of *his* own accord." (Acts 12: 10.) On the same principle, the altar in the court of the tabernacle in the wilderness was also a male person, for we read of "*his* horns," "*his* pans," "*his* ashes," "*his* shovels," "*his* basons," "*his* fleshhooks," "*his* firepans." (Exodus 27: 1-3.) If the use of the pronoun "he" is to be received as *proof* in the one case it is equally good proof in the other two. But if the use of that pronoun does not prove the altar and the iron gate to have been male persons, neither can it prove the Comforter to be a male person. So this alleged "evidence" is no evidence at all.

In the languages, ancient and modern, of continental Europe, sex had and has but little to do with determining the grammatical genders of nouns, these being arranged (the English think disarranged) in manners which the most of us would consider exceedingly peculiar. In Germany, the sun is feminine, the moon is masculine, and the ship always neuter.

The English language is not now burdened (as it was in Chaucer's time) with the grammatical gender which is still such a trial to English students of continental languages; although there are a few idiomatic and colloquial instances remaining in English, such as "she" for ship. We now are accustomed to apply gender to nouns according to the sex of the things named. In the Greek they had the grammatical gender, which arbitrarily applied masculine, feminine, and neuter regardless of physical facts. It is very convenient for English-speaking people to be free of the burden of grammatical gender; but it is necessary for us to realize that it was used in the Greek language, and that its use forbids the citation of texts containing the pronoun "he" or "itself" as indications of the personality or lack of personality of that which is thus referred to.

Grieve Not the Holy Spirit

We have shown from the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit is the power, or influence, of the Father. The Holy Spirit therefore is not a personality. But as long as the Father has existed (that is always) so long has the Holy Spirit proceeded from Him to accomplish His purposes. Therefore the Holy Spirit is called "the eternal Spirit." The objection is sometimes raised—If the Holy Spirit is not a person, how can it be said to experience love or grief, as in Ephesians 4: 30—"grieve not the holy Spirit," and Romans 15: 30—"for the love of the Spirit"? To this we answer that, by a well known usage of language, impersonal things are sometimes spoken of, or even spoken to, as though they were persons. Young children learn this in the well known nursery rhyme addressed to the star—"How I wonder what you are." This usage is frequent in the Scriptures. In the two passages cited the Holy Spirit, though not a person, is spoken of as though it were a person. Keeping in memory the fact that the Holy Spirit is the power or influence of God, who is a Person, it is not difficult to understand why the qualities of Jehovah, of which love is one, and the ability to suffer grief another, should be ascribed to the Power or Influence which proceeds from Him. Moreover, Ephesians 4: 30, which exhorts to "grieve not the holy Spirit," adds an explanation, "whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," in which the Spirit is spoken of as a *seal*—an inanimate thing; while in 1 Thessalonians 5: 19 it is spoken of as a flame—"Quench not the Spirit." To get the right understanding, all these descriptions must be considered in harmony; and the only consistent conclusion is that the Holy Spirit is not a person but a Power or Influence from God "shed forth" upon His people through Jesus Christ.

When the Saviour began His earthly ministry, the Spirit was given Him without measure, and the inspired words of prophecy show exactly what that Spirit was—"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord"—in short, the power of God. When our Saviour offered up Himself, the same Spirit gave Him the power to do so "without spot." And when the risen Christ ascended to the Father, He obtained the power before promised in the prophecy of Joel, and on the day of Pentecost "shed forth" that wonderful Gift, "which proceeded from the Father," upon His waiting people, to be with them and their successors in the faith until He should receive them to Himself.—Hebrews 9: 14; Matthew 3: 16; John 3: 34; Isaiah 11: 2, 3; Acts 2: 14-21, 33; John 15: 26.

"Jehovah our Gods is One"

When Moses was inspired to write Deuteronomy 6: 4, in the Hebrew text of which the word "Gods" is in the plural, was he writing something in favour of the Three-in-One teaching? No, he was not; though this passage is now much misused by those who seek to convert the Jews to trinitarianism.

The Bible has many instances of similar use of plural forms. In the introduction to Young's Ana-

lytical Concordance there are two pages of "Illustrations of Bible Idioms." Paragraph 50 says—"Plural nouns, pronouns, and verbs are frequently used for the singular." Numerous references to both Old and New Testaments are cited. In modern English this usage is very infrequent; but the Royal "We" is well within living memory; also the editorial "we." In modern German the practice is still followed of using the plural pronoun when addressing a stranger or a distinguished person, also by children when addressing their parents; and, in writing, such plural pronouns begin with capital letters. Let us refer to two Bible illustrations of the plural-for-singular idiom. The two to be cited are chosen because the facts are noted in the marginal readings in reference Bibles, and can easily be seen by every reader.

In Genesis 4: 10 it is written—

And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood [margin, bloods] crieth unto me from the ground.

This referred to the blood of murdered Abel, the first martyr to the faith. There is no possibility of supposing that the plural form "bloods" refers to plurality of number. The plural form of the word is used for impressiveness, to indicate importance.

In Isaiah 53: 9 it is written—

And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death [margin, deaths]; . . .

Our Lord died but once, as we all know. By the Hebrew prophet His one death is referred to in the plural. Why? To indicate, by the usual grammatical form, its immense importance, value, and dignity, as the one offering sufficient for the sins of the whole world.

Similarly the plural word "Gods" is used in Deuteronomy 6: 4 to indicate the majesty of Jehovah.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God [Hebrew, Gods] is one Lord.

Any thought of plurality of number is ruled out by the word "one" in the text. So the trinitarians are seriously misusing the majestic and inspired Hebrew "Shema" in their endeavour to influence Jewish proselytes to become trinitarian believers.

While on this subject it is very interesting to note—and it well illustrates that the people in general were accustomed to this idiom—that when the children of Israel in the wilderness worshipped the golden calf they said (Exodus 32: 4)—

These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Yet there was but one calf!

In the Name

Trinitarian believers refer to our Lord's words (Matthew 28: 19)—"baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"—as though they would support their idea.

But the text says nothing about coeternity or co-equality. The rendering "in the name of" signifies by the authority of, or with the assent or approval of.

If trinitarians urge, as sometimes they do, that the association of the Holy Spirit with the Father

and the Son in the baptism formula should be taken to prove that the Spirit is a person because the Father and the Son are persons (in this connection see also the benediction in 2 Corinthians 13: 14), reference must be made to 1 John 5: 8, where this so-called "principle" of interpretation that satisfies the trinitarians that the Spirit is a person should equally prove to them that the water and the blood also are persons because associated with the Spirit in an agreement.

But the trinitarians would not allow this association to prove that the water and the blood are persons (as of course they should not); so we say that they are debarred from insisting that the Spirit is a person on account of being associated with the Father and with the Son in the baptism formula.

The One Text

In all the Bible there has never been more than the one text that could be thought to be definitely trinitarian in its declaration; viz., 1 John 5: 7, 8—

For there are three that bear record [[in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth,] the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

The peculiarly trinitarian portion of this passage is enclosed in double brackets. At the time of making the Authorized Version (A.D. 1611) the authenticity of the bracketed words was somewhat in question. The finding since of manuscripts more ancient than those then available shows beyond all doubt that the bracketed words are not authentic; they are uninspired, and should have no place in our Bible. According to the Variorum Bible footnote, these words are found in "two very late MSS.; omitted by the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrine, and all Greek MSS. written before the fifteenth century; omitted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort in their compilations of the Greek text; omitted by the Revised Version; the passage is first found in writings of the African Fathers of the fifth century (but is possibly also quoted by Cyprian) and in later copies of the Vulgate."

From this it appears that there was no trinitarian text in any Greek manuscript of the New Testament for more than a thousand years after the Nicene and Athanasian creeds were formulated!

In this connection it is necessary to make a serious complaint against the Revised Version. It is customary to see in the marginal notes in relevant places in the Revised Version, "some ancient authorities read;" or, "Many ancient authorities read;" or, as in a note on the last chapter of Mark, "The two oldest Greek manuscripts, and some other authorities, omit from ver. 9 to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel." By such marginal notations the attention of the reader is directed to special items of information, always interesting, and sometimes very important. Against the words omitted from 1 John 5: 7, 8, there is no

such marginal notation; this most important alteration has been made in complete silence. Moreover, the numbering of the verses in this chapter has been altered, also without notation, so that in this passage the verse numbers in the Revised Version do not agree with those in the Authorized Version (although the verse numbers agree elsewhere).

The right of the Revised Version translators to alter the verse numbers is not questioned, since these numbers are not inspired, but are inserted only to facilitate reference to the Scriptures.

But here is an alteration made in the text, as well as in the verse numbers, at a passage affecting the very doctrine which the Athanasian creed says is necessary to be believed in order to salvation; and the Revisers have done all this without following their usual custom of directing attention to ancient authority on special items. WHY???

Perhaps the reason may be in the fact that nearly all the translators of the Revised Version were trinitarians.

Christendom's Idolatry

Eastern Christendom bows down before "holy" pictures (ikons), but will have nothing to do with images. Papists bow down before images and venerate "holy" pictures as well. Both sections venerate alleged "relics" of saints. Papists bow down before the "strange god," the wafer which the all-powerful word of the least of its priests is supposed to be able to transform into the veritable flesh of our blessed Lord, so that the creature creates the Creator. Protestants have rightly cast out all these forms of idolatry.

But there is another idolatry in which nearly all Protestants are involved with the Papists and Eastern Christendom. They all worship the "Holy Trinity" which, as we have seen, is violently contrary to Scripture; is most dishonouring to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; and, having been fashioned by men, being the work of men's minds if not of their hands, is wholly imaginary, and therefore NON-EXISTENT.

In worshipping the non-existent "Holy Trinity," Christendom is guilty of IDOLATRY, and we have no hesitation in making this accusation. Individual Christians to whom these words may come are lovingly exhorted and urged to flee from this and all other idolatry if they are involved. And may we all have grace and strength to keep clear of it and of every semblance thereto.

Those of us who, by the grace of God, are already clear should give thanks for what we can understand about the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and should endeavour to follow the course that will glorify God in all things.

One God, and One Lord

Although we are fully aware that the "Holy Trinity" worshipped by nearly all Christendom is in fact non-existent, we are also aware that as a form of misbelief the trinitarian doctrine is very potent in many hearts, and is a conspicuous illustration of

the activity and the influence of the "god of this world" in blinding many minds. It behooves us therefore more than ever to rely on that Word inspired by the Holy Spirit—that Word which is able to make us wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3: 14-17); that inspired Word which contains neither the Nicene nor the Anathasian creed, but which, contrary to these creeds and imaginings of uninspired men, says to us (1 Corinthians 8: 4-6)—

... we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

But to us there is but ONE GOD, THE FATHER, of whom are all things, and we in him; and ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom are all things, and we by him.

May this blessed knowledge ever abide in our hearts, sanctifying us according to the blessed, and holy, and perfect will of God! Amen.



For the Children

PAUL REACHES CORINTH

When so many preparations were made by the Lord for the introduction of the Gospel, and so long before it was to be preached, we begin to think it must be something very, very important. And indeed the Gospel is important. It is the most important thing in the world, because it tells us of things of more value than anything we have ever yet known or heard of. The Gospel is really "news from heaven," first brought to men on the earth by the greatest of all God's messengers—our Lord Jesus. That we should hear anything from heaven at all is wonderful enough; but when God's own Son is chosen to bring it we may marvel at the way this earth has been favoured.

When Paul heard of it he immediately devoted his whole life to telling the "news from heaven" to others; he became one of its honoured messengers. Silas did the same, as also did Timothy; and, as we have seen, they both became Paul's trusted helpers on his great journeys from city to city.

Paul had been alone in Athens; Timothy had gone to Thessalonica, and Silas seems to have been on another mission somewhere in Macedonia. Paul left Athens, after his preaching to the philosophers on Mars' Hill, and went to Corinth, and there he seems to have been not long in finding two people—a man and his wife—who, like himself, were tent makers. Paul would have but little difficulty in finding someone of this trade, for a good many people were engaged in it. No doubt he would also know just where to look for such traders, and when he found these people he arranged to make his home with them, and every day they worked together at the tents. It was in this way that Paul provided himself with the simple necessities of his life while in Corinth, earning enough for all his needs, so that he had no occasion to receive anything from the natives of that city.

As we shall several times again hear of the two people whom Paul met and with whom he abode, we must tell you that their names were Aquila and Priscilla. Both belonged to the Jewish nation, but we are not sure whether they were Christians when Paul first met them. We know, however, that they were soon after, and it may all have come to them through Paul their partner in labour. Although

Aquila, and probably his wife also, was a native of Pontus in Asia Minor, he seems to have made his home in Rome—many miles from Corinth. But, sometime before Paul met them, one of the Roman Emperors had commanded all the Jews to leave that city, and that is how these two came to be in Corinth.

Among the many seaports along the Mediterranean coast Corinth was one of the most important. It was a great commercial centre, and the Jewish population was large. This means that there was at least one synagogue in the city, where the Jews gathered every Sabbath day—there to pray, read and search their Scriptures; looking for and waiting for their Messiah, not knowing that He had already come to their nation, had finished His work on the earth, and had gone back into the heavens!

In a city like Corinth, where travellers by sea were arriving nearly every day, the Jews would certainly have heard of Jesus of Nazareth, for the news would be brought to them. But the Jews themselves also frequently visited Jerusalem. From the different reports they would receive—some saying "He is a good man," others that "He deceiveth the people," they might be left in an uncertain state of mind as to whether He really was their Messiah.

And that is how Paul would find them when he entered the synagogue in Corinth on the Sabbath days. And we can well imagine how thoughts of sympathy and even pity would fly through his mind as he sat there and heard his brethren, the Jews, praying to God and trying to worship Him through Moses. His concern would be even greater for them if, after he had declared the truth to them about Jesus, they stubbornly rejected the divine message and preferred the hopeless course of looking for another Messiah. Well might Paul think of the burdens that would be lifted and the blessings that were awaiting them if they would but believe the truth he had to preach.

And the opportunity was given him each sabbath; and he reasoned with all present, using the Scriptures and persuading them that Jesus was the Christ. And the Jews early opposed themselves to the apostle's message. That opposition would be shown by their manner towards him as well as by words. But what particularly showed their determination and unreasonableness was that they did much more

than merely oppose Paul: they "blasphemed;" that is, they said things against Jesus as Messiah that were quite wicked. By blaspheming they proved themselves wholly unworthy of having any more of the Gospel made known to them; so Paul withdrew, and did not enter their synagogue again. He had fulfilled the Lord's command always to preach to the Jews first, and as they refused him he could tell them they must themselves take the consequences of that refusal. And that was no small matter, for in refusing Paul they had also refused God!

The very words he used you will read presently in the Acts, but they were accompanied by an action which was common in those days, and was indeed commanded by the Lord whenever the Jews refused their testimony. He "shook his raiment," which meant that he had done his duty toward them and was now free.

The Jews in Corinth were thus left to continue in their synagogue alone, and to go on looking for their Messiah in their own way. For Paul walked out and went to the Gentiles, declaring the Good News to them. And that was only a matter of passing out of one door and entering another. For a Greek believer named Justus had a house next to the synagogue, and this man, seeing and knowing all that had been done, invited Paul to hold his meetings there. So now what do we see?

We see the old form of worship and the new being carried on side by side in a Gentile city, in both of which places the Corinthians were at liberty to enter during a service, for the invitation was always open. And if it so happened that the two congregations were meeting on the same day, say on a sabbath morning, we would see them passing each other in the street and afterwards entering the different doors.

Amongst those going to the house of Justus would be some Jews who formerly went to the synagogue: and now what looks they would get from their Jewish friends as they passed the synagogue by! At the close of each service there would be further awkward meetings and passings in the street; and all of this would prove a test for both parties. The synagogue Jews would certainly frown on and condemn the Christian Jews, harbouring more or less bitterness against them. But the Christians, if true to their teaching, would be patient and intreat: "Come and see" would be their appeal.

This odd situation of a Jew starting a rival meeting next door to the synagogue would become known through the city, arousing some curiosity. The people might say, We know fairly well what the Jews believe and teach—looking for their Messiah, and so on; but what do these new ones say? And many of them went to see, and so heard for the first time how the God of the Jews was then calling the Gentiles, the Corinthians amongst them, to receive the blessings that were first offered to the Jews, but which they rejected. And Paul put the matter so plainly and scripturally before them that many believed, and later on still many more, and were baptized in token of their faith.

Thus the church in Corinth was started, and the numbers grew and increased. All of the members were enriched in the knowledge of God and given mighty powers by the laying on of Paul's hands; so that they must have created quite a stir in that great city and the country round about.

We have many times had to tell you of the envy and bitterness of the Jews against the Christians in other cities, and already those evil things were showing themselves amongst the Jews of the synagogue against Paul. Some Jews having left them, and many Gentiles crowding in as followers of Paul—and next door too—acted like a sting. It gave them pain instead of pleasure which it should have done. But when the chief ruler of the synagogue—Crispus by name—and his whole family walked out and entered the house of Justus, also as followers of Paul, there was most probably a real storm of indignation against Paul. For it was like taking a stone out of the foundations of the synagogue when they went; for the chief ruler was the most influential and prominent man in it.

Those Jews who separated themselves from the synagogue to follow Jesus faithfully, and those Gentiles who left their idols and became firm believers in the Lord, certainly did the right thing. They recognized Paul and his companions as true messengers from God, and therefore as having the word of the Truth to speak. In that case the truth could not be heard in the synagogue again, nor was it then or ever in the idol temples. Their calling, then, was to keep themselves separate, to keep together and close to Paul and to the Lord who was the great Leader of them all, and to pay attention to no other teachers.

But let us suppose that some of the Jews after a while should say, Well, after all there are some things in the Law of Moses that are good; and the Gentiles should say, Not every thing in the gods is bad; and, you know, some of the people still attending both places are very nice. Let us pay them a visit in their services, and get friendly with them, then perhaps we can talk with them of the good things we know, and it may be they will see the Truth and will come over to us, forsaking the wrong ways as we did. Is not that just what is wanted?

We might answer this and say, Yes: it is what is wanted. But whether it would be right to adopt that plan is another matter. So we ask, Would the Jews of the synagogue who had already refused Paul's message be persuaded by that plan to change their minds and join the Christians next door? I suppose we may say, Not one of them. Would the Gentiles do any better? We are sure they would not.

So if friendship and companionship with these are desired, it is the Christians who would have to sacrifice their faith. And that would mean that in time they would lose it all: the Jewish believers would be back in the synagogue altogether, and the Gentile believers in their idolatry again!

It is always the same at all times with all of us. Satan is interested in breaking down the separate-

ness of those who believe, and is so strong at present that the wrong will always win as soon as we forsake the apostle's instructions. If we have learned to know the Lord and to love Him and His people, it is for us to keep with them or we shall soon find ourselves falling away, falling back to the old things we once left.

How careful must we be of our companions!

Be Not Afraid; I am With Thee

Paul had been so accustomed to the Jews seeking to take his life or to do him bodily injury, in nearly all the cities he visited, that he again seems to have feared that probability in Corinth. For when he wrote to the Corinthian church a good while after he said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." And as it seems he was in Corinth when he wrote his second letter to the Thessalonians, we may learn from that letter that there was considerable opposition to the Gospel in Corinth, and probably from the Gentiles as well as the Jews. For the apostle besought the Thessalonians to pray for them, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and that they may be delivered from "unreasonable and wicked men." It was his great desire to go on with his work of evangelising that great city, but there were very many hindrances and, as we think, positive dangers to his own person. And had he been injured by violence or threatened with death as had so often happened before, the free course of the Gospel would have suffered, or Paul would have had to fly out of the city.

But the Lord knew about all that was going on, and of Paul's weakness and fear and trembling. And the Lord was kind to Paul in his distress, and for the third time spoke to him. On this occasion it was in the night He spoke, and in a vision. They were words of cheer, promise, and encouragement—just such words as he seems to have needed—

"Be not afraid," Paul: stop fearing and trembling.

"And hold not thy peace;" "but speak"—as you have been.

Do not think I have forsaken or forgotten you: "For I am with thee."

And now I promise that "no man shall set on thee to hurt thee."

And know this, that your work here is far from finished: "for I have much people in this city."

This visit of the Lord in a vision must have lifted Paul right up; and whatever depressed feelings he might have had must have flown away. He could more than ever trust in the Lord and resume his calm and serenity, walking about that city before the face of all his foes, "teaching the word of God among them." And knowing that not one person or any number of them could raise a hand to do him injury! That was now impossible since the Lord Himself was controlling all of them. And his work was going to be a great success, for "much people," many people, would become believers through his ministry.

For one year and six months Paul continued in Corinth, and knew that he was being preserved from

the violence of wicked men. The Gospel spread throughout the city and in many smaller places around, and to the great joy of the apostle many believed on the Lord, and were added to the church. So if he had a short season of "fear and . . . trembling," it was more than balanced by a long period of security, peace, and success under the mighty hand of the Lord.

Please read Acts 18: 1-11 for this Story.

What the Jews said of Jesus, John 7: 11, 12.

Instruction in conduct, 1 Corinthians 4: 12, 13.

The Corinthians made rich, 1 Corinthians 1: 5; 2 Corinthians 9: 11.

The Gifts, 1 Corinthians 12: 28.

The need for keeping separate, 2 Corinthians 6: 14-18.

And together, Hebrews 10: 25.

To follow Paul, 1 Corinthians 11: 1.

To reject false teachers, Galatians 1: 8, 9.

—UNCLE FRANK.

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The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

67, 2/-; 68, £1; 69, 2/-; 70, 4/-; 71, £1:10:0; 72, £10:10:0; 73, 4/-; 74, £1; 75, 4/-; 76, £2:2:0; 77, 2/-; 78, £1; 79, £3:2:6; 80, £2:11:3; total for month, £23:13:9 (\$115.11); previously reported, £117:19:0 (\$573.11); total for 6 months, £141:12:9 (\$688.22). Of this total, a portion was required to clear off the Deficit from 1934, the amount remaining for use in the work for this year being £55. The expenses of the Advocate Sustaining Fund for the whole of this year to December 15, 1935, are estimated at £400 (\$2000); thus leaving £345 to be accomplished between July 1 and December 15—or an average of about £69 (\$345) per month for the 5 months.

The Cheerful Givers

Voluntary Donations, as under, have been received since our last report for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grace of God in Jesus, our Mediator and Intercessor under the terms of the New Covenant.

32, 5/-; 33, 2/-; 34, £15; 35, £20; 36, 5/-; 37, 6/2; total for month, £35:18:2 (\$174.52); previously reported, £67:9:11 (\$328.02); total for 6 months, £103:8:1 (\$502.54). The estimated expenses of the Cheerful Givers Fund for 1935 amount to £200 (\$1000); though more than this sum can be beneficially utilized should it be available.