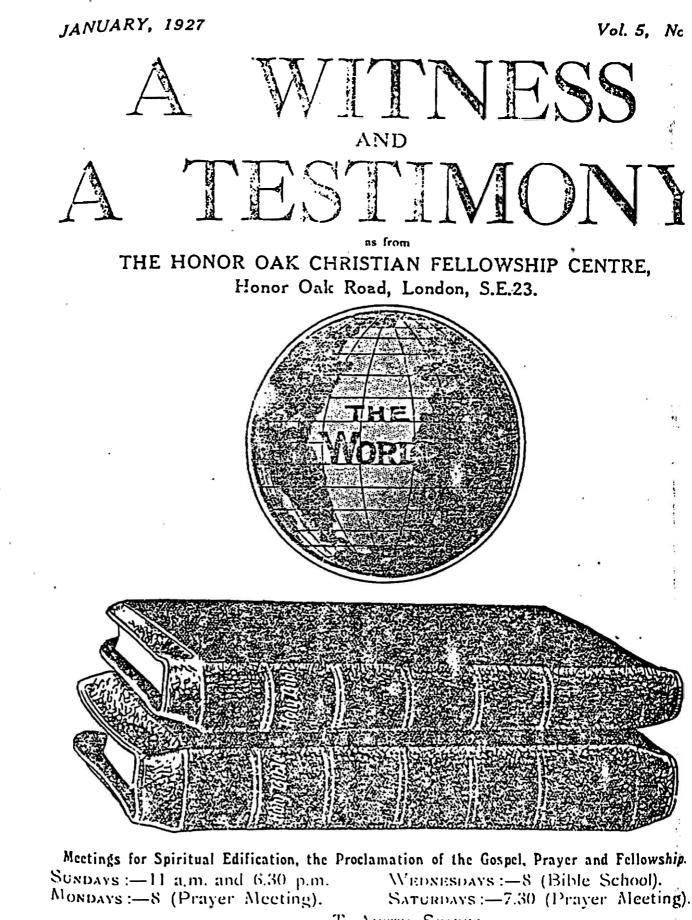
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Ministers :

T. AUSTIX-SPARES T. MADOC JEFFREYS

All particulars may be obtained from Mr. G. PATERSON, 27 Tintagel Crescen London, S.E.22, the Secretary of the "Fellowship"

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# MINISTER'S LETTER

#### BELOVED OF THE LORD,

January, 1927.

Is not the Lord Himself our Light and our Salvation, and the very Strength of our life? Whom shall we fear, and of what shall we be afraid? His *might* is ours. Think of it! If God be thus for us, let us measure the thing that can be against us: "*He* uttered His voice: the earth melted." Nothing can stand before the confession of our God. His Voice is heard in the heart-testimony of the weakest saint, for none can say, "Jesus is Lord!" but by the Holy Ghost. It is therefore the Holy Spirit that then speaks. This is "The Testimony of Jesus" before which Satan is overthrown.

And the Strength is within: "I in you"; He shall be in you. It was this indwelling of God by the Holy Spirit that enabled Paul to spiritually boast, "I can do all things through Christ Who in-strengtheneth me!" His ministry also was according to the inworking of this Strength: "according to His power which worketh in me mightily." The resources of God therefore wait at the heart of those who dare believe.

Strength was wont to come out of Zion, from the sanctuary. There the glory of the Lord was revealed : "O Thou, Who dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth !" But now it is as from within the spirit of His own redeemed, whom He hath chosen for His habitation, would God reveal Himself; and strength, authority, and power are within the believing heart, as we open it on the heavenward side to Him Whom our soul loveth. The resources of heaven wait at thy door, believing child of God !

So in the darkness, here is the Light, for it is the light of an indwelling Life according to His promise : " He that followeth Me, shall not walk in darkness; but shall have the light of Life."

And, again, in our weakness (so readily acknowledged, Lord !) here is our Strength. The very Might of God is in these feeble but believing hearts. We will not be intimidated by all the wrath and fury of the adversary; neither are we dismayed by the palpable ineffectiveness of our own resources, for He Who is stronger than the strong, has come in to abide with us. Our weakness but affords a richer opportunity for God's grace, and the occasion shall enhance His glory.

The key-stronghold to all the land of promise, Jericho, collapses to the mere shout of a

patient but proclaiming faith. But your faith must have a voice. Say it ! Let the redeemed of the Lord say so ! It is the "utterance" of faith that stands to the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God (and what assurance has He not given in the blood of the Cross ? ) that turns the battle at the gate.

So we have proved it throughout this past year, whether in light or shadow, and pass the testimony on that the New Year may be faced with courage.

Who can tell what it may bring forth? But for us who dare believe it must, and shall, bring forth the glory of God.

## THE

## MINISTRY AND FELLOWSHIP

WELL, the Lord has raised our "beloved"; and once again there is a feast of love where the joy of this resurrection is shared. It would be idle to try to put into words the gratitude of our hearts. This sickness has indeed been to the glory of God. It has caused us to cast ourselves upon Him, and thus to prove Him. as never before. Throughout the first strenuous fortnight, when human resources seemed so precarious and were continually threatening to collapse, we were thrown again and again upon prayer as the Lord's way of coming into the situation. Not that we are unmindful of medical skill and devoted nursing! We should be singularly churlish were we to fail in our recognition of these Divinely permitted ministries. But it was not these me ns only that brought our brother through. There has been a ready admission from those directions that the case is a "miracle." Do we not know it? For whenever the situation became more ominous the Holy Spirit energized and stirred us up to take hold of those Divine resources of life which He seeks to minister in the fellowship of the Body of Christ, and-there was always an immediate response. It has been throughout a wonderful demonstration of this law of the Spirit of Life in the Christ, viz., that we minister to one another as members of His Body in a Holy Ghost prayer-life. May the lesson of these tense weeks lead us on to exercise this ministry in all the ranges of its possibility for the church of the living God in all the world.

Our brother will need yet a long season of quietness and rest, but his ministry in the Spirit will be very valuable to us at the Centre.

These are the weeks when the ordering and appointments of our "house" will be taking shape, and we are already praising our God for His wisdom in keeping our trother at home. There will be needed much counsel of the Lord's l'resence, as we shall be waiting upon Him together that the ministry and equipment of the Hostel, Training Centre, and the development of service in the Fellowship, shall be according to His pattern.

MINISTRY.—Of the many calls to service this past month we should record that at Newcastle and Colchester the Lord's Presence was manifested, and the Word of God was richly blessed. At Newcastle the "Witness and Testimony" Conferences are being held the third Friday in each month.

THE JANUARY CONFERENCE.—As predicted, the Lord made this a time of decision and action with regard to these long foreseen developments. The Theme, "The testimony of Jesus," really gathered around these practical matters; but we shall ever remember the blessed way in which the Lord brought our brother, Mr. A. S. Crowe, of the Kurku and Central Indian Hill Mission, into a rich tide of ministry in the Word. The addresses on Saturday and Sunday evenings came fresh and living from the Throne, and there was another season of unction on Monday afternoon. It is most encouraging to us as God "comes in" in this way. Our brother, Mr. Pearson Harrison, was only able to be with us on the Saturday afternoon, when he was suffering from indisposition, but the Lord had His own provision for us, and we give Him praise !

The addresses of our brother, Mr. Crowe, were reported, and we give the summary of the first in this issue.

Upon our own heart was the burden of our relation as a fellowship to "The testimony of Jesus," and, as intimated, this headed up to the practical matter of our present actual basis.

THE FELLOWSHIP.— It was necessary to make it clear that with our removal from the former premises we had come out upon the clear basis of a fellowship in the Spirit through the redeeming grace of our God in the Christ, crucified. All organisation, as such, has been left behind. The old church membership roll has ceased to exist, and all the administration which depended upon that system of "church government," including the deaconate, has in like manner concluded its term.

But there will be orderings of fellowship in life and service and it is for the coming forth

of these, as we continue to wait upon God, that we arc expectant. It is evident that our present fellowship must be based upon a wholehearted acceptance, on the part of those who have followed us, of the vital spiritual principles which our "Testimony" affirms. There has been demonstrated a wonderful loyalty to the spiritual leadership and ministry. During these months of transition the responsibility for practical direction devolved upon such as were wholly devoted to the vision the Lord had given to the pastors. We believe this is blessedly shared. But some had to take the necessary steps to ensure the continuity of the ministry and testimony of the fellowship as gathered together in this locality. In this matter onr brothers Paterson, Bond, Taylor and Alexander have co-operated with us in assuming a joint-trusteeship of the "Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre," recognising that this involved a spiritual responsibility. We believe that the "Fellowship" generally recognises this as being of God, and there has been a spontaneous response and acceptance of the present position: but where so many are ready for service we may expect the Lord to raise up others in aids, helps, govern-These however ments and administrations. will become manifest as we continue instant in prayer. We have been stripped of every form of man-made organisation, and the Lord has to build up now from the foundation. But the "Foundation" stands firm. The Lord, He is the "Foundation."

And apart from our regular times of meeting we are looking forward to the opportunity the fully equipped Hostel will afford of a more or less continuous prayer fellowship where those whom the Lord shall raise up as intercessors can deal with the many calls for aid and deliverance (to be wrought only through prayer) that are continually coming to us from all parts of the world,

THE HOSTEL.

We have been led to definitely "call" our sisters Lady Ogle and Mrs. Brand (U.S.A.) to the ministry of taking the oversight of this part of our corporate service, and they are responding to the "call" as one that the Lord had already laid upon their hearts. We trust that both these "servants of the Lord" will be with us by the February Conference. We are filled with praise for God's bounteous provision for the important ministry. None could be more competent in grace or gifts. The Lord make them both a world blessing.

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The Hostel will be a guest-bouse for servants of God from all parts of the world who return from strenuous labours and conflict, needing the rest and reinforcement we trust their fellowship with us will provide. The possibilities of this ministry are very great.

TRAINING CENTRE:—The time has come for a definite commencing of this work. Already there are several applicants waiting for this announcement. God has brought into our Fellowship a sufficient number of those "apt to teach" under His anointing, and we are able to go right ahead. We do not specify here any details of our prospective course. We must obtain all such matter from the Lord, but all who are interested in this "department," if it may be so termed, of our Fellowship and Ministry are requested to write now to—

#### Mr. G. PATERSON,

Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

PRESENT.

We rejoice at thesettlement of our dear brother, the Rev. Douglas Wood, late of Matlock, in our near vicinity. Mr. Wood has now a free itinerant ministry within his own "church," but he belongs to that One Church, which is His Body. And the Lord has brought his dear wife and himself into close and affectionate fellowship with ourselves. We are looking forward to an increasing blessing as this freeing of our brother for the proclamation of the whole counsel of God becomes more and more manifest. ABSENT.

Another servant of God, who had also come into close fellowship with us, the Rev. T. A. Horne, Vicar of Haddon, near Peterborough, was called suddenly into the Glory of His Presence a week ago. His was a pure spirit. He followed the Lord in a beautiful simplicity of faith. He had been with us at more than one conference, and we had learned to love his worth. So we journey toward that hour when His purpose completed in the Church, we shall all be together "for ever with the Lord."

#### DR. LUMSDEN.

Our sister has just returned from a ministry of marked blessing in Lisburn, near Belfast, January 15th to 18th.

We rejoice in this all the more because there was a going forth (under much pressure), for during the past six weeks our sister has been a bulwark of faith and service to us all. Her labours of love have been manifold and inestimable. We thank God for His gift to us in her fellowship and ministry.

## A PERSONAL LETTER

BELOVED IN THE LORD,

The burden of indebtedness and gratitude has become so great that I must make an outlet-though so inadequate-by this brief personal note. For all the wonderful kindness shown in so many ways during this time of sickness-both in spiritual upholding and in lifting all the temporal concern from us by so many and generous gifts-for all the tokens of thought and care from numerous friends near and far. I do tender a gratitude which can never be expressed in words. This truly is the Grace of God resting upon you, for I am the least of all in worthiness of this great kindness, I do trust that in some way a ministry enriched by this time of going into the depths with the Lord will work out to your upbuilding and blessing.

Undoubtedly there was some very great purpose in the mind of God in taking one through this, and I think many of us here in the local fellowship are already able to discern something of this. May it all be realised and nothing be lost. The testimony to the Resurrection is greatly strengthened, and our witness to His Life as out of death is confirmed. There were evidently some things which could not be brought about in any other way, and for the accomplishment of which the Lord did not esteem this to be too great a price. Looking back over it all one is fascinated with the many revelations of the holding of His hand. The full story may or may never be told, but one feels that, for the sake of the "Testimony" one should record that, in their different ways, independently of one another, and guite imsolicited, surgeons and nurses, and others in a position to judge, have declared with emphasis -to use the words of one of them-"It is a miracle you are alive !" We agree, but this is no strange word or truth.

Beloved, once more, receive my very deep gratitude, and may our personal fellowship bo hastened by the continued increase of the Lord's life and strength. The many friends to whom I owe letters will, I am sure, be patient yet a little while. Like Hezekiah, to whom the Lord added some years of life, one feels that "I shall go softly all my days," but only the "softliness" of a solemn realisation that life is not their own.

> Yours in the one Life and Witness, T. AUSTIN-SPARKS.

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## A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

# "PARABLES OF THE CROSS"

#### DEATH IS THE GATE OF LIFE.

THERE was deep insight in those old words. For man's natural thought of death is that of a dreary ending in decay and dissolution. And from his standpoint he is right: death as the punishment of sin *is* an ending.

But far other is God's thought in the redemption of the world. He takes the very thing that came in with the curse, and makes it the path of glory. Death becomes a beginning instead of an ending, for it becomes the means of liberating a fresh life.

And so the hope that lies in these parable lessons of death and life is meant for those who only are turning to Him for redemption. To those who have not turned, death stands in all its old awful doom, inevitable, irrevocable. There is no gleam of light through it for them.

\* \*

"The death of the Cross "-death's triumph hour-that was the point where God's gate opened; and to that gate we come again and again, as our lives unfold, and through it pass even on earth to our joyful resurrection, to a life each time more abundant, for each time the dying is a deeper dying. The Christian life is a process of deliverance out of one world into another, and "death," as has been truly said, "is the only way out of any world in which we are." "Death is the gate of life." Does it look so

"Death is the gate of life." Does it look so to us? Have we learnt to go down, once and again, into its gathering shadows in quietness and confidence, knowing that there is always "a better resurrection " beyond ?

It is in the stages of a plant's growth, its budding and blossoming and seed-bearing, that this lesson has come to me : the lesson of death in its delivering power. It has come as no mere far-fetched imagery, but as one of the many voices in which God speaks, bringing strength and gladness from His Holy Place.

Can wo not trace the sign of the Cross in the first hint of the new spring's dawning ? In many cases, as in the chestnut, before a single old leaf has faded, next year's buds may be seen, at the summit of branch and twig, formed into its very likeness: in others the leaf-buds seem to bear its mark by breaking through the stem blood-red. Back in the plant's first stages, the crimson touch is to be found in seed-leaves and fresh shoots, and even in the hidden sprouts. Look at the acorn, for instance, as it breaks its shell, and see how the baby tree bears its birthmark : it is the blood-red in which the prism ray dawns out of the darkness, and the sunrise out of the night. The very stars, science now tolls us, glow with this same colour as they are born into the univorse out of the dying of former stars.\*

Be it as it may in nature, it is true, nt any rate in the world of grace, that each soul that would enter into real life must bear at the outset this

\* Prof. Huggins. Brit. Asso. 1891.

crimson seal; there must be the individual "sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ." It must go out through the Gate of the Cross.

And here is the needs-be. Death is the only way out of the world of condemnation wherein we lie. Shut into that world, it is vain to try by any self-effort to battle out; nothing can revoke the decree "the soul that sinneth it shall die."

The only choice left is this. Shall it be, under the old headship of Adam, our own death, in all that God means by the word, or shall it be, under the headship of Christ, the death of another in our place ?

It is when we come to self-despair, when we feel ourselves locked in, waiting our doom, that the glory and the beauty of God's way of escape dawns upon us, and we submit ourselves to Him in it. All resistance breaks down as faith closes on the fact: "He loved me and gave Himself for me." We receive the atonement so hardly won, and we go out into life not only pardoned, but cleared and justified.

DEATH TO SIN'S PENALTY IS THE WAY OUT INTO A LIFE OF JUSTIFICATION.

And as we go out free, we find that on the other side of the Cross a new existence has really begun : that the love of the Crucified has touched the springs of our being—we are in another world, under an open heaven. "Christ hath suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

Does anyone read these words who is trying to struggle from the natural life into the spiritual, by "some other way "than this way of the Cross? It is as impossible as it would be to pass from to-day into to-morrow except through the night. Your battling is a battling against God. Yield and come to His terms. Yield now.

But blessed as it is, this passage into a life of peace with Him, woe to the soul that stops there, thinking that the goal is reached, and dwindles, so to speak, into a stunted bud. Holiness, not safety, is at the end of our calling.

And so it comes to pass that a fresh need for deliverance is soon pressed upon him who is true to God's voice in his heart. The two lives are there together, one new-born and feeble, the other "The flesh strong with an earlier growth. lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against tho flesh," and the will power is distracted between the two, like the sap that flows partly into the old condemned leaves, partly into the fresh buds. Consequently there is the strife of a kingdom divided against itself: sometimes the one life grows and flourishes, somotimes the other; sometimes they struggle on side by side, till the cry is forced out-" Oh, wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me?"

And here again, when the point of self-despair is reached, and we come to see that our efforts after holiness are as vain as our efforts after acceptance with God, the door of escape opens afresh.

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For there is, glory be to God, a definite way out from the prison life of struggling and failure, sinning and repenting, wherein many a soul beats its wings for years after the question of pardon has been settled. And that way is again the way of death.

A stage of dying must come over the plant before the new leaves can grow and thrive. There must be a deliberate choice between the former growth and the new; one must give way to the other; the acorn has to come to the pointwhere it ceases to keep its rag of former existence, and lets everything go to the fresh shoot: the twig must withdraw its sap from last year's leaf, and let it flow into this year's bud.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The following gifts, as apart from local contributions, were received for the maintenance of this paper during December :----

Red Cliff Gardens, 18s.; Dover, 7s. 9d.; Palmer's Green, 10s.; Ashford, 10s.; Cardiff, 10s.; Golders Green, 4s. 8d.; Stoke Newington, 4s. 6d.; West Ealing, 2s.; Glasgow, 2s. 6d.; Woking, 5s.; Cardiff, 4s. 6d.; Worthing, 2s. 6d.; Ipswich, 5s.; Carlisle, 5s.; Chichester, 2s. 6d.; Bucks., 2s. 6d.; Denmark Hill, 1s.; Blackpool, 2s. 6d.; Palmer's Green, 10s.; Hornsey Rise, 5s. Total £5 14 11. The Lord be thanked.

#### FEBRUARY CONFERENCE

This will be held (D.V.) upon the first week-end in the month. Friday to Monday, inclusive, February 4 to 7.

The Conference will mark the practical beginnings of our extension in ministry, for by that date we hope to have Lady Ogle and Mrs. Brand in our midst; and our brother also.

We are beginning to recognise that the Spirit does not always allow us to follow out the given theme; but while He does honour it in part, the Lord has other things to say to us. For this we praise him, and for our liberty.

We do not propose therefore to continue publishing a detailed syllabus unless such should come to us with clear and pressing force. This theme however does come to us as for February:—"The Cross and the WILL of God."

Leaflets (with map) indicating the location of our "Centre" and the best routes for reaching it from the City may be obtained from our Secretary.

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### A SIGN

. . . . . .

What does it mean to be given to the Lord? Notes of an address given on the last Sabbath evening, November 29th, 1926, in Homor Oak Baptist Church buildings.

"Say ye, I am your sign."-Ez. xii. 11.

THE mental conception of consecration has come to mean to be blessed and to be made a blessing. That is not a true conception if just left there. These passages which we have

read contain a proposition which is the central and basic principle of consecration to the Lord, of being given to the Lord. And what is it? That He might make us a sign: They contain this law, which we have often pointed out, that God in His eternal purpose determines that the method of His realisation shuold be by an incarnation of Himself, that is, a manifestation of Himself in the flesh; and that He should do something in that incarnation which would be a sign to the universe, that should signify something of the infinite Wisdom, Power, and Sovereignty of God — that He should take hold of the form of a man, and in that form do things and say: "Look at that and learn." By what He does in such an instrument, He is making that instrument a sign and signification not only to man, but to angels of the two hierarchies, the divine and the satanic. As exampled in Job, that He might do a thing that the whole hosts of angels and demons. should look at and learn, and be made wise; so that in every realm, amongst men and in the heavenlies, the lower and the super heavenlies, God should be able to do a thing in those who are His, which might be the means of instructing, making aware, informing and demonstrating.

Moses was a sign to the Children of Israel. He disobeyed God and God had at once to act, and because Moses stood in such a prominent position before the people, his disobedience was publicly punished. In that judgment he became a sign to the Israelites, lest they should come to lightly regard the sin of disobedience. And with us, there will often have to be a public demonstration and judgment of the flesh, for the warning of others, as well as the vindication of the Truth in its living outworking. Moses was God's sign. It costs to be God's sign. Are we willing ? How great the cost to Moses !--but--the afterward !

That this is a principle of Divine dealing is illustrated in the following scriptures :---

Ezek. xii. 6. "I have set thee for a sign."

Ezek. xii. 11. "I am your sign."

Ezek. xxiv. 24. "Thou shalt be a sign unto them and they shall know that I am tho Lord."

Acts i. 8. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me."

- 2 Cor. iii. 2. "Ye are our epistle....known and read of all men."
- 2 Cor. iii. 3. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ."
- 1 Cor. iv. 1. "Let a man so account of us as the ministers of Christ."

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

1 Cor. iv. 9. "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men."

Eph. iii. 10. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God."

2 Cor. ii. 15. "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish, to one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other of life unto life."

I believe that the Lord in these days is seeking to gather out a people, and to gather in a people-few they will certainly be, and one does not say that the Lord can do this with all who are His—who shall be His Sign to the spiritual House of Israel. Their testimony may not be a testimony that the House of Israel is utterly wrong; but their testimony will be that there is a higher and deeper life in God to which He would call them. One feels this borne in upon one so much in these days, and you will understand the signification of this, that when the Lord calls a people, a small company it may be, when He puts His hand upon one here and one there, adds them one by one to a small company of those who are to be a special sign to His household, He deals with them in different ways altogether from those which He follows with other people, and He says: "I will do a new thing.'

Now it is no use your makeing comparisons with others. They may, in their way, have a certain seal and blessing of God upon them; but it does not mean that the way the Lord is leading you is a wrong way; and you dare not argue according to the ways the other people go. This is the way of the Lord for you. Do not stay to make comparisons. We stumble at that so often, we who have given ourselves wholly to God, and then have these exceptional and trying experiences to come up against-the full impact of the wrath of the enemy. We look around upon others who have an easier time, because they are not going the way we are going. Immediately we do that the bottom begins to fall out of the whole thing. The point is, the Lord has His wheel within a wheel, His instrument with which He desires to make a special sign to His people, of His Wisdom, His Power, His Grace, His Methods, His Purpose, so that He can reveal Himself through them to others. Do not have, for one moment, the thought of anyone being on a pedestal, and being in solitary isolation, of special account to the Lord. It simply means that we go deeper down to death, and in humiliation

before the world, than anyone else. And because the Lord takes us deeper, He is able to reveal something higher.

To speak now as we are closing the days of our sojourn on the older lines, and with certain of the older associations-God is leading us out into a way which is unusual, which is, if you like, peculiar; and doing a thing which we know not of as having been done anywhere else. As He leads us in a fellowship, I believe it is in order that in doing this thing, with all its cost, with all its pain, with all its need of the slaving of every bit of the flesh, pride and arrogance, and its desire for the approval of men, and all that kind of thing-I believe that in His new way He is seeking to have such to go with Him, in order that He may make them a Sign, as something spiritual, and something spiritually powerful; not that men can applaud, not that men may approve, but which perhaps will be like the impact of God from the Throne of Godupon the throne of Satan, in these closing days. That is the burden of the Word of the Lord : "Son of man, I have made you a Sign "; "Say unto them, I am your Sign."

I take it that we who are gathered in this place to-night are all the Lord's people. Nearly all of us are in this fellowship of the Spirit, having abandoned ourselves to go with the Lord all the way. It seems to me that this moment is a moment when we should face the implication of this word ; as to whether we are going the popular way, or whether we are going the unpopular way; as to whether we are going to be the Lord's Sign. When Paul uttered these words: "God has made us last of all a spectacle," he was taking account of the holidays of the Romans, when they gathered for a day's sport ; when all the other things had been got through, the last thing was the turning into the arena of criminals who were made sport of to crown this holiday, for people to laugh at, jeer at, ridicule, make fun of; and Paul says: Last of all, we are made a 'spectacle'"-the world laughs. Just as the world laughed at Nehemiah in the building of the walls of Jerusalem. . . . . .

"God has made us a spectacle." Are we ready to be made a "Sign"? The thing which the world laughs at? The cross of the Lord Jesus has proved ever and always to have been the superlative wisdom and power of God. For the time being the sharing of the cross is the real test. The Master endured the cross, and despised the shame, in order to be made a sign. Was there ever a Sign more glorious and

mighty than that cross ?

So our Master came to the end, and said : "For their sakes I consecrate Myself, for their sakes I give Myself unto the full consecration : and that consecration is the cross; and I am willing to be made a 'spectacle' to men. demons and angels, for their sakes." The Lord wants us to be Signs. One says this with bated breath, knowing little of what it means, but knowing also that His Grace is sufficient. Beloved, He is just seeking to gather a company of people together with whom He can make a Sign, not only of suffering and affliction, but of Power and Glory, to show to others His Wisdom, His Might, His Sovereignty, His Grace. Will you say on those terms, on that ground : "I am the Lord's. At Thy feet I fall; to suffer, live or die, for my Lord crucified "? This is what it means to be His witnesses. "Ye are my witnesses "---it does not mean going out and talking; it means the Lord working out in our lives, and others looking on, and saying : " That is the Mind of God ; that is the Way of God ; that is the Will of God." And as He does it, so demons learn what God is, the Glory of God, the Sovereignty of God; angels bow because of His doings in the Church, and glorify Him on our behalf.

May He lead us to give our assent and consent in a new, fresh act of abandonment and consecration individually, and as a people, for these coming days. T. A. S.

## THE SECKET OF FRUITFULNESS

(Notes of an address given during the January Conference, Saturday, January 5th, 1927, at the Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre.)

Ezekiel xlvii. 12.

"And by the river, upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side shall grow all trees for meat whose life shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed. It shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters have issued out of the sanctuary, and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the life thereof for medicine."

That is a picture of what Life is, when He Who is the Life has His way. When Christ Who is our life fills and possesses, this is what happens. The life must culminate in fruit; no man liveth unto himself. You cannot have the Life of Christ in possession and live unto yourself. That Life flows through for others, for the reproduction of that Life in others. This is according to the word of the Lord Himself. There is the purging of the vine, for the thing

the Lord Himself has eyes upon is fruit; and if there is fruit, then more fruit. And so with you and me the Lord has this before Him; not suffering for suffering's sake, not an experience of life just for its own enjoyment. He has an end in view, and the end in view is fruit, fruit. Fruit on this side and on that side. I like that. Not just inside here, and none outside—this side and that side. On the south side where it is sunny and pleasant; on the north side where it is bleak and cold. In your private life, fruit; in your public life, fruit. And the fruit shall not fade, neither shall it be consumed-not dependent upon circumstances, nor upon environment. No matter what the days may be like, no matter what the drought may be, the fruit is not affected. The life is not affected, therefore the fruit is not affected. And all through the year, according to the months, it would seem every month, new fruit. You cannot have that in nature. No, it is not nature, it is the supernatural-continual fruit-bearing; when man would look for it, and when he would not look for it; when it is expected, when it is entirely unexpected. The end of this fruit means the It is fruit for meat—Oh! feeding of souls. there are hungry souls all round. Only one thing will meet their need, and that is LIFE, HIS LIFE. Words won't do it. HIS LIFE will do it. And HIS LIFE is in the fruit, His fruit satisfies. And there are diseased souls, and the medicine is the LIFE, the all-conquering Life, Life that conquers death.

Now that is not simply a pretty picture. That is a fact of God. Fulfil the conditions, that will be; for that is His purpose; that is the end in view; He must have fruit. And so someone says-we will just get into that verse right away. Well you can't. No, you can't. You can become a candidate for that verse right away; but you cannot jump from barrenness to fruitfulness in five minutes. God wants to get you into that verse, into that living word of His; and if you want to get there with God, then you will have to go God's way; and God's way is indicated right in the verse. The secret of the fruitfulness is there. The secret is there because there is revealed the cause; and your life will never be fruitful without an adequate cause. (let the cause, and you will have the effect. It is no use tinkering with the effect. God is dealing with the cause. God takes you right to the cause. There is bound to issue such fruittulness because it says their waters (they appropriate these waters) their Life, they

were theirs-their waters, they issued out of the sanctuary; and that is the secret of the fruitfulness; so if you want the fruitfulness you have got to get back to the source; and you have got to begin with God, where the river begins, and then follow with him, step by step, stage by stage, until He, in His own time and way, brings you into that fruitfulness. It is not done in five minutes. God has patience with you and with me. Lot us have patience with God. Let us come back then, and trace the river bank, away from the seenes of fruitfulness, right back to the source, to the sanctuary, and see where the river rises. We go back to the first verse :---

"And He brought me back unto the door of the house, and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward...."

and the 46th chapter, first verse :---

"Thus saith the Lord God: The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened."

day of the new moon it shall be opened." Now you have come to the source. You cannot get in there! It is a shut door! You can't *push* it open! What is it shut for ?—To keep certain people out! What people out? Men! But it is the man who wants to get in! But the man can't. Even before this door there was an outer door. You read of that outer door in an earlier chapter, the 44th, the door of the outer sanctuary; and it is just the same, it is a shut door.

"Then said the Lord unto me, 'This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it because the Lord, the God of Israel his entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut."

To keep man out! It is just the same when you come to the New Testament: the Word of God is always the same. There you have our Lord Jesus speaking to a man who is doing the very same thing that we are doing, who was in quest of Life, and the source of Life, and the Lord shows him a shut door.

Jesus answered :

"Verily, verily I say unto theo, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot onter into the Kingdom of God."

Rule out the Spirit and man cannot enter in: not something *in* man cannot enter in; *man* cannot enter in, And yet there is a way. There is a north gate and a south gate. In the 46th chapter you read :--

The way for the public, (they can only go in when the priest goes in, but when the priest goes in they can choose):—

"He that entereth by the way of the north gate to worship shall go forth by the way of tho south gate; and he that entereth by way of the south gate shall go forth by tho way of the north gate"

but through that north gate they have got to go, some time, and the Spirit of the Lord emphasizes that north and south, if we are in quest of fruit, and the life that gives fruit. Turn to that word in the 4th chap. Song of Solomon. The very same thing is mentioned, in relation to the fruit of Life—

"A garden shut up is my sister, my bride; A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

Thy shoots are an orchard of pomegranates, with precious fruits;

Henna with spikenard plants,

Spikenard and saffron,

Calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense;

Myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices.

Thou art a fountain of gardens,

A well of living waters,

And flowing streams from Lebanon.

Awake, O north wind; and come thou south; Blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.

Let my beloved come into His garden,

And eat His precious fruits."

It is His garden now; when the north wind has blown upon it, as well as the south. The north wind blows and the south ; but the north wind strips, lays bare, pierces through and through; Thou cutting north wind, blow upon My garden! You know what we can read through the parable-it is as if the Lord says -You can come to the source of Life, but the way is the way of the Cross, the way of stripping, the way of piercing through and through, the way of deep repentance, the way of death is through the north gate. You prefer to start with the south gate, and sometimes the Lord lots you; but you must go out by the north gate. And if you start at the north gate, you can go out at the south gate. You think you can avoid the fire, the refining fire, you think that you can avoid that purging. You cannot. It has got to come. We must pass through the fire. Well it is if we elect to go through the north gate for a start. Go through it now, it will lead out of the south gate; but that is the outer gate !

It is just the same when you come to the

inner gate. We want to get into the inner court, and it is out of the inner court that the river comes. Wc want to see where it comes from! Wc want to get in, and in order to get in, the one who has to be dealt with is this man. He cannot! And if you come to the inner court the lesson is just the same. Read it again—46th Ez. 1st verse :—

"Thus saith the Lord God: The gate of the inner court that looketh towards the east shall be shut the six working days."

Man's working days that gate is shut—your cndeavour, your push, you won't get life that way. It is shut! Then when is it open? On the sabbath day it shall be opened. On that day of rest when God ceased from His own works. and we who believe must enter in to rest by ceasing from our own works, seeing that, in God, in the rest of Gcd, we are taken up and God takes us in, You can't push yourself in through that door. And that is borne out right through as you read of those who are permitted to enter into the inner court. You get it again and again in the 44th chap, beginning with—" No man shall enter in," (note the fifth verse, see where God puts His emphasis here), and the same emphasis is put again and again as you read these chapters through-

"And the Lord said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary."

Oh! just to have that stream of Life, to have that fruitfulness, and to know that God is using us! But, "Son of man, mark well the entering in, with every going forth." Not just once, but always, mark well the entering in; and the entering in is always the same! No man! No man! As man, disqualified! Man brought to death! In the 9th verse:

"Thus saith the Lord God, No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into My sanctuary"

No stranger shall enter into My sanctuary. Now you know the Holy Spirit's interpretation of that. Let us not spoil it, let us read it. Colossians 2, 10:

"And in Him ye are made full, Who is the Head of all principality and power; in Whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of

the body of the flesh." Conybeare translates it: "The whole body of the flesh "—cut away by the knife of the Cross, so that there shall be no longer any confidence whatsoever in the flesh the whole body of the flesh—all that man is, apart from what he is in Him, in Whom he is complete. But I don't agree to that, you say; it is too humbling; it is too difficult; it is too drastic, it brings me down, it puts me out. Yes. Well, you can't get in, that's all ! "No uncircumcised stranger" shall go in and discover this secret of Mine; this source of Life, And even if you do find the source, you can't find the outlet. And as you read through the chapter there is another class who cannot come in—

"And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of My holy things in the most holy place, but they shall bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed."

Who were they called as priests? "They kept not my charge; they kept not my words.' They kept not" the testimony of Jesus." They lightly regarded it, and they had idols, and they associated with those who had idols, and the idol is put in place of God. Not wood and Perhaps some man! Perhaps some stone! woman! Perhaps some teacher whose words have become more to you than God's words, and you exalt the man, and the man is an idol! And if any man takes the place of God, you shall not enter in. You may have a place in His mercy; He will give you a place; but you are after this secret of Life, this fulness which is to be found in Him, and it is not for you. Those who keep the charge—the sons of Zedok, who would keep the charge—they shall enter in. This time it is not this man inside and another man outside, but it is always the same—Nothing but God! Nothing but God!

"And it shall come to pass that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whilst they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within.

"They shall have linen tires upon their heads, and shall have linen brccches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves with anything that causoth sweat."

The heat of the flesh, they must be purified from that.

"Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court."

No excitement of the flesh, no getting excited

about the things of God, no, nothing of the flesh. Ah! but it all heads up in one thing which you find in the end of the chapter—27th verse—

"And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, into the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord God."

"His sin offering, saith the Lord God"; not his *trespass* offering, not dealing with sins, dealing with sin, dealing with the man who sinned, the life which sins; and there you see the sin offering, and that whole carcase of the sin offering taken out, outside the camp, into the place of judgment, into the place of death. Why taken out unclean? Why unclean? By reason of that which is on it. What is on it? My life, my sinful life, your sinful life! That life He takes out! Ah! hut not before another Life has been poured out at the foot of the altar! The blood is upon the altar, and the blood is poured forth at the foot of the altar; and His Life is there for me that I may become the righteousness of God. But you see Him going as the sin offering, and it is yourself that has made Him that. Now you want to go in and get that Life in there; it is in there in the inner court; but except this sin offering is accepted—God's judgment not only upon your deeds, but upon vour life, you cannot enter in. Hear Christ saying, "Hate your life." That means all that you are, this man! This old man! How can I hate it enough until the Spirit of God shows me my Lord going out thus with His Life, unclean because of my life? And you won't submit to that Word of God ? Then you will stay outside this door. You won't go in. You can't go in. Yield to it! And look, this door is blood sprinkled, the blood offering is round about the door! You would enter into the inner thing? Then enter in through the blood, through His Life, making that Life your own, by faith. What happens if you take that sin offering ? Read on-

"And they shall have an inheritance; I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession."

That is the way. Oh, to get in ! A way which humbles, as we assent unto death. The only way ! But go that way, then He gives you nothing less than Himself. Then you can say in all the depth of its meaning—My God ! My God ! My inheritance ! Not only something, Someone put before me to inherit, and I possess *Him.* My possession ! And thus you enter in, and you know into what you enter. 43rd chapter, 7th verse—

"And He said unto me. Son of man, this is the place of My throne."

His power, His almightiness. This is the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty. And now then what is there? Read the 5th verse of the 43rd chapter, so, just in the way in which we have been describing, so the Spirit took me up and brought me in. So. Will He do it in any other way? No, no other way. If you would have this prize there comes a disturbance. You cannot pick and choose.

"And the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court: and behold the glory of the Lord filled the house."

No flesh shall glory in this glory of the Lord. In our last Conference wasn't that word given ?

"Lift up your heads O ye gates! Be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, He is the King of Glory."

He is coming in. How did you expect the King of Glory to come in ? With pomp, with show, with glamour, and all that which appeals to the natural man ? That was not how the Lord allowed us to look for the glory. And how does the prophet look for the glory? Read this third verse of the 43rd chapter:

"And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city, and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar: and I fell upon my face."

That was when the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. The glory of the God of Israel had gone through the eastern gate—and no man can come through that gate.

And now the house, this glory fills the house. But how does the glory come in ? The prophet says it was like the vision that I had at the river Chebar when I fell on my face. Turn back to it. 3rd chapter 23rd verse :—

"Then I arose and went forth into the plain: and behold, the glory of the Lord stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river Chebar, and I fell on my face."

What he saw by the River Chebar and what is here described, is the glory of the Lord. How does it come? In the 1st chapter, 4th verse :—

"And I looked, and behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, a great cloud,"

a whirlwind came out of the north, devastating

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behind which is a path of wreckage, ruin ! You pray for the glory, and you get the whirlwind. You don't expect Him to come that way. You might have expected Him if you paid more heed to the message that was given.

"A whirlwind which came out of the north, a great cloud."

One has seen these clouds banking up, the breaking of the monsoon in the east, flashing with fire! That is the picture. This inky blackness, and the raging storm! But then add the fire!—

"And out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man."

enshrined in the whirlwind, in the thick cloud of darkness, "One like unto the Son of man" and *He* is that vision. And again at the end of the description, in the last verse—

"This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of One that spake;"

and so here, right in the inner court there is this glory; but the glory is of such a nature that man cannot stand. He is kept low upon his face.

And now that we are there right at the door, and within the inner court, what do you expect to see? Something very ornate, something very ornamental! Neither, no ornaments in this inner court. In the 41st chapter you get the description of the inside of this house. It is just wood, no gold: here, no silver, no drapings of blue, purple, scarlet; just wood. The 18th verse :—

"And it was made with cherubim and palm trees: and a palm tree was between cherub and cherub, and every cherub had two faces: so that there was the face of a man toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side: thus was it

made through all the house round about." Everywhere you looked, all round the walls, and they were on the door itself as you came through—cherubim, palm tree : cherubim, palm tree. These, I am persuaded, stand for those who are in living union with God. Here is what you are to be in the throne room, in the source of life into which He has brought you, and in living union there is the cherubim bearing His likeness—the cherubim and the palm tree; the cherubim and victory ! And there is no other message all the way round everywhere. You come to the place of victory ! You have come to the place of the throne !

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In your victory now there *is* victory.

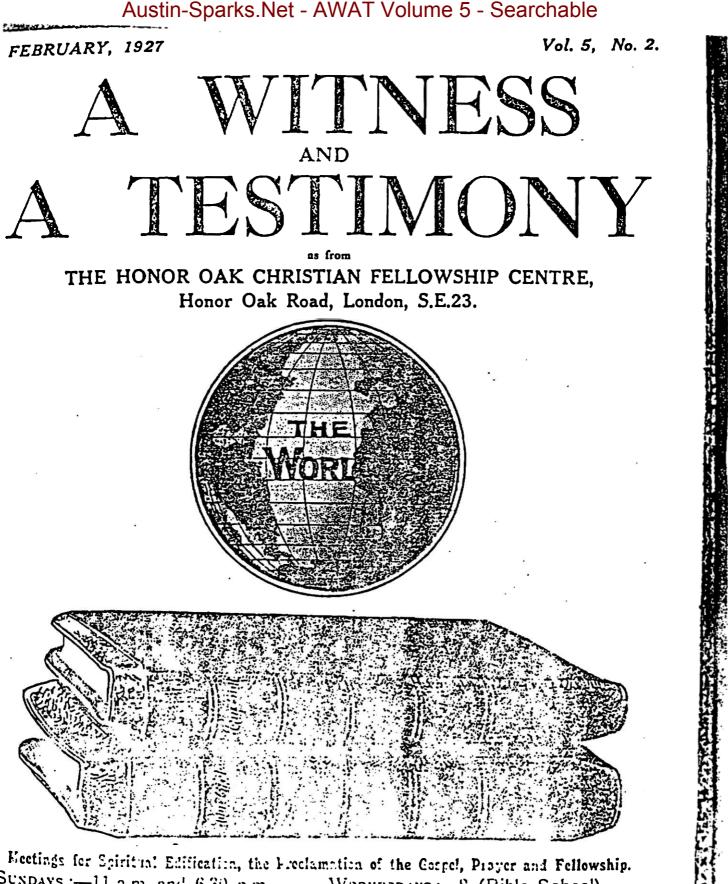
And what is to be done there, now we have got to the very source, to the very centre? Is there any furniture? Only one little bit of furniture, and it looks very commonplace. If man could get in he would take very little note of it—nothing much to look at ! And if it is much to look at, it isn't the right thing. Here it is in the 22nd verse :—

"The altar was of wood, three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits : and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof were of wood ; and he said unto me, This is the table that is before the Lord."

Just an altar of wood; an altar not for burnt offering; an altar for incense, an altar for prayer, an altar from which there ascends that incense which speaks of the victory of Calvary, that Name which is above every Name; just a wooden altar ! When our prayers seem most wooden, then the efficacy of that Name is most in evidence. Don't be discouraged when it seems so wooden, as you know that through death the Lord has brought you into that place of Life, the inner court. Here is the table of the Lord. It is the table of the Lord. The table of which He savs :—

"Lo! I stand at the door and knock, and if any man hear my voice and open the door I

will come in unto him, and sup with him." And by this time you have learned to put Him first; in our blessings first, and in our needs. His need is satisfied : His joy, and He comes to this table, the table of the Lord, and sups with me, and He with Him. Have you given all to Him? All that He asks, and no reserve, and is He satisfied ? Now you have come to the source of Life. Now He feeds me also: "Open thou thy mouth and I will fill it !" The Bread of Life; the Water of Life! You have come to the very source, and somehow I feel sure that standing by that altar, bubbling up all the time, was that river which flowed out under the shut door, and away out right through the land until it reaches the Dead Sea and transforms it and turns all the barrenness into a rden of the Lord, and there is fruitfulness there. But we have got to get in first. In, and there must be the going out. We have not time now to see the going out. Let us be sure of getting in ! The Spirit of the Lord took me in. We will go this way, the way which leaves the flesh nothing whatsoever to glory in. because it is the Spirit of the Lord; and only the Spirit of the Lord will take us in ; will take you in. " He took me in !" A. S. C. .



> Ministers: T. AUSTIN-SPARKS T. MADOC JEFFREYS

All particulars may be obtained from Mr. G. PATERSON, 27 Tintagel Crescent London, S.E.22. the Secretary of the "Fellowship."

# MINISTERS' LETTER

### February, 1927.

BELOVED OF OUR COMING LORD,

Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it; for to each one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of the Christ. And lest any should faint under this charge, observe it is " in the Lord." Take but your place in Him, your inheritance in His Body, and the Anointing upon the Head will flow down to such as seem the most humble and remote of His members.

Thank God, all our salvation is in Christ, even our salvation in service. Every branch that beareth but a little fruit He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. Perhaps "salvation in service" may meet a challenge; but we are undoubtedly saved to serve, and in our serving are being saved. Wherefore work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that energizeth you both to will and to do of His good pleasure—working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight.

Let this matter of service in God's House—His Temple-Body—now become of great concern to you. Cry, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do"; and whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. It is only obedience He requires of you. The gracious miracle-working power is His. Yours but to obey very simple commands: His to transform, the water unto wine, the dead things into the living manifestation of His Grace.

It is in, and thus through, the Spirit-life of His Body He seeks to use you. Ask not, Am I an apostle, a prophet, a teacher, an evangelist? but inquire of Him whether thou art a saint, for to the ministry of the saints are wc all called :—" called saints."

And what is the ministry of every saint? It is to build-up, to edify the Body. It is to become a living spiritual organ in this increasing Spirit-organism (but it has an end, a fulfilment) of God, the Christ. It is to see to it that by obedience daily to the Spirit there is the effectual-working in your measure as an individual part of the Body, for so the Body maketh increase of itself in Love. But God is this Love, and such increase therefore is the increase of God. Now this may seem mystical to a carnal mind, but very practical is it to the heavenly calling, to the eternal destiny of each member, and to the great Purpose and Will of God in the church.

Let God work in you. Yield in active cooperation your faculties to the Holy Ghost. For He would work in you : He would energize you: He would move you to fellowship with our Head in glory, and stir your heart to love and passion for His service—thus groanings because of desire too deep to articulate will begin to surge in your spirit, and you will begin to pray the "all-prayer" of the Spirit. The Etcrnal Desire will break through your natural torpor and lethargy, and God will arise within the shrine of your spirit to make wai against His enemies through the Blood of His Passion, and you will pray in the Holy Ghost all-conquering, prevailing prayer-and in that praying all the saints will be included, with specific ministries for such as God brings to heart and remembrance.

Take heed to the ministry in the Body of Christ which thou hast received in the Lord. And so may we likewise be found faithful.

Yours in this supreme service,

T. Austin-Sparks, T. Madoc Jeffreys.

# THE MINISTRY AND FELLOWSHIP

WE announce happy days. The final haver is not yet in sight—it will not be until Hiappearing—but the seas are calmer, and Hidirecting Hand is increasingly felt. It is the good Hand of our God. It was on the helm al through the storm, but perhaps our puny hand were grasping somewhat tightly, deeming wwere steering, and so the omnipotence of Hi grasp of things, in heaven and earth, was no felt. O we of little faith, wherefore did we doubt ? Lord increase our faith !

Doubtless there will come storms again nevertheless we have learned something o heavenly navigation.

What can we say to these things but to re-affirm that God is with us? Just now too there are strong hints of spring in the air. Al around is the parable of faith, and of faith thaworks. *Resurgam*! For He is the Resurrec tion and the Life.

January was a smiting month. There was much sickness about, and some hearts growing a little faint and perturbed. A friend of ou says respecting seasonal ailments, such a influenza, "It doesn't matter as long as you don't get it in your spirit!" Do the saint

sometimes become *stale* also? Surely we have to guard against re-actions and depressions after some great exertion of heart in the battle of faith. Did not stout Elijah come to a drooping spirit after Carmel's victory, and was in a sorry state at Horeb?

Let us confess that this is the fashion of our flesh, and thus cease from confidence in it. Live in the inner man. and let the trumpet peal from the fortress. "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" What a Name for faint hearts—"The Omnipotent One." This is our God and Saviour, Whose Name is also Jesus.

And all the while behind the visible, the tangible, the audible, our God was working. This is the way of the "Vision's" coming. "Though it tarry wait for it; it will come; it will not tarry." Nay, at the last it breaks suddenly upon us, and shames the doubts of our restless souls.

So it has been with us. There has been this waiting time; and in our waiting time much to harass and disturb. But God has His own time-table, and brings forth His works in the order of His own will. Blessed be His Name! Now, there is definite movement. Everyming seems moving. The things of God are arriving on time.

Our brother is back in our midst again, and even manages a quiet word or two. What strengthening even the physical presence brings. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man the countenance of his friend." And, there is a Friend....

As an instance of this wonderful "timing" of God we have our sisters, Lady Ogle and Mrs. Brand, coming from different directions without mutual arrangement, one from Italy, and the other from New York, arriving within a few hours of each other to take up their joint-ministry in developing and presiding over the Hestel. They hope to go into residence within the next few weeks, but the opening of the house for guests may have to wait a little longer, since we cannot enter upon the work of adapting the premises for this service until our lease of the property is endorsed.

Nevertheless we are not disturbed by this, because the Lord is taking pains to show us that He will have the work developed little by little as the need arises. We should like to have the Hostel ready by the Easter (onference, but this seems hardly probable though possible.

It may be necessary to reiterate what we feel will be the ministry of the Hostel. It will provide a spiritual home, upon a moderate scale of charges reduced to the lowest minimum, for such of the Lord's servants at home and abroad as feel their need of our fellowship and ministry for the quickening of faith and the renewing of spiritual strength. And in the case of such as these, as well as for those who are seeking to obey a call to ministry for the first time, we believe our "testimony of Jesus" both as to the Sovereignty He has won for us through His Cross, and the vesting of that Sovereignty in the fellowship of the One Spirit in the One Body. His church, will be a means of equipment to them for service—an equipment so necessary in these final days of the age. But this will only be made possible by the grace of God in them and in us.

The Hostel will also be a "house of prayer"; and in this we can see how the Lord is providing a sphere of service for "intercessors" who will be able to give some time daily to this ministry of waiting upon God for the prayers of His Spirit. The need for such a ministry is urgent, for from all parts of the world there is coming in an increasing list of appeals for prayer-help.

We are looking to God for the resources whereby a "Guest Fund" may be established so that any of the Lord's servants who may not have the means to avail themselves of this provision can still be warmly welcomed in His Name.

THE EASTER CONFERENCE.

This, as already announced, will be held from Thursday evening (April 14th) to Tuesday evening, the 19th. The Theme is not yet through.

While we do not guarantee the readiness of the Hostel to receive guests by these dates, we are preparing to make greater accommodation. We are already seeing that the Hostel will not serve the need of our monthly visitors, and will have to be reserved rather for such as come for the quiet and continuous fellowship of the regular ministry. The house will not in any case accommodate more than 14 guests at the same time. We are expecting the Lord to give us more house-room in the vicinity; and there is an indication that He may lead some to open guest-homes in the neighbourhood for this work.

It will be well for those who intend coming to us for Easter to address their applications and enquiries without delay to our brother, Mr. Paterson. (We intend opening a Conference Guest Fund as well.) TRAISING.

As to this phase of ministry we are going forward with the vision step by step. Our

present necessity is to get our "house" in order. Wo do not doubt that this further ministry will develop in the Lord's time and way.

All enquiries therefore as to the Hostel, Training Centre, Conferences (March and Easter) should be directed to our secretary, Mr. Paterson, The Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, London, S.E.23.

We do not need to add that in all these matters we shall make each case of application a matter of earnest enquiry of the Lord as to His will, and we ask that the same care be exercised by those who seek our fellowship. RESOURCES.

Still another indication have we of the Lord's time-table. He has been sending such additional resources this month that we can now contemplate proceeding with the building of a Conference Hall. Our present accommodation is not unduly taxed as yet. The Hall attached to the house holds some 250, but we have no baptistry; the conveniences for entertaining conferences are limited; moreover the present weeks with the unfavourable weather have seen our house always comfortably full, and we anticipate much larger attendances as the better conditions of spring and summer come to pass.

THE "WITNESS AND TESTIMONY."

The time is also come when our paper needs to be enlarged. We propose adding another 8 columns making the issue one of 16 pages. As it is we have insufficient space to deal adequately with the teaching of the Word as given in our fellowship gatherings and at the monthly conferences. With the opening of the Hostel there will arise the necessity of introducing further profitable matter in relation to the ministry of intercession for many nigh and distant fields. It is hoped also to provide some columns that shall deal with specific questions and difficulties, and perhaps meet the need of younger Christians. The gist of each conference will also be published under the heading of "Conference Report." The enlarged issue will probably follow the Easter Conference.

FEBRUARY CONFERENCE, 4TH TO 7TH.

"The Cross, and the Will of God" as the theme fitted the events of the days, for the conference synchronised with the arrival of the hostesses of the Hostel, the advent of our brother from his critical illness, and the lifting of many clouds.

messenger of the Lord with a series of dynamic addresses upon the words, "Take My yoke upon you." It was the personal application of the theme, and the essential message to any who had not accepted the "will of God " in its demand for an undivided allegiance to the Sovereignty of the Lord as represented in His challenge to would be disciples, "Take up the Cross and follow Me."

We felt that the main thought of the Lord for this conference was held up by the presence of unsurrendered lives, for the Spirit kept our brother upon this word throughout as a veritable hammer of the Lord.

Yet, there seems such a need that the Lord's people should enter into the vision of "His Will," " the mystery of His Will." And this is impossible until there has been the final irrevocable surrender to the Cross. However the final meeting of the Conference brought us to the unveiling of the "Will of God " as His eternal purpose in the Christ corporate. We saw that the eternal predetermination of God, the mystery of His will, is that age-long movement of the Spirit towards the consummation of the Body. It is the unlimited, universal and omnipotent Will of God as exercised and revealed in Calvary that is the essential revelation needed by the saints for this last hour of the dispensation. Oh, that the children of God would emulate their Lord in learning the Will of the Father. Then, the Will was moving towards the accomplishment of the Cross: now, it is moving towards the con-summation of that Cross, the completion and perfection of the Lord's Body, the manifestation of the sons of God in and with the manifestation of the Son of God.

THANKSGIVING.

We do not use these columns for personal matters, but we feel it fitting to celebrate God's praise for giving to our brother and sister (Mr. and Mrs. Austin-Sparks) their firstborn son. His safe coming has been a triumph of the Lord's mercy, and never has the testimony of His all-sufficing grace been more manifest than in our dear sister's courageous and cheerful faith during the past trying months. The whole "Fellowship" rathers around them in glad congratulation and thanksgiving, and it is because we know how friends near and far will share our joy that we make this happening known.

THE ITINERANT MINISTRY.

It is the manifest wisdom of God that we aro Mr. A. S. Crowe was again made a manifest | being shut up to the care of the work at the

"Centre" during these months, for this is the period when the foundations need to be laid aright.

The monthly conferences at Newcastle have the seal of God upon them. Thus far the messenger has been the writer of these notes. Here again foundations are being laid, and this has been obviously the Lord's plan. We go again this month, Friday the 18th. The theme is 'The Cross, and the Eternal Purpose of God.' Next month, March 18th, our brother Mr. A. S. Crowe will be the speaker. Special prayer is asked for these meetings which are the outcome of our brother's (Mr. Sparks) ministry at Newcastle. Particulars can be obtained from Mrs. Mackenzie-Mentiply, 35 Northumberland Gardens, Jesmond, Newcastleon-Tyne.

Mr. Sparks' ability to take up ministry will be limited for some time to come. He intends taking rest for a morth or so. This is very needful. Then these next months will be, as indicated above, the formative period of the developments at the "Centre" so that his presence in our councils is very welcome as well as desirable. 'He doeth all things well."

### F. M. J.

### MARCH CONFERENCE

Dates, March 4th to 7th inclusive, and the meetings at the usual times. The Theme given is :-- "The Cross, and the believers' conformity to the image of the Son of God." Further particulars on application.

There has been an unusual addition of gifts as from outside the regular contributions received from the members of the fellowship resident locally, and we take this as another *timely* indication of the Divine approval for the enlargement of the paper. Will contributors please notice that gifts for this ministry are to be sent, or handed to, Miss SACH, 29 Mundania Road, S.E.22. Miss HAWES, 24 Rye Dale, S.E.22, will be glad to send copies to any who desire them.

Italy, £10; I'hiladelphia. £1 os. 7d.; Tipperary, £1; Derby, £1: Matlock, 7s. 6d.; Cornwall, 5s.; Cornwall, 2s. 6d.; Aberdare, 5s.; Belfast, 4s.; Forest Hill, 2s. 6d.; Chichester, 2s. 8d.; Hampstead, 1s.; Eastbourne, 1s.; Clapham, £1; Birkenhead, 2s. 6d.; Blackpool, 3s. 6s.; Fazakerley, 5s.; I'almers' Green, 2s. 6d.; Green Lanes, 2s, 6d.; Donaghadee, 5s.; Boscombe, 2s. 6d.; Eastbourne, 2s. 6d.; Wandsworth, 2s.: Hoylake, 5s.: Cardiff. 5s.; Reigate, 2s. 6d'; Sandown, 2s. 6d.; Wembley, 2s. 6d.; I'hiladelphia, 4s.; Friern Road, 6d.; Minneapolis, 4s.; Muswell Hill, 3s. 6d.; Hampstead, 5s.; Blackheath, 4s. 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d.; Dublin, 5s.—Total, £18 9s. 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d.

Booklets (by T. A.-S.):—Nos. 1 and 2, 'Incorporation into Christ,' 2d. ench. No. 7, 'The Inner Man of the Heart' (with diagram), 4d. each. l'articulars as to these from the Secretary.

## INTRODUCTION TO AN ADDRESS Given by T. Austin-Sparks at the

December Conference. Honor Oak C. F. Centre.

The Cross, and the Eternal Glory of God

is our general theme, and the burden of the word for this evening is related, I think, to the whole syllabus; but at any rate starting with the emphasis on that third section in the syllabus —" the Glory Post-Incarnate"—the cross vindicated in the Resurrection and Ascension, I have also to go on into the other, for this is the burden in these days—the abiding manifestation of the Glory in the Church, the Body of Christ.

There are seven manifestations of the Glory in the Word of God, and we shall mention them because they are the basis of this meditation. Seven times both in type and in that typified we are told of the manifestation of the glory, or the glorification. These are as follows :—

- 1. In the case of the Tabernacle as mentioned in tho 40th chapter of Exodus. When all things had been put in order and completed according to the pattern in the mount, the Glory of the Lord filled the House—filled the Tent.
- 2. The next is in the case of the Temple as recorded in II Chron. 7.—Again when all things had been set in order and made according to the revelation of the pattern of the heavenlies, we read the Glory of the Lord filled the House.
- 3. The third is in the 6th chapter of Isaiah. I saw the Lord high and lifted up, His train filled the Temple. Here is a breaking forth, a manifestation of the Glory, and still filling the House of God, as over and upon and within that House of God, the glory was revealed.
- 4. And then we come into the days of our Lord on the transfiguration mount, as in Matthew xvii., & there is a manifestation of the Glory of Christ, a breaking forth, a glorification.
- 5. Then in His Ascension we read, (and it is interesting to notice this word in the Book of the Acts in the first chapter. Three times this phrase is mentioned—" Received up.") The Authorised Version does not give the significance. It puts it in another way. But Ho was received up, and received up into tho Glory, and in that connection you

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bring those words from the 24th Psalm: "Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors: and the King of Glory shall come in." The King of Glory. Here is the glorification in the Ascension, when the King of Glory enters into His Glory.

- 6. And then at Pentecost, as in Acts ii., there is a manifestation of this Glory in the Church. It is the glorified Christ coming in the Person of the Holy Spirit and revealing and manifesting His Glory in the midst of that spiritual counterpart of the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple, the Church, which is His Body. At Pentecost He comes into His Temple suddenly, and there is a breaking forth of His Glory. We shall see the nature of that breaking forth later as the manifestation of His sovereignty over sin and death and all "Thou hast given Him authority, flesh. or jurisdiction, over all flesh " was His Word earlier, and you remember Joel's prophesy concerning Pentecost. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." This is that, the manifestation of His sovereignty, His Glory, within and upon and through this spiritual temple.
- 7. Then finally there is that ultimate, that consummation of the Glory in the spiritual house as mentioned by Paul in II Thessalonians chapter 1: "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints." Here is the final consummate manifestation of His Glory in the Church, in the Spiritual House, in His Body. His corporate Body.

T. A.-S,.

(To be Continued).

# THE CROSS, AND THE ETERNAL GLORY OF GOD

(An extract of notes taken at the December Conference.)

Verses: Romans viii. 17, 18; Philippiars i. 29; I Peter iv. 12-14.

SUFFERING AND GLORY.

THE whole relation of these two is brought to its explicit declaration in this last verse: "If ye are reproached for the Name of the Christ blessed are ye, because the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." Thus the glory of God in the church is at present evidenced by the fact of the saints' suffering together with Christ.

We remember how the Lord said that we were to exceedingly rejoice, to be exuberantly joyful, when we were persecuted for righteousness' sake. Why ? ... Because so persecuted they the prophets which were before you," He adds. It is an evidence of "The testimony of Jesus." We are in the prophetic succession. The Spirit of the Christ was in them to testify beforehand. The Spirit of the Incarnate Christ is in us as members of His Body. But in both cases "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" and in an anti-Christ world it will provoke persecution. If we are faithful in our testimony persecution will be the inevitable result : suffering of some character must inevitably follow. Therefore, when it ensues. Christian! Rejoice. It is evident you are counting for God in an anti-godly world. "The spirit of glory and of God taketh rest upon you."

It strikes a lower note to say, Let us be reconciled to this present inevitable experience. But we must note the fact that the glory of God in the Christ does not at this present time win the world to an admiration, much less to a consent and a worship. It is rather provocative of a strange antagonism, of a stirring up of strife. The challenge of God through the Cross provokes the enmity of the flesh, and agitates the hidden forces behind the flesh, precipitating them to action, crusing the "mystery of iniquity" to work, and—we need to note constituting a process whereby there shall be a heading-up of the satanic system in its opposition to "the only true God" as revealed in Jesus Christ, Whom He has sent. So that if we are functioning aright as living members of the Body of Christ we are bound to provoke this antagonism, and especially of the hidden evil forces. Suffering, of a kind, is bound to ensue. Count it all joy, for it is an evidence of a spirit-activity in you; it is brought about by the very fact that the One Holy Spirit is resting upon you, the spirit of glory and of God.

Now this rather changes the direction of our vision. The horizons of faith in this aspect, may seem somewhat intimidating. Such declarations are calculated to make the timid shrink. One has noticed, indeed, that the present emphasis of truth has tended to quench a certain kind of praise. Well, there is a certain soulish exuberance, a mere enthusiasm of the flesh, which it was the Lord's practice to elways check and chill.

No, He ever confronted them with the Cross. He spoke to them about the need of meeting a challenge of Divine obedience that would bring

to an end all the desires of this life.

We are aware that the illustration of the Lord's method is prc-Calvary, and that " Christ also hath suffered once for all for sins, the Just One for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." But this is a principle of His Life which we now confess to share. He has brought us to God. We are speaking not of suffering as a means of salvation, but as a method of service. He shared our shame at Calvary; but we are now called to share His glory. Nevertheless that glory is alien to the spirit of this world. It will put us outside the gate, bearing His reproach. And this is the principle of the Life of glory that is now hid with Christ in God, it must meet the rejection of this world, it must provoke the hatred of the spirit who is in this world. The glory entails suffering. To be God-born means to be devil-hated. There is no escape from this incidence of the Divine Life upon this world system. Even the Birth arouses the malignity of Herod-a typical instance. So every new-born child of God is immediately the object of the satanic murder spirit. "He was a 'manslayer' from the beginning." The seed of God will have no respite from his hatred until they be receivedup into glory. Meanwhile they are in this world for the glory of God. We are witnesses of HIM. As He is, so are we in this world; and there must be the inevitable clash of the two wills that govern—the will of God that rules in the children of God, and the will of satan that rules in the world of fallen men.

So we must start aright, with no misconceptions. "Since I must fight if I would win, Increase my courage, Lord!" It is significant that the first virtue that diligent faith must add to its armoury is this grace of "courage." 2nd Peter i. 5. Joshua as he entered the land of conflict was bidden again and again, "Only bo strong, and of a good courage."

Not now, then, the manifestation of the wonder of heaven, the bliss of eternity spent in the blissful habitations of praise, but the challenge of suffering. Yet this is the extraordinary thing—tho child of God welcomes this. We mean the true child of God, the one bornfrom above; not the professor, but the possessor of that Eternal Life that was in the bosom of the Father, and Who has been manifested to us, and in us. He may shrink in his flesh from such prospects; but once in the light of that Face ho has accepted the fellowship of His Lord, and submitted to His Cross, he finds he receives a Spirit that embraces the conflict

Thus the chief characteristic of the with zest. early church is the extraordinary joy of the believers amid their trials and persecutions. First of all they are an insignificant, littleheeded folk; but as the testimony of the Spirit within them to the Sovereignty of the Crucified Lord registers its impact upon the powers behind human society, and the world is turned upside down, they have to meet the growing hatred and bitter persecution that follows. Are they discouraged? On the contrary they are filled with this wonderful joy. You have the same experience manifested in Paul and Silas singing their spontaneous psalms in the prison at Philippi. And it has been ever so. The true child of God knows that the pathway of suffering for Christ's sake is all the while the way everlasting, the unseen glory is upon that path. Thus when the apostle breaks through his preliminary argument into the great declaration of "justification by faith" in Romans v. 1, he announces that we exult upon the Hope of the Glory of God. And this is so. We look for His Glory to be manifested, and we with Him, in a fellowship of Glory. But the apostle immediately adds, "And not only so, but we rejoice (exult) in tribulations also."

And in that Life of the Spirit revealed in the 8th chapter, there is this central thing, "If we suffer together with Him, we will be also glorified together," verse 17.

And this is the way of the Glory now. It is as God sees us, and as the principalities and powers see us; and not as men see us, or even as we see ourselves. God is manifesting His glory in the saints now; but it is through our obedience of faith, and through our suffering in that obedience. So our Lord says, "I have glorified Thee on the earth." But how? By obedience, and by suffering. The Glory shone from within, and was manifested; but not to human sight. Nevertheless, some beheld His Glory. It was the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Grace and Truth ! These are the present indications of the hidden Glory.

It is not the mere transfiguration of the mortal body that is the manifestation of the Glory of the Christ. That is but the end and consummation of a LIFE which is now being wrought out in our spirit. The glorification of our bodies is a small matter for the Creator to accomplish; but the glorification of our spirits to bo like unto His, to be conformed inwardly to the image of His Son, this is the wonder of His

grace; and it is the manifestation of this glory that He desires should be given to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places now. It is the CROSS that glorifies God. This our Lord recognises as He turns from the prospect of popular acceptance in John xii. 21-28, faces the Cross, lays down its basic principles in those well-known words about the corn of wheat, and finally declares, "Father, glorify Thy Name."

That Cross stands to the eternal glory of God.—" The Lamb in the midst of the Throne," newly-slain, and yet slain before the foundation of the world, the mystery of the Divine Passion in the Christ. This is the language of the Spirit to tell us that the Glory of God is vindicated in the suffering of His love.

We are saved by this, as we believe. And there cannot be the shadow of a doubt about our salvation, sealed as it is in that Blood. But now, being saved, what are we, if not the children of God, joint-heirs with our Risen Lord? And if so, are not His interests our interests? His Kingdom our Kingdom? His enemies our enemies? "Is this vile world a friend of grace ?" Then the very fact of our identification with HIM in Life because we have accepted His death, means a sharing of the impact of that hostility against Him, and a bearing also on our hearts of the Burden of His Purpose. Nay more, that very love of God that gave the Son is now shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, We suffer together with Him. We pray together with Him. We yearn together with Him for the fulfilment of His purpose, the building-up of the Body, and the bringing of Satan down into this earth, the arena where the age-long conflict shall be finally ended. This is the cosmic vision; but it requires a Spirit Who knows the passion of the Cross.

Flesh and blood cannot stand here. These elements cannot enter into fellowship with Him. How they failed at Gethsemane! How far from apprehending the invitation of the Lord, "Tarry ye here, and watch with Me." Impossible for flesh and blood to inherit the kingdom of God, to become joint-heirs with the Christ. No, God does not expect our flesh to meet this conflict. He well knows it cannot. And flesh must not visualise the conflict either. It is something belonging to the "new man." It is a burden of spirit. Beware of making a catalogue of sufferings, of letting the devil play with your imaginations and inventing a list of

possible persecutions. This is not what i. meant. Such things may come-or they may nots The important thing is to know the Spirit, the Spirit of Him Who suffered. Is He within you ? Then, when the pressure comes, the fight begins, the conflict thickens, tribulations ariseand all because of the Word, then it is for you to know that as you stand with the Lord in His meekness, and yet in His strength, knowing the power of His resurrection in your conformity to His death, GOD is glorified, and the Spirit of glory and of God resteth, delighteth to take rest, upon you. God can exhibit you as a trophy of His grace before principalities and powers and say, Hast thou considered Mychild? T. M. J.

## THE SECRET OF FRUITFULNESS Continued.

Notes of the 2nd Address upon this subject (Ezekiel xlvii.) at the JANUARY CONFERENCE

WE are seeking to find how the Life of God in this picture of fruitfulness may be realised in experience, knowing that this is God's will for us; the end to which God is working in all His dealings with us—for nothing but fruit will satisfy the heart of God. In our quest there are some words in the beginning of the 47th chapter, a clause in each of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd verses which give to us the innermost secret of Life.

In the first verse—" He brought me unto." In the second verse—" He brought me out."

In the third verse—" He brought me through." "He brought me unto." You must remem-

ber that other word we read last night. "Then the Spirit took me up and brought me in." "He brought me out." "He

brought me through."

And at the outset let ns get help in these two pronouns, "He" and "me": my personal relationship with Him. That is the root of everything. Not the absorption of some teaching, not the accepting some doctrine, but a deep personal, intimate, living relationship with Himself. Then He will have His way with me; He will get me at the place He wants me to be in. He will bring me in. He will bring me out and through each succeeding experience, time after time. He will bring me through.

This is the first question. What is Jesus Christ, the Lord, after ? Not what do you know about Him : not what are your theories about Him : what is He to you ? All hange on that. This is a thing of the heart. "He

brought mo unto the door." We must get the whole picture, and we must just recapitulate a little and go back over that way—the course of the river, back from that scene of fruitfulness to the source of the river within the sanctuary; for we saw that all the fruitfulness is caused by the origin of the river, the source from which it flows—because it issued out of the sanctuary.

How to get there? Wc came in our quest of the source of the river to a shut door, a door which very literally bars our progress, a door across which is written-" No man shall enter." And we say—"Who then can be saved?" And the Lord answers-" With man it is impossible." You cannot go in through that door, and yet you have to go in. It seems all very contradictory. Yet we saw there was a way. And the way in was round; not through the gate by which the Lord of Glory entered; but through a gate to the north; and you could go in, and pass out by the south gate. Or you could go in by the south and pass out through the north. And we saw the better thing to do was to choose the north, for that is the place of the realisation of the sufferings of our Lord, of our Crucifixion with Him, and of our consequent stripping by that piercing north wind of all our pride and all our righteousness, and of all in which we boast, and of all that we are, until we know ourselves naked and in shame before Him. We do not like it ! We prefer the sunny south and the warm breezes, and the sunshine, and we will go that way. But if you would ever know that Life you must go through that north gate. Well, make up your mind and go.

Then you come to the door of the sanctuary, and we are reminded in the 44th chapter how again it is written : " No man "; not on man's working day, tho six working days, can you enter; on the days of man's effort, when man would do something, the door is shut. Only on the day of the sabbath rest, when God entered into rest and ceased from His own works, on that day the door is open. So right through that chapter also the uncircumcised shall not enter: the man who refuses to have the whole body of the flesh cut away, and to be brought to the place where he has no confidence in the flesh shall not enter. The man who would come in the excitement of the flesh shall not enter. Ho who would enter must come in having first realised all that Christ as the sin offering means, and having seen in that offering his own life, his accursed life, carried out without the camp; but in the carrying out of

that accursed life He leaves poured out there at the base of the altar His own blood, and in the blood a Life, and in the blood His Life. If you assent to that, if you agree to God's terms, then look at the door. It is open, but a blood besprinkled door, and you enter through blood into Life, His Life !

Now within is the place of the throne. And then the Holy Spirit says-" An inheritance." It is thine inheritance. All that is within this inner court thine inheritance, and I am thine inheritance, I am thine. You lay down this little "I," this accursed "I"; you acknowledge that it has gone out, and you have instead the God that is eternal, "I AM," your possession, yours absolutely, yours! It is the place of the throne, and in this place of authority, in this place of power, we are brought into fellowship, But the only piece of furniture in the inner court is the mean insignificant little wooden altar. Yet here is the place of "prayer in the Spirit," the place where the incense ascends, the incense of the Name, and so you have come to the source of the river; springing up comes a river of Life, and it flows away out from the source, and everywhere the river comes there is Life. He brought me in. He brought me in. No other way! You cannot bring yourself in. He died to bring you in: to bring me in. But now, He would have me out! Out! And if you would remain concentrated upon that which is in, without any outlet, then you miss all God's purpose. God's will cannot be fulfilled. And He has joined me to Him; married unto Him. But for what purpose? That you may bring forth fruit unto God. Out! And if you are just going to come to Conventions to take in, and again a month after, to take in, there can never be the realisation of God's purpose to bring you into Life with all its growth and development. You will be a cramped, dwarfed soul. "He brought me out." What is the way out ? 47th oh. 1st verse :--

"And behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward, for the forefront of the house was toward the east: and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on tho south of the altar."

Immediately outside that door, the altar; immediately outside that door again, the cross! Oh! says one, it is Life now. We have done with the cross. Have you? Then you have done with God's purpose through you! No, we stand now at this altar, and everything, every-

thing, depends upon our attitude to this altar. Stand at the altar and look back. There goes the stream of Life, the river which is flowing from the throne to the altar, and one cannot help but think that because it is a river of Life, there is the ebb and the flow all the time, and it is from the throne to the cross, and back from the cross to the throne, and again, from the throne to the cross. There is that relation of Life between the throne and the cross; that Life which makes the throne real, and that Life which makes the Cross real.

One is in that throne room, in that throne room an altar, and on that altar, written in the 44th ch. 16th verse :---

"They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table." What for ? "To minister unto me."

How am I to minister unto Him there in that inner court? Let us turn to that passage we know so well and read it once more, and get the answer from the Lord. How can I minister to my Lord? Wait on Him hand and foot! How can I serve Him like that at His table? If anyone else had said it, we might say in our unbelief, it is not for me. But now He says: "If any man!"—Any man! And the "If" is not on God's side, it is on your side.

" If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am there shall also my servant be."

Where art thou Lord ?

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die (If it die!) it bringeth forth much fruit."

And says He, I went that way—" If any man serve me, let Him follow me." And for a life of fruitfulness such as will satisfy the heart of God, this is the way to it, past this altar; and let the altar do its work; don't hurry the altar; take God's time at the altar, and stay there; He is speaking to you. Any man! A corn of wheat, just one corn ! One by one. The cross was only made for one, it is going to bring you into fellowship with "the body," a living body where you arc knit together the one with the other. But there has to be the individual dealing first with Him, as a corn, a single corn of wheat ! Will you follow ? "What shall this man do?" "What is that to thee, follow thou Me!" Will you follow? A corn, such a little thing! Yes, and you are just a little thing. Do you know it? Well, stay in His hands till you do; you won't get any further until you do. A little corn, so

insignificant; a corn, a corn of wheat. This way is not for tares, the Devil's imitation of the wheat! They cannot enter into it; I doubt such will ever get so far as His hands. They will have gone long before they get there. And if you find your whole soul rising up in rebellion against the word of the Cross, the question is, are you wheat or are you tares? We are talking about the Life. This is living wheat, and living corn; and God is dealing with those who have the Life. He is not dealing with dead souls. He has given you Life, God's own Life, Eternal Life? Then come to the altar, learn this lesson at the altar. You alone, a little corn; little you, that you may live. Have you found it? Will you accept it now, if you have not, by faith in the living Word of God, repenting of all your sins, and say-Lord, I take this gift of Eternal Life-I take it now, and then you go on with us in this quest, and from now, little corn of wheat, you have to die ! But you say, I thought I did die. I accepted all that the Lord showed me as He stripped me through that north gate, as He told me that no man could enter in, as He brought me to the end of myself, as He laid me sheer upon my face, as He showed me the sin offering, I accepted it all, and it was real. Now, as you come out into fruitfulness that vision has got to be made real; it has got to be wrought in, for there has to be fellowship in His sufferings.

A sower went forth to sow. That is His business, to sow, and if I am in His hands, and am willing for the process then He will do it. There is a little cranny there in the soil and His business is to get me into it. His great secret, as I said at the beginning, is He in me. Now before you contemplate this death, look at it it is Christ Who loves you, Who lives for you, as well as died for you, and He holds you in His hands-and He is going to accomplish it if you say-" Yes," with all your heart. He will do it. It is going to be in a way down. How? A way of humility, of humbling even unto death. But how ? That word has been spoken once or twice in our meetings, a word one loathes-" Humble yourselves !" How ? That is the difficult part. Humble yourself ! Oh ! It is difficult, so difficult. Again, you cannot do it. So difficult that only the mighty hand of God can bring you down, ovon if you see yourself as a little one, and you think you are little. Start going down! God can do it in everyone of us here-down, down, by the mighty hand of God! And it takes the hand

of the Almighty to bring mc to death and to bring you to death ! But you won't tell me that it is more than the Almighty can do, will you now ? Are you there, under the almighty hand of God? And what, if a corn of wheat fall ! Fall ! What is falling ? Well, just going down, and just as quickly and straight and as far as you can. That is falling. "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Right from the throne to the cross ! Down ! Down ! And He says-" Will you serve Me ; would you minister to Mc; would you please Me; then you go down and down, and just as far down as I tell you, much farther than you think, but I will do it, under My mighty Hand. Will you fall? I cannot fall. Can't you? What are you holding on to if you won't fall ? Let go ! Let go! What of? 1 do not know. You do. Whenever this question comes up of a deeper knowledge of the death of the Lord He fixes on something. Ho makes that His battle ground, that is going to be the test. If it is victory, it will be victory all through ; if it is defeat it will be defeat all through. If you let Him have His way there, then for the time being he has got his way all through He selects the battle ground. He has picked out that. I will meet Him somewhere else. No, you will not ! You obey Him just there. That one thing ! Let go, let go. You fall quickly enough if you meet God there, in that thing He is bringing up before you again and again. Whenever you want to go a step forward. He brings you back to that point. You know what it is, I cannot tell you. Perhaps it is the most trivial thing possible, but God is calling If you won't die, stop talking you there. about death. If you won't die, you won't have fruit. Meet Him there ! Fall, let go !

And you know what God is talking about, don't you? What are you going to say to Him? Everything hangs on that, so much hangs on that! And then to die in your own estimation, and probably in other people's estimation, to be of no reputation, to die into the ground. Well, can't I stop on the ground? No, that won't please Him. Not only down, but out of sight. Out of sight! Oh! that is death. That is where we preachers have to die, and only God can do it. And God says, now I want you not only to die, but I want you out of sight! Buried! Do you consent to that? Again, I cannot do it. The mighty hand of God can do it. He will do it. And now die. But what does that mean? Well, give up your

life. Surely, He doesn't mean that !

"He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto Life Eternal."

Now you want the Life that brings forth fruit unto God—that is the Life Eternal which is in Him, His life; and you want to know that Life in all its fulness? Then die !

Give up all the pride in your life, your trust in your life, and the mighty hand of God will take you all the way through as far as you are concerned. With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible: this falling is possible, this burial is possible; this dying is possible with God. That is what it means to stand at that altar. Do you hear what the Lord says as He stood by that altar? What shall I say? Two things you could do! Two things the Lord could do! One was to make a big detour round that altar and pick up the river a little way down its course. But the Lord says:—

"He that entereth not in by the door, the same is a thief and a robber."

and do you think you can "burgle" Him ! Get the power, get the blessing, get all the fruit, and all the credit of it, and not by that door ? Is that what is in your heart ? Then you are a thief and a robber, trying to rob God of the fruits of His own life without going God's appointed way. No, that is the way. The altar ! Here the Lord says : "I come to do Thy will." And now He says : Will you serve me ? Follow me, just here, you too, so shall you be with Me and with My Father :—

"A body Thou hast appointed Me-I come to do Thy will."

And Thy will is my death? Then I agree, Lord! Put me to death. You cannot do more than that. He will do the rest.

Now stand by your altar and look back. Here is a stream of Life, but no development, so far no broadening. And now from this altar —look on from this point, and from this point full development, growth, deepening, widening, an ever-growing fulness, and that is how the growth comes. In the development of Life you cannot evade the Cross, even if you have Life. Tho Corinthians did it; many are doing it to-day; but you cannot grow if you evade the Cross. And you cannot know the blessedness of the will of God if you evade the Cross; and you cannot have fruit if you evade the Cross. "What shall I say?" What do you say? The Lord was talking to His God, and before the Cross there is just you and God.

It is God's Cross, not man's! What do you say? What do you say to God? He brought me out ! And that way out, not just as you think ! "Then brought He me out of the way of the gate, the north gate." Oh ! but I want to follow my stream now, I have found the river, I have found Life, and I have got Life; and I will go out by the eastern gate. Will you ! This man follows his guide. The way out again through the north gate outside the wall. And he looks round. Where's my river ? No river ! I have been to the Lord. I have been to the Cross, and things are about as dry and as dead as they could possibly be. Well, what did you expect when you asked to die ? And the Devil says—" that did not mean anything. Why, there isn't anything to see !" Well, no, there isn't anything to see....And yet that is the way the Lord takes us. After Jordan, wilderness, and the Devil in the wilderness! This is the life that I live, not by sight; I live by faith. But although you cannot see it, the river is flowing alright, and the river is deepening; it is flowing all the time. The Lord knows what He is doing, and He goes round that way with us; bids us go there—"Follow me." Let us go forth unto Him bearing His reproach. But Ho also says He will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able to bear. He is very skilful, His idea is not to annihilate you; it is to develop, to increase the Life; to make a spiritual man of you in the stature of Christ. But outside and alone where you can only live by faith. And then presently, He says-Behold ! there's the eastern gate, and there's my river! I am alive! Christ is my life. He is real and He is mine, He is in me and I am in Him. In His own time—Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. That is how He gets His fruit. You want it all Summer. You cannot get fruit that way. You must have it in Winter. If you have a new harvest then you go through Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. So He brought me out, and then He brought me through. Through again and again into this river, and each crisis moans something new—a fuller development, a fuller Life. Mind you, the river is full all the time. Some of you are full, but you don't hold very much; and what the Lord wants is that wo shall hold more, that there shall be a bigger outflow. How is that to come ? Only by deepening the bed, making you go lower down, still excavating lower and lower, and that means more room for Him. That is what the Cross does; it is the Cross that develops; and that is so wonder-

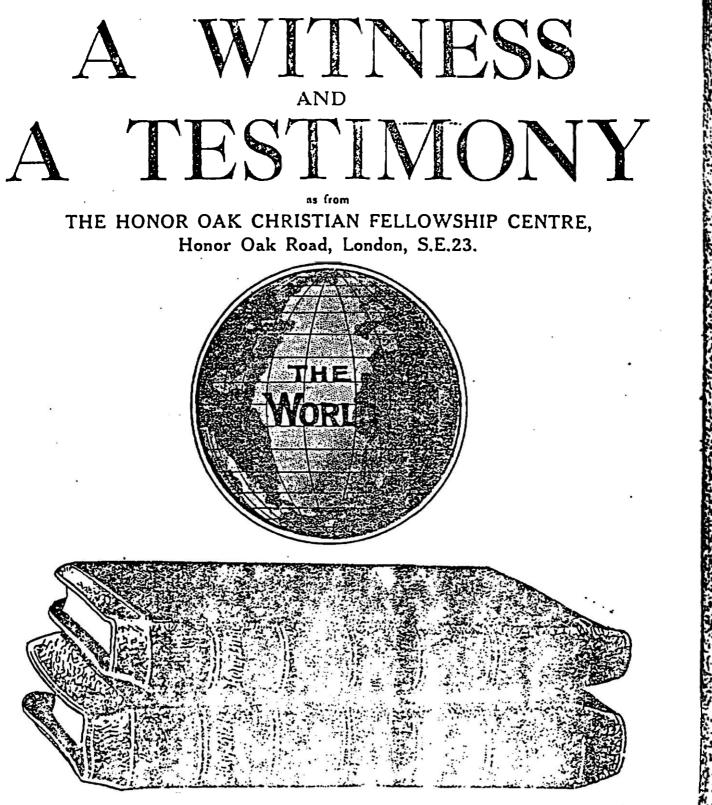
ful in this picture of Ezekiel's temple, there isn't much as to what is in it; nearly all the things are made of wood. Wood, that is all we see. But what is the emphasis? The measurement of everything, the capacity of everything ! Here is a man with a measuring rod. What God is concerned about is your capacity. No capacity for self, but capacity for God. And He brings you again and again to the Cross. He is increasing your capacity for God, and this last month what has God been doing to the Fellowship-increasing the capacity for God. That is why God had to call a halt. You must not be afraid....you had one blessed experience, a most real experience, and you have been right down in the river. But a little further on there will be another definite deepening, another excavation going down. And if you go down, then you come up; and He is working on and on, and each time the tide rises higher and higher; and there is more and more of God with each fresh experience of the Cross, until at last He has got His heart's desire. It is a river that no man can pass over! Well, what can the man do? He can swim! And what is swimming? When I was learning to swim I was told to just trust the water! Just trust the water! And what is swimming? Just resting in the Lord, in God, in His fulness! And now son of man—Hast thou seen this? Have you seen it ? The in-flow and the outflow! Just these two things, the Cross, and the Life out of death; and the more of the Cross the more of the Life.

Hast thou seen this? Then there is something you have not seen. Now I will bring you to the bank of the river. I will show you what has been going on. Look at the river now! These trees! I never saw them growing. Of course you didn't. You thought you were drowning; but God was working out His purpose, and when we get there He will take us to the banks of the river. Now see these trees of fruit, that is what happens through the Life. That was what I was working out through this strange process of death. Life out of death ! It is for you. Have you see it ? He and me. The Lord and I. Just meet Him now. What I have been saying to you are just scrappy words; but come to terms, drastic as the terms may scom to be. Come to His terms. 1 yield, I agree, I accept. I put my name to the death, my death! Thy Life! He and me. Shall wo closo here. You settle this thing with Him. Settle it now. A. S. C.

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MARCH, 1927

Vol. 5, No. 3.



Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Proclamatica of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship. SUNDAYS :--11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. WEDNESDAYS :--8 (Bible School). MONDAYS :--8 (Prayer Meeting). SATURDAYS :--7.30 (Prayer Meeting).

> Ministers: T. AUSTIN-SPARKS T. MADOC JEFFREYS

All particulars may be obtained from Mr. G. PATERSON, 27 Tintagel Crescent London, S.E.22, the Secretary of the "Fellowship"

# MINISTERS' LETTER.

## Honor Oak

March, 1927.

BELOVED OF OUR LORD,

His first so-welcome word to us was "Come unto ME, all ye that *labour*—". That toil of the futile Adam was upon us, both in sin and weariness of works.

Have we left it at His Cross, or are we still bearing it, in part? Martha was cumbered in her much serving, though she were serving her Lord, as she thought! Strange that such a service should bring strain and irritation, jangled nerves, and wrong judgment of others; but that duality in Bethany is not yet passed; it is still found in the service of God. And so many "break-downs" are due to it, and much is the perplexity of that other word about His supreme service, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." In the face of some experiences the statement sounds ironical.

For the Lord calls us not into such *labour*, but into rest: "They that believe do enter into rest:" and, "I will give you rest." Not only from sin, but from useless and disappointing labour does He promise rest. Adam's cursed labour in all its phases engenders but a fruitless weariness, an exhaustion of effort without recompense, and surely "the sweat of the *brow*." The energies of the "flesh," the mere intensity of soul, the heats of a self-created passion, all these cause the fever, often a great fever, that renders us unequal to serving our Lord when He comes truly needing our ministry.

So insistently does the Saviour say to fleshly carnestness and impulse, "one thing is needful, that you be still, and listen to My counsel, for I am your Lord." Study to be quiet.

For the works are finished from the foundation of the world, and we can do nothing to make them more perfect, or add one thing to them. Apart from Him was not one thing made that was made.

What then? There is the good part, which is also the good partnership. He and we are now to work together by His indwelling Spirit, just as He and the Father worked together on earth by the Indwelling. It is the Great Yoke, God's Eternal Purpose; but it is casy and light, for the burden is upon the Spirit, within our spirit, and is not a pressure anywhere upon the soul: neither the nerves nor the brain are tried by it, nor does any flesh know its weight. But the pillar of His Strength within supports it, an upward pressure of the Sovereign Love.

But now we labour, and rejoice to labour. There is toil and there may be glad weariness, but no strain.

And to conclude, here is the secret contained in an exultant experience,—"I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." Paul heavily underlined these latter words all his life through, for it is the last subtle touch of the "old man" that he seeks to serve God, and to say "I" in the temple of *His* Glory; and as Andrew Murray said, "Where the flesh seeks to serve God, —there is the strength of sin."

Arise, THOU, and the Ark of Thy Strength, within Thy saints;

Yours in the weakness that affords HIM Triumph,

T. Austin-Sparks, T. Madoc Jeffreys.

# THE MINISTRY AND FELLOWSHIP

**RELEASE!** 

Wc rejoice to be able to announce that our lease has now been endorsed by the Court of Chancery, and we are free to go forward. The hand of the Lord upon the entire situation has again been made singularly manifest, for the deed was signed by the trustees on the same day that our sisters, Lady Ogle and Mrs. Brand, took up their quarters in the Hostel.

**RESIDENCE** :---

Our sisters felt with us that the Lord had not brought them across land and sea simply to "mark time," and so all the necessary arrangements were made to move in as quickly as possible, in faith that the release would come as we acted. So the hostesses of the Hostel arc in, and already a little household of faith is gathered at the Centre, and prayer has commenced to grip the place for the growing ministry.

Our sister Miss Florence Green (Sister Florence) has been brought in as a spiritual help; and our brother George Ashby has taken up service in the house. There will be other necessary members of the staff added as prayer brings through the leading as to persons and appointments. All the ministry must be considered directly spiritual, and taken up upon a clear spiritual basis; we are finding that this basis is eminently practical also, and that

all servants of the Lord need to be thoroughly crucified that they may be efficient servants of the "Fellowship."

### **RESOURCES** :---

As mentioned in our last issue the Lord had given witness as to His time for definite action having arrived, for He had provided sufficient funds to proceed immediately with all the work required. As a matter of fact an additional sum of  $\pounds 2000$  came in during the month.

This brings the total amount received toward the development of the work to approximately £3,120, apportioned as follows— Hostel, £1,383; Hall, £1,737. Nearly £300 has already been spent upon our initial requirements, and this has to be deducted from the former sum.

The trustees have now put the work in hand for adapting and equipping the Hostel for its necessary service in such a way as to reduce running costs to a minimum, and the total estimate for this work approaches £1,000. This sum may seem large, but the house is old. and the whole interior arrangements of rooms and conveniences need alteration; central heating, hot and cold water in each bedroom, are being installed. The present outlay is the wisest economy for the future, and the whole cost will be saved within a few years upon the running expenses.

It is estimated that the Hall which will be built in the grounds behind the House will cost about £1,800. It will be recognized that the money to hand is evidently proportioned to meet these immediate needs, for as soon as the Hostel is in being some other home for our gatherings will be required. The present Hall attached to the House is already proving too small, and we are using Hostel accomodation.

It will be remembered that originally it was stated that £5000 would be necessary for the full equipment of all the service, and this looks likely to be correct. There are still the furnishings of the Hostel to be considered, not to speak of other requirements such as the putting of the grounds in good order. But the Lord is meeting the needs as they arise. For example the turnishing of all the rooms occupied thus far has not cost the funds as mentioned above a penny; it has all come direct from Him. As we go to press we are able to face the equipment of the large dormitory over the present Hall with cubicles at a cost of £260 as another private gift.

With these blessed and obvious indications of His will are we not compelled to go forward holdly?

All these resources have come to us in a manner that precludes much reference to them in the ordinary way. They are made up of personal and anonymous gifts, and these mainly from "the larger fellowship." They have truly been a seal to the ministry of this "Witness and Testimony."

But our local fellowship has also had signal proof of the Lord's hand upon us in matters of finance. Our accounts are being audited, and will shortly be published, but our treasurer, Mr. Bond, informs us that during the past year over £1,300 has been placed in our offertory boxes in this free anonymous ministry of the Lord's people. The Lord bless all his faithful stewards!

#### EASTER CONFERENCE -

Our vision for this is crystallizing. It would appear that the main theme will be,

### THE CROSS, AND THE PATTERN IN THE HEAVENLIES.

We trust that this means the unfolding in measure of the rattern of the Spirit's ministry in our midst, and through our fellowship thus in all the earth. The Hostel pattern has become fairly clear. We wait for His word concerning the Training Centre. But it is obvious that the whole "Fellowship" needs to share the vision of God for this place, and this will only be forthcoming as we jealously guard our corporate life in prayer. It is not the coming to meetings, but the coming together in the Holy Spirit that counts. But there must be this latter assembling, and each gathering should be regarded as providing the Holy Spirit with His opportunity of unveiling the glory and purpose of the Son of God in His Church for all the world.

It may also be needful to say that during this testing and transition time those of us who have had the responsibility for the leadership and guidance of this work have been obliged to keep close counsel, for there are many adversaries, and we have found it true that the last member to come under the complete Sovereignty of His grace is that member that is used for the confession of His great and holy Name. We have been compelled to guard the secrets of the Lord.

But now that the pattern is coming through we are looking forward to the closer co-operation of the whole fellowship in all the work.

The weather at Easter will, we trust, be sufficiently mild to make our gatherings in a large Marquee in the grounds a comfortable experience. We are still hoping to entertain some of our guests in the Hostel, but whether housed so, or in private homes, we are making arrangements upon one basis of charge, the lowest we can estimate for the 5½ days, Thursday to Tuesday, and we especially advise all who feel led of the Lord to come to make application immediately to our secretary, Mr. Paterson, who will also deal with all matters relating to their accomodation.

### LARGER ISSUE OF THIS PAPER :---

We intend getting the April number out hefore the Conference, and so propose to publish our first enlarged issue (16 pages) in May. PERSONAL :—

Our sister, Miss Ruth Rogers, of Swindon, has now joined Miss Frearson, at her orphanage, at Shemlan, Lebanon, Syria. Our sjirit responds to this leading of one who has already been used to give out the testimony of the Cross in that land. The Armenian problem presses in upon this work at Shemlan, but that with all other world-problems meets its solution as far as individual lives are concerned in the Cross. May our sister be greatly used to strengthen Miss Frearson's hands and to add to the Fire of God in that place.

Our sister, Miss Barnes of the Kurku and Central Indian Hill Mission went out again to service on the 22nd of last month, and will by this time have landed at Bombay. Let us hold her up before her Lord.

#### THE MARCH CONFERENCE :---

The messages of this time were very personal, and most of us have come through with the impact of God's word upon our hearts. We were brought very low at his feet. Our brother, Mr. Crowe, again shared the ministry with us. His message was mainly upon the necessity of the believer being "with ME." Christ's call to those who profess to be His came with almost unbearable power. The final message on Monday evening was an unveiling o" the whole history of the "Body"-the true church, amid the pseudo 'professing' church—'' following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth ", WITH HIM, right through to the final breaking of the power of the principalities and powers, so that last company shall be caught-up, simultaneously with the OUT resurrection, to meet the Lord.

Our own word was kept more to the theme. Conformableness to that IMAGE of God in the

Christ is only possible through conformableness to His death. The process of the glorifying is now going on (2nd Cor. iii, 18. It takes place there in the Presence. "as we walk in the Light." But what humbling, what abasement of self continually! The daily dying! Selfmortification! Yet the joy of knowing that as we decrease so He increases. The old theme of the Cross that once we shunned becomes now more and more the vital word of God. We cannot breathe in any other air than that which surrounds it, for there the Holy Ghost witnesses still through the Blood and the Word. But oh, the atmosphere elsewhere than at the Cross, what subtleties of Satan infest it !

On Sunday evening the Hall was taxed to its utmost, and it was evident that our marching orders are through. During the Conference we were rejoiced to have the fellowship and prayers of our brothers, Mr. Fearson Harrison and Mr. P. W. Faunch.

#### **OUR BROTHER:**—

It is but kind to intimate to many enquiring hearts that our brother Mr. Sparks, with his family, is recuperating at Whitstable this month, one of the Lord's children having put a house at their disposal. Strength is returning, and there seems every probability of a return to ministry for the Easter Conference. There are many calls to service but we need especial prayer, not only for strength, but that we may be kept in the will of God, within the compass of His appointments. There do is appear, however, the likelihood of a Conference in Newcastle in May or June of three days, in which we shall share the ministry.

### PRAYER.AND PERSONAL PROBLEMS

THE number of requests for *prayer*, and also of enquiries concerning *personal problems*, is growing to considerable proportions.

The Lord will raise up in relation to the former a more definite prayer instrument in the Hostel; and as we do not propose to open a correspondence column in this paper. We shall be glad as far as we are able to attend personally to the latter.

Will our readers therefore for the present address all correspondence under both these heads to the acting editor, T. Madoe Jeffreys, "The Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre," 13 Honor Oak Road S.E.23.

It may be best noted here that this address will serve as a common address for all the workers in connection with the WITNESS AND TESTIMONY.

### BOOKLETS (By T. A.-S.).

Nos 1 and 2. "Incorporation into Christ." Price. 2d.

No. 7. "The Inner Man of the Heart" (with diagram). Price 4d.

Apply Secretery : Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Lord continues to stir up the hearts of His people to maintain this, message, and we have to indicate gratefully the following gifts :---

Hephzibah House. £2:8:0; Dublin, 10s.; Newcastle, 1°s.; Southen't, 10s.; Philadelphia, 8s.; Philadelphia, 4s. 2d.; Ashville, U.S.A., 4s. 2d.; Tenderden, 4s.; Edinburgh, 3s.; Brighton, 3s.; New Jersey, 1s. 8d.; Switzerland, 2s.; Anerley, 2s. 6d.; Anerley, 13s.; Paddington, 2s. 6d.; Brixton, 2s. 6d.; Barking, 2s. 6d.; Highgate, 2s. 6d.; Dorking, 2s. 6d.; Dublin, Is. 9d.; Norwood, 1s. 6d.; Norwood, 13s.; Ealing, 2s. 6d.; Tenterden, 5s.; Crawley, 2s. 6d.—Total, £6 18s. 3d.

To avoid confusion will readers note that remittances for this paper should be sent to Miss Sach, 29 Mundania Road. S.E.22. All mailing is attended to by Miss Hawes, 24 Rye Dale, S.E.22.

## THE CROSS, AND THE ETERNAL GLORY OF GOD Notes of an Address delivered at the December Conference.

(Continued from last month).

Here then you have the sevenfold breaking forth of His Glory in specific and definite manifestations and acts. But that does not carry you very far until you begin to realise the connection of these manifestations of Glory, and I would have you just note the connections of these and the specific significance. They are mainly revealed to us typically and that in two trios, and then you get the one glorious isolated revelation of His Glory in that consummation-and yot not isolated, because it is the consummation of a process which is going on now until that time. You notice in the Tabernacle the suprome characteristic and feature is His mediatorial work. The Tabornacle has as its central reality the system of sacrifice and priesthood in mediation, and when this thing which is supremely a manifestation of mediatorial priestly work in the behalf of sin and sinners is set up and fulfilled according to the divine ordering, then the glory of the Lord fills the tent: and here you have Christ mediatorially glorified as the High Priest and as the Altar and as the Sacrifice, the glory of God resting upon and within His work as Mediator, here so fully revealed in the Tabernacle: the glory of God, the glory of

Christ, is found within His atoning work, His mediatorial work as Saviour, the One who deals with sin. Do you notice that couplet which we have often mentioned in this fellowship. It runs right through the Word of God uniting Grace and Glory : "The Lord is a Sun and a Shield, He will give grace and glory." The sun is the glory, but grace is the shield which makes it possible for sinful man to dwell in the glory. If that full-orbed glory of God were to blaze suddenly upon one of us here we should die instantly. "No man hath seen God and lived." It is not possible to stand in the full blaze of the glory of God unless you have something to shield that glory, and the incarnation is the glory of God shielded by grace, so that we can enter into the glory of God without being consumed. You have often looked at the sunset and you have said "How glorious." Now what is a sunset? It is simply the rising of the mists of earth laying hold of the sun rays and breaking them up so that the full blaze of the sun is arrested by these mists of earth, and you look through the shield of mists and see the glory of the sunset, which is simply the full blaze arrested so that you can enjoy it, so that you can look at it in its varied hues and shades. So He took our flesh; He was made in our likeness in order that being one of us He might, yet being God, reveal to us in grace the glory of God, so that we could enjoy it without being consumed. He will give grace and glory. The mediatorial work of grace, the atoning work, the work by reason of His sacrifice, as He was the Lamb slain, as He was the mediator for our sins, this is the grace of God in Christ by which the glory is revealed; and, beloved, you can never understand the glory, or know anything about the glory, until you have been led to the apprehension of grace, and when you know the meaning of grace, then you know the meaning of glory; and I think of all who ought to be able to appreciate grace, we here ought to be able to appreciate it the most. For has there not been disclosed to us the revelation of the awfulness of flesh, the impossibility of flesh entering into the presence of God. Have we not seen the flesh laid bare, exposed, and have we not come to stand in horror and dread of anything that is flesh? We loathe it! Wo know what havoc the devil can do if only he ean get hold of a little bit of flesh ! So we have come to hate and loathe and stand in fear of flesh; and with this revelation of the awfulness, the impossibility of flesh, oh, how much we

aeed the grace of God to stand in His presence t all, all the while enduring this exposure and knowledge of flesh, this awfulness. But that we with this true knowledge (which is not a theory, but is to us a daily agony before God, lest flesh should come in at all) can stand and enjoy fellowship with the Lord, that is grace! And until you understand grace by reason of what He has done on our behalf in being made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for flesh condemning sin in the flesh, bearing it away Himself, until you appreciate that, you cannot appreciate the glory. But when you understand that, that is the glory, that to you is the glory of God. I cannot define the glory of God now in other terms than grace. Later on, we may be able to define it in other terms, but at present the glory of God is the grace of God, His forbearance, His longsuffering, His tenderness, His many mercies, the things that He does for us, always what He is doing. The wonder of it all! The upholding, the sustaining in the midst of the direst assaults and most terrible pressure, yet there is that holding of us up all the time, so that although we would give up all too readily, and shrink back, He holds us and brings us through, and then He allows us the honour, which we so often think of as being anything but an honour—to be led into trouble—in order that the manifestation of His grace might bring glory to Himself. This is the glory of God; and it is all because of the mediatorial, atoning, representative and work of the Lord. When substitutionary When we understand grace, then the glory of the Lord fills the house. You ask any sinner who has been sayed from the awful depths and reality of sin by the grace of God if he knows anything of the glory of God! Why it is in his face all the time, and it ought to be in our faces all the time, we who know the awfulness of the flesh. The Lord will give grace and glory. These two things always go together, and so you find the first manifestation of the glory of God is in that structure, the Tabernacle, that presentation which speaks supremely of His grace, the mediatorial aspect of the Saviour's life and work.

The next is in the Book of Chronicles, when you come to the Temple. Has it struck you that it was not in the priestly so much as in the monarchical, the kingly, that the glory is vested. It was a king who built this temple; it was a king who dedicated this temple, it was a king who was (lod's representative in this. The plan was still the same plan, the pattern was still the same pattern

as out from the heavenlies. David got the pattern by revelation. It was still the pattern of the things in the heavens, but this time the main feature was the monarchical, the kingly, and then when this thing had been finished according to the ordering of the Lord, and a king representatively stood over it and handed it to the Lord and represented the Lord before the people as the priest had done in the other case, then the glory of the Lord filled the house. Here you have the kingly aspect of the Christ, the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus. We have no need to stay further to talk about it, we are always talking about it. He is sovereign Lord. and we preach Jesus Christ as Lord, and that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father. " Lift up your heads O ye gates : be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, He is King of Glory." On the ground of His tremendous conquest, on the ground of His great triumph—as He trod the winepress alone, as His garments were dyed red with the blood of His enemies, as He travelling in the greatness of His strength by way of His cross where he stripped off the principalities and powers, where He laid low the powers which were against Him and triumphed gloriously—He is the King of Glory. Upon the triumphant work of Christ as Lord and King the glory of God rests.

Now the third is in that little passage in Isaiah; Isaiah is being called to a prophetical work. He is the prophet of the Messiah, and the words suspended in the air in the presence of the revelation are : "Who will go for us?" and whom shall I send? Here is a "Sent One" required, an Apostleship demanded, one to go out to fulfil a prophetical ministry and work in an apostleship, being sent." The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," said the great Sent One later, "because He hath anointed me to proclaim: He hath sent me." Now here you have right in the centre a prophetical word. Some have, I think quite justifiably, made Isaiah the highest of the prophets because of the revelation of the Christ which He was permitted to give, or which (lod gave through him; but the phase here is undoubtedly a type of the "prophesorial" work of the Lord Jesus. His ministry is a "Sent One," a prophet : and as this prophet of the Great Prophet, this one who is included in the prophetic or prophesorial ministry of the Greater Who was to come later, of Whom he prophesied, as he was before the Lord, the Glory of the Lord fills the

house to create and to establish this prophetic ministry. Now the Lord Jesus is here foreshadowed in His prophesorial ministry or office, the "Sent One," the Apostle, God's Apostle, and in this coming forth out from the Father of which we read so much and so often speak. "I came forth out from God." "1 came out from the Father." "God so loved....that He gave " -here is the Gift, the Sent One of God. On the ground of His having come forth from God to declare the counsel of God, and to reveal the mind of God, and to draw men back to God, as well as to warn men of the judgments of God, upon this work of a prophet the glory of the Lord is seen filling the House. Now you see this three-fold phase when you get to the New Testament, which is the counterpart of this Old Testament type.

You notice that in the mount of transfiguration the Saviour is in the presence of His atoning and mediatorial work; for why was He there in the mount? Well He was being spoken to, and having communion concerning His exodus, His going out, which he was shortly to accomplish at Jerusalem. He was in the mount concerning this great work which He was going to accomplish by the exodus of the Cross, and the passion, taken into the Ascension, and through the Ascension into the glory. And when this work of the cross is nearest and most real and accepted anew by Him in the mount, confirmed and ratified by Him before God and the heavenly witnesses, the glory of the Lord breaks forth upon Him and is manifested in Him and through Him. There it is. We need not stay, for we have already said what is to be said about the mediatorial glory of the Saviour.

Thus the second in the New Testament is the Ascension, the King of Glory entering in; this is the sovereign, the monarchical. Then Pentecost is the prophetical, or apostolic—the sending of those in like manner as He was sent. •• As the Father hath sent me, oven so (in like manner) I send you." And as He is now thrusting out His church, His Body, Christ corporate, Christ representative, the going out into the apostolic, the prophetical ministry, to speak of Him and for Him, to exhort, and to warn, and to entreat -the Glory of God is there.

Now, beloved, this is all so clear and patent, " Wo see the underlying truth or ground-work of the Glory of God. But what I want you to notice is that in each of these cases there is the relationship to the cross-the death, the resur- know the glory as we have already been made rection and the ascension. When Moses went i to sit with Him in the heavenlies. into the mount to recoive the pattern, in order t things, union with the crucified Lord, union

to carry it out, in order that the Glory of the Lord might be revealed, before he ascended that mount he built an al'ar at its foot, and offered a sacrifice before he went up. Here is Calvary in the Ascension, in the heavens, that the pattern of the Church might be revealed. The cross is basic to the manifestation of the heavenly pattern, and the breaking forth of the heavenly glory.

When Solomon dedicated the temple the allar was there. You remember, the sacrifice was offered, and he knelt by the altar and presented it to God. and the glory broke through, but the revelation had come from the heavenlies. The three things are always there-the Cross, the Resurrection, the Ascension. In Isliah it is all too patent. "Woe is me, for I am undone," then the cherubim took a live coal from the altar; here is this coal soaked in blood and permeated with fire. This is the cross that alone makes this ministry possible, and through this ministry makes possible the manifestation of the glory of God. In the New Testament we see that the cross is associated immediately with the mount of transfiguration. The cross is also at Pentecost. Listen to Peter's sermon and see if it is not there; and we shall recognise that it was upon this spiritual recognition and entry into the meaning of the cross that the glory broke forth at Pentecost. The crucified Christ had now been revealed to them in all the meaning of His Calvary work. There was a time when they could not understand and appreciate that. They said, "Far be it from thee Lord. This shall never come to thee. If this happens then that is an end of everything. There is no hope at all if you go up to Jerusalem and fall into the hands of wicked men." They could see nothing beyond that; but now they had got beyond that, and they saw the cross was everything in the risen Christ. And then in union with the ascended Christ Who was received up into glory, then, on the ground of the cross, and all its outcome, the glory broke through. You see that these three things are there all the way through.

Beloved, in that coming again to be glorified in His saints it will still be the cross, it will still be on the ground of the cross. But this is the point—we can only share the glory as we have shared the cross. The cross is there, and we can only share the glory as we know Him in the power of His resurrection. We can only These three

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

with the risen Lord, union with the ascended Lord, this is union with a glorified Lord. And if there is to he any breaking forth of the glory of God in us individually it must be as, firstly, the cross does its work; then as He is Sovereign, and not only Mediator; and then as we go out to fulfil His apostolic ministry, as " sent forth " men—only so can the Spirit of Glory rest upon us. The ascension glory is the indwelling of ('hrist by the Holy Spirit. He has come forth in the person of His Holy Spirit to indwell, and He is the glory in the midst. Only on these simple, but fundamental realities of union with Christ can the glory be. If He is to be glorified in the midst of us corporately, it will be as we are separated by the cross from all that which the cross condemns and rules out; as we are joined in a personal testimony experimentally to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and as we know what it is with Him jointly to reign in life in the ascension power by the Holy Ghost coming and indwelling us. We have made it our supreme ambition and prayer that "I might know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made comformable to His death." And thus we shall know Him now in His glory.

There are many phases of the practical application of this thing, but the broad range of revelation will be enough, and other applications may follow, if the Lord so leads. We have often said much about this—that He might be allowed to take us into the death of things, and of all that we are, in order that He might be glorified in a testimony to His resurrection in us, and in them. This is the ground of the glory. H we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. And that must begin now, because we have got to have an earnest of our inheritance-to know Him as Elisha knew His master Elijah, who went up into the glory in the power of His ascension. When the mantle fell (the type of the Spirit) upon Elisha from his master as he went up into glory, this is a picture of our relationship to our Lord, joined with Him ascended, by the falling of His Spirit upon us, and the entering of His Spirit into us-to know Him in the fellowship of the Spirit, wearing His mantle. This is the ground of the glory. May we know it. May it not be to you as a beautiful objective mental vision, but a real practical experience. The mediatorial, the sovereign, the apostolic Christ in us fulfilling all those ministries of Saviour and Lord and Prophet in us, and through us, so shall the glory be revealed. The Church—His Bodyis the instrument and sphere of this ministry. Christ continues to manifest Himself as Mediator, Sovereign and Apostle in and through His Body, and even so His glory rests upon and breaks forth in this Temple as He is allowed so to do fully by each member becoming incorporated in Himself as Saviour, Sovereign and Sent One.

T. A.-S.

# THE ALMIGHTINESS OF THE RISEN LORD IN HIS CHURCH

Notes of an address given at the CENTRE, Sunday morning, 27th February, 1927.

Matthew xviii., 20.

#### "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

He must be in the midst of *each* before He is in the *midst* of them. He must be in my midst, in my spirit. I must be born again, out from Him, and therefore share with Him one Life. Where two or three such, sharing with Him one life, are gathered together, there perforce He is in the midst, being in the midst of each in their spirit, God dwelling in and upon them individually through the Christ; and therefore when two or three such come together He surely is in the midst of them.

The verse is an explanation. He is explaining why almightiness belongs to the church. Why the authority of the Throne about which we have been speaking much in recent years is vested in the church of God. He has given the mazing promises that "Whatsoever things ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever things ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven-Whosoever sins ye forgive they arc forgiven, &c." But it is when we thus come together; and it must be such a coming together, for it is a unique coming together, the like of which has never been known in heaven or earth. It is a coming together of the members of the body of Christ, a wonderful assemblage in the Holy Chost of an incarnate Life of God in men through Christ. 1 have not touched the fringe of this "mystery of Godliness," much less exhausted it, and while these words are among the best known in the scriptures we cannot understand them with the natural mind, and need the revelation that it is not for flesh and blood to inherit the kingdom. Oh! we do need revelation to understand every text of scripture. It is our peculiar danger that we have come to think

that I ible knowledge is sufficient. Bible-taught Christians talk much about the coming of the Lord and we think we know because we have been instructed in doctrine as from without; but we do not know except by the Holy Ghost's revealing within. It is the Holy Ghost alone Who enables us to understand the infinite meanings of the word of God.

These words form the basis of what are supposed to be in a well-known denomination "Congregational Principles"; but how little are they apprehended. For there is a great vista in these words, a revelation, a wonder of authority and power. They instance the fact that in the church there is possible a manifestation of Divine Omnipotence by reason of the Cross. That where two or three of His people are truly gathered together in the Spirit of God they can loose on earth and it is loosed in heaven, they can bind on earth and it is bound in heaven. Authority Vested in the church; but not as Divine! men, not as individuals, not as persons who can in themselves say that they have authority. but as those who have become incorporated into the Christ of God, as those who share with Him one Life, as those who are born out from Him, and therefore look upon Him as the entire source of their being, and are prepared to continually crucify the flesh or their own make-up, their own nature, and accept instead the indwelling and the operation of His Spirit as their life. When two or three such come together in such a condition wrought out by Christ, recognizing that this is made possible by the tremendous act of the Cross, and by the ever continuous operation of the Blood of the Lamb in the midst of the throne (that is the effluence of God that now proceeds from the Throne by the Spirit in eternal passion), when the children of God realise that, then they reswept through by the current of a Divine Life, and they arc gathered together into an activity of this Divine Life, and they are made to represent the living God in the earth'. This is the majesty and power of God's grace in the church. Of course you have the caricature of this in the systems of this world as represented in such systematised bodies as the Roman and Anglican 'churches,' and now in the denominations which are becoming organized politic bodies. But these are creations in this world of the flesh and of the devil as against this tremendous but bidden FACT of the church which is His Body. T. M. J.

(To be continued.)

## "SCORCHED."

### Notes of an Address at January Conference. by Mr. A. S. Crowe

THE word the Lord gave me this morning was just this word. "Scorched," and it is not a word one woull choose to give forth. One would prefer to go forward in the faith that there is none who is in any way rejecting the word of the Lord, and yet one cannot do other than give forth the word that He gives—You remember where it comes—you find it in the 4th chapter of the Gospel according to Mark, in the 3rd yerse :

"There went out a sower to sow."

and then in the 5th verse :

"And some foll on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up. it was scorched; and because it had no root it withered away."

We will read the Lord's own interpretation of the Word, 16th verse:

"And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground: who, when they have hoard the Word immediately receive it with gladness, and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time : afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the Word's sake. immediately they are offended."

"When the sun was up it was scorched." The Son, Who to us is the Centre of all things, our Life, our Light, our Lord of Love; and when the divine heat of that Love shines forth in all Its glory, then this seeming work of grace shrivels up! When we begin our walk with the Lord it is like early morning, freshness, beauty and a gladness as we walk with Him and talk with Him; but as we walk on with Him the Sun gets up, that Love which has been a cheering ray, which has been something that has enlighten d and illuminated, and we enjoyed it, The figure is becomes somehow unbearable. that of the oriental sun, the mid-day sun. Some of us know what it is, especially when it is in the heat of the hottest season of the year, like a blast out of the oven, and you have to shut yourself in the house away from it; and your garden is simply withered up, and the little water that your boy puts on the flowers is just enough to boil them; and you come back at the end of a hot season like that to find everything withered, scorched : "Scorched."

Now, do you know where the full revelation of the Love of God is to be found? Where do

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you have to go to find the Sun up—all the fulness—all the ardour—all the fierce heat of Divine Love shining forth—where is that? We know: that is at Calvary; that is at the Cross. And all of it is Love, the very perfection of Love. We begin our walk with the Lord, and because it is a walk with Him He must lead us there; and because He is Love. He must take us on to the full revelation of Himself. And then it is the test comes.

Oh, the multitude of souls who will walk with Jesus up to a point, but when this fierce heat comes, their soul draws back; they are stumbled; and the stone of stumbling and the rock of offence is the crucified Lord, and the Cross to which He brings them; and they begin to have a quarrel with their God; they are offended with Him. He is not treating them as they think He ought; He is not doing for them what they expected He would do; at least, He is not doing it in the way that He should be expected to do it; and so there is a quarrel, and a suppression in spirit, and the life that was so full of promise, the response, the gladness and joy, it all seems to die out and wither, and there is nothing left but a w thered life, a scorched, blackened, charred life. But the Lord is showing here how one reason for it all is, that the great desire of His heart for fruit is not realised. Instead of the fruit there is just this blackened life, all the promise taken away. What has done it ? This Word, the Word of His Testimony, the Word of His Life has been received, but the soul is not willing that it should go on unto perfection. When it comes to the Cross it dies away; it says: "No!" The Lord says it is "tribulation" because of the Word, tribulation for the Word's sake. If the Word given in the power of the Spirit comes to full perfection, this word "tribulation" is in it. It 's the same thought of " pressure "-not the same word—but it is very much akin to a word which the Apostle Paul uses: "Constraineth" 2 Cor.v.14. Here was a man who yielded to the pressure; he found himself held in position by the Love of Christ; pressed into one place by the Love of Christ. It is the word the Lord Himself uses of Jerusalem, where Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, and hemmed in on every side, and there is no escape from the armies. Now, the Lord seems to say that it is not the armics of man -the persecutions of man you have got to fear; it is My Love, My hemming you in-there is no escape; I am pressing you in.

There is also a word used about our Lord when the soldiers held Him; they "arrested"

Him, they seized Him and kept Him, with a determination to hold Him. And you just turn it round—it is not we arresting the Lord, it is the Lord arresting us, the Love that will not let us go; but that Love forcing us into one place, from which there is no escape; and Divine Love presses you into that one place -Calvary; that one place-the Cross; that is the tribulation. Those of you who need the power, here is the secret of power: when God brings pressure to bear, yield to it. No, but the soul says: "Not that way! We are in for all the delights, for all the joys, and all the gladness that Jesus can bring into our lives. and all the peace and the revelation even of the Lord's love for us, but we are not willing to go on to all the fruitage." That means they are not willing to go through pain, and they are not willing to go through travail, and fruit can come no other way. "No, we will not have that Cross."

Now what is the reason for the "scorching?" The Lord gives three reasons. First He says:

"Because they had no depth of earth."

They had just a little; but to take you through you need much. We saw the altar last night; and we saw the throne. Now all the resources of that throne are behind the soul that would lead on to the altar, and on and on to fruitfulness. But you have got a little Lord, and He does little things for you, and you are satisfied with little things—a little joy—a little love a little prayer-and it is very little; and you do not know there is anything bigger in the Lord. You have not had what our brother has been speaking of, this revelation of *Himself*. And before you can really go through, there must come this revelation of WHO HE IS. His wondrous power, that He is on the throne. and that the Hand that is going to so deal with you is the Mighty Hand. You have not seen it, you do not see what there is to draw you, and because you do not see that, when the pressure comes you are at sea so to speak, and you come to a full stop—you have finished with the impossible. You have stopped because there is not much earth; and your real need is to be shown by the Holy Ghost that there is much you have never seen, much that has never entered into the heart of man, never can enter into the heart of man, but by the Spirit.

Another of the reasons is: "No root." What does that mean? No hidden life—it is that. Now we are getting to the connection of what was in my brother's mind, "Prayer," and what

was in my mind, "No Root"; no secret life with God, that is the root. You will go along quite merrily until the hour of pressure comes, until God begins to make some demand; but it is in the hour of tribulation, in the hour of trial, that you find what it means to have no root, no secret life.

We were speaking last night about the Shut Door. We saw that it was the Shut Door that shut the flesh out. There is also a Shut Door that we did not mention, a Shut Door which when you are inside you are shut in, and you are shut into a place of power, and you have access to the Throne. And when the need comes you get the vision of the Throne, you are cast back upon Him. The Lord speaks of it in the 6t'n Matthew, 6th verse :

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast *shut* thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which secth in secret shall reward thee openly. When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

There is a repetition which is not vain repeti-Some of you have read that book: tion. "Praying Hyde." I was permitted to see Hyde's prayer life, to be with him in prayer, and that was one of the characteristics about his praying, they were not wordy prayers; but he would just lie on his face before God with one word perhaps, and he would repeat that word, and repeat, and repeat, and repeat. Some people would not call that a prayer. There he was, just holding one thing before the Lord. We think it is the words we use, and if the words do not come, then it is not prayer. It is very simple; the Lord does not say anything about what he *hears* in the secret place; it is what He sees. It is the attitude of heart toward Himself, that soul in the secret place just standing there with the Lord, standing on the promises, maintaining that attitudo of Spirit towards Him, and He is looking for it. Of course the time comes when words come forth out of that, but the Lord looks for that; and it does not matter if the words do not The Lord is looking for something in come. the secret place. He is looking for the secret life behind the Shut Door.

And then comes the pressure. What is the pressure but Himself? It is Jesus from above pressing in upon me behind circumstances, and even behind the power of the devil, He uses all of this: and the soul that has got no root dies because it has no means of getting into

contact with the Throne, even if it knows there is a Throne to get into contact with. The soul is dry, and I am not getting that which I must have in my immediate surroundings. I cannot find what I must have—I must have water, the moisture—if it is not here, then I must go where I can get it, and out go little fresh rootlets, pushing their way here, and pushing their way there, and they go down and down until they begin to suck in moisture, and when they have found it the unexpected happens, and instead of that little plant withering up in the fierce rays of the sun, as you would expect it to do, it lifts up its head, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and it is full of Life. It has drawn in the Life. The pressure of Jesus from without, and the letting go of all things in search of Jesus in the hidden place; the soul meets the call of the Lord without, and finds the Lord within. That is the second reason. Why "scorched ?" No Root, No Root!

Then comes the question: Why no Root?-No Depth; so awfully superficial; all upon the surface, glib, plenty for show, but no depth. Why no depth? It is not so much stony ground this, as rocky ground; you look across the field and you cannot see that there is any rock there, it looks good ground; it looks just like that patch from which the Lord is going to get a good harvest, thirty. sixty, an hundredfold; in fact, it looks much better; but it is not going to last. What is it that prevents the root going down? .Rock: a hard heart, the flesh. We do not pray, we cannot pray, we cannot really pray. What is it that has to be dealt with? The flesh. That is the secret of our failure in prayer-flesh, flesh. The Lord speaks of that hard heart so often. There is that word in the 3rd Hebrews, 8th verse:

"Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness."

But if ye will hear His voice, this Word of His, this living Word, this Word which is Spirit and Life, this Word will, if it is received, bring forth fruit an hundredfold unto God if God can have His own way, if He does not find a hard life. Ah, who can break this hard heart? He alone can break the heart. He can! Let us turn back to the 95th Psalm:

"O como, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving . . . for the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is His also. The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands

formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

This is the revelation of the Lord, what He is, what His power is; and as the revelation comes, kneel down, not merely with the knee, but with the whole being, down in His Presence. And then this word: "Harden not your heart" as in contention—this contention with God! Why? They had got into one of those hard places, those places of pressure, those places of trial in the wilderness, dry burning heat, no water. God had His own provision, He was able to give them water, but instead of believing that, they said: "Let us have a quarrel with God; let us call God names." And they stumbled—that is the hard heart. And this flesh must be dealt with.

Oh, there must be a coming to the Cross, if there is to be the fruit, and if there is to be the life in prayer; and is it not so that it is just in that place that He teaches us to pray? We say: "Lord, teach us to pray." But how is He going to do it? By showing us the *pattern* of prayer. The *man* who prays; the man who is just in this position, who is feeling the pressure; the pressure of midnight. It is dark, the midnight hour. He is feeling the pressure of another's need, and he knows exactly what that need is, and that need is weighing upon him; and he is feeling the pressure of his own absolute poverty; he can do nothing.

Now then, what are you going to do in a case like that ? Just this: a man who has got no roots, and not much earth, a very poor conception of the Lord of Glory, and no contact with that Lord of Glory because there is no root, it is there he is going to fail God. But a man who has got root, there is only one thing to do-search after God. But the door is shut, and He does not answer; and that brings fresh pressure still; but he prays, and he stays there; it is not that he comes night after night to the Lord; he stays just there; it is a perpetual burden on his spirit; and he does not let go until he gets through. And it is not a burden for himself; he is after something for another; and the very pressure drives him to God, and he waits there until He does arise, and does give to him what he needs.

The 107th Psalm.

"Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses." That is where the Lord brings you, when you ask to be taught to pray—unto distresses. Most of these distresses in the 107th Psalm are distresses brought upon the soul by its own foolishness and their sins, but not all of them. And there is one phase of this, and I do pray that the Lord may bring us into the meaning of it, verse 23:

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters. (Business in great waters —"I must be about my Father's business.") These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."

Now we are all wanting to see something wonderful, we all like that—but to be brought into the place where God can work the miracle —how He answers our prayer: Teach us to pray." But to bring us into that place ! What is that place ? Verse 25:

"For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They are mounted up to the heaven, thoy go down to the depths: their soul is full of trouble... they are at their wits end."

And the Lord brought the storm to bring them there. These places of distresses, of tribulation, of the heat of the Cross which brings you right to an end of yourself, nothing to be done, it is impossible, except one thing, and that you have to be a baby to do such a silly thing, such a simple thing—just cry, keep on crying, verse 28:

"Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that tho waves thereof are still. Then they are glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth thom to their desired haven."

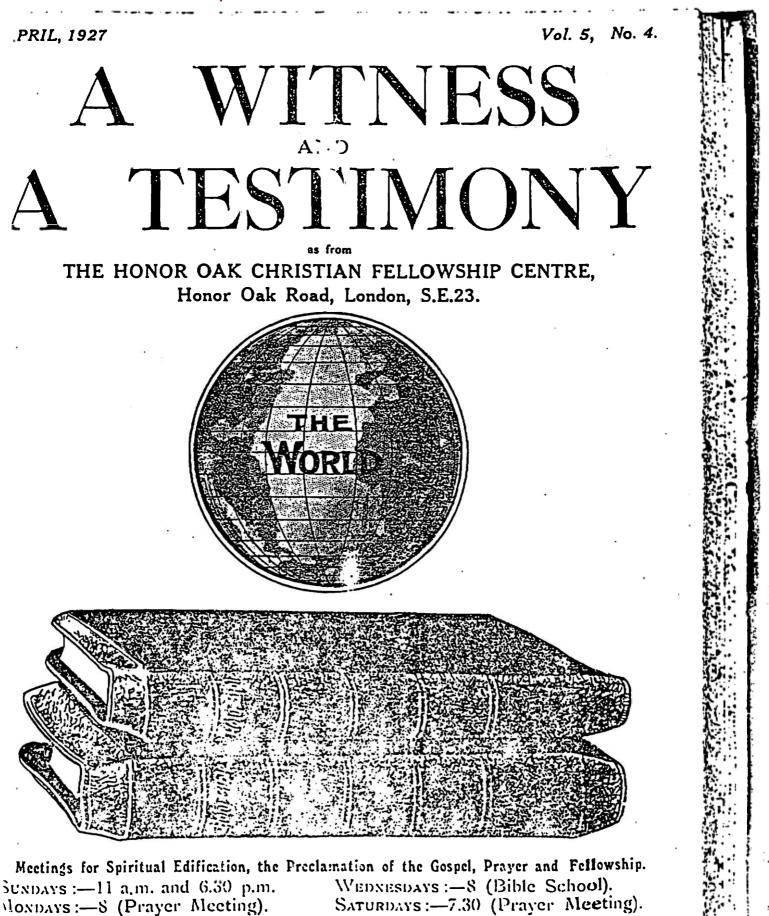
And that desired haven is not simply a haven that they desire; He desires it for them, and He creates the storm in order that He may get His way, to get them into this haven that He desires to get them into.

The business of God, that is what we want. As long as we are just praying little prayers about our own little needs, and we are not concerned about the great business of God, we are in the condition of rootlessness, and therefore dryness and hardness.

"I must be about my Father's business."

and there, in the midst of the storm you see the wonder of what God can do; you see the strength of the Arm of the Lord. You say: "I am not going to have the storm, I want calm seas"— Then you will miss the wonder of the miracle. I do not think we can really learn to pray without this progressive teaching in the midst of storms. The Lord answer our prayer—to be taught to pray through the storms. A. S. C.

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Ministers: T. AUSTIN-SPARKS T. MADOC JEFFREYS

All particulars may be obtained from Mr. G. PATERSON, 27 Tintagel Crescent London, S.E.22, the Secretary of the "Fellowship."

# MINISTERS' LETTER

# HONOR OAK CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CENTRE.

April, 1927. BELOVED OF OUR LORD,

And after the toil joy ? Is this the order ?

In a sense, and beyond measure, yes. But by no means altogether so. For while we look for that unutterable joy of the "Morning without clouds." even now, by His grace, there is a joy of the Spirit, of which it is said, "The joy of the Lord, *it* is your strength." The "it" is left out in both our versions, yet how emphatic it is. Ir, the joy of the Lord, is alone our strength. There can be no strength apart from this present joy.

The romance of the New Testament is in its All through it is a joyous book. Amid joy. the storms of ill-will, persecution, hate, and the battle for the gaining of the soul, it is the confession of this company of harassed saints-"We rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." But here we have purposely left out the dynamic centre and cause, "In Whom." For it is the joy of the Christ-Life: it is the fellowship : of His Joy amid the fellowship of His sufferings.

Without this, Christian life and service are impossible. This joy of God comes instant and immediate to meet the pressure of the outward sorrows of the battle, so that the ground of our salvation being clearly revealed, the apostle says, "And not only so, but we rejoice in tribulations also." Extraordinary language ! But it is the expression of the extraordinary character of the Spirit-born life. Faith (Abraham) begets laughter (Isaac). Oh, the joy of this fighting faith. It has its taste of victory amid the confusions of the conflict.

So it says, "The Lord loveth a *cheerful*, a *hilarious*, giver." Surely this is one who in all things sacrifices with joy, endures with joy, suffers with joy.

But how is this possible? It is impossible for the natural man; by which we mean, it is impossible for the Christian in the ground of nature. There are no such springs of joy in our "flesh." This joy springs up from the wells of salvation. It is of the Spirit; but of the Spirit as within us. Thus the second aspect of the celestial fruit of the Spirit is "Joy": "The fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy ...." The Kingdom of God, already a realised FACT in the Spirit, is righteousness, and peace, and joy. But the well-spring is the Divine Love. The children of God share so deep a fellowship with their Lord that the Joy of His accomplished triumph springs up within their hearts.

Did not He enjoy so intimate a fellowship with the Father here on earth that in the face of His anguish He was able to pass on the inheritance of His joy to His disciples, saying, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be complete."

It is therefore *His* joy. Nothing else can sustain the Cross. We do not go through upon determination, stoicism. Between the upper and the nether millstones of God's will and Satan's all flesh would be intolerably crushed. It is not in us to stand the pressure of the Cross. "The joy of the Lord, IT is our strength."

So He calls, "Rejoice with Me." He has triumphed, and He is triumphing. Rejoice! He has found, and He is finding : He is calling, and He is gathering: He is leading His flock like a Shepherd, and the Gateway of that Eternal Fold is close at hand. Rejoice !

Joy therefore not our own: not selfish, springing from personal motives or achievements; but in captivities, straitenings, afflictions, sorrows, suspenses, delays, postponements, and seeming present defeats, Joy, that springs up in our spirit from the Eternal Heart, because our life is in that stream of the Love of His Purpose, which the Cross has already accomplished in the unseen, and which the Spirit is working towards in the saints in all the world.

As we seek to co-operate with Him in the building-up of the House may it be said of us, "The Lord made them joyful to strengthen their hands for the work."

"Rejoice, and again I say unto you, Rejoice."

Yours in this hidden Life, T. AUSTIN-SPARKS. T. MADOC-JEFFREYS.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FROM our wider fellowship we have received the following gifts, as denoted, towards the printing and circulation of this paper during the past month : Hephzibah, Now York City, £1; Palmer's Green, 10s.; Hong Kong, 10s.; Fukien, 5s. ; Egypt, 5s. ; Nigeria, 5s. ; Jerusalem, 5s.; China, 5s.; Heightside, 5s.; Epsom, 5s.; Clapton, 3s.; Dundee, 2s. 6d.; Clapham, 28. 6d.; Cardiff, 28. 6d.; Dollis Hill, 28. 6d.; Waltham Cross, 2s. 6d.; Penge, 2s. 6d.; Wimbledon, 2s. 6d.; Manchester, 2s. 6d.; Cardiff, 2s.; Belfast, 2s.; Cornwall, 2s.; Willesden Green, 2s.-Total, £5 6s.

Will friends note that all communications relating to the WITNERS AND TERTIMONY should be addressed to T. Madoc-Jeffreys at the "Centre."

# THE MINISTRY AND FELLOWSHIP

### PREPARATIONS :---

This issue is being sent out amid the pressure of preparing the "House," yet there is no cumbering with much serving, for the "needful thing" has the larger place in our hearts.

For we are made conscious, and increasingly so, that these activities in making the Centre ready for its guests and service, most practical ministries, are as nothing compared with those mighty energies of the Spirit which the Lord would release in our midst, so that we may cooperate with Him as the "day of the Christ" the more nearly approaches, in the Divine Purpose of gathering-together and up-building His Body, the church, into its heavenly Life and service. And this, of course, with all saints. Is not this the "house" that the Son is

Is not this the "house" that the Son is seeking to build, and we with Him? And we have ever to watch also lest the matters of the Lord's House become our "own things" and are thus no longer the "things of the Christ." By which we mean we must cease from our own works, however well intentioned, refusing sclfpossessions of all kinds even in work and ministry, all service not divinely ordained and commissioned, and dwell and serve only under the Anointing.

Nevertheless there are these immediate burdens and necessities, and only those of us who have been privileged of the Lord to know the spiritual history of this time of preparation, could credit the peculiar and insistent attempts of the "enemy" to arrest the progress of the Lord's work. But such are the times when the secrets of hearts are revealed. Well, it is a great and effectual door, and we need not wonder that there are many adversaries. Please God, the "House" shall be ready in that hour of the Lord, and His Name gloriously written upon it. And this is true of the Great House of God as it is for these temporal houses of service.

As for the latter, we arc still standing for Easter, and while the conditions may not be those of perfect comfort, we are expecting all who shall be earnestly seeking the Lord's face with us at that time to endure a little hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

### **OUR FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP:**---

The Lord has ministered liberally through some of His stewards toward the equipment of the Centre, and thus continues to reveal His good pleasure in the work. During the past month we have received a further anonymous gift of £2(0 towards the furnishing of the Hostel. The way in which these gifts have been entrusted makes it difficult to publish an ordinary statement of accounts. Yet we feel it is necessary that there should be some kind of regular publication of moneys received and spent, and we propose issuing therefore a quarterly statement, and our first shall be published in the May WITNESS AND TESTIMONY. The Lord's gracious seal thus far upon this testimony gives us every confidence that all the needs yet to be met will be supplied.

The report of the "Fellowship" accounts for the past year, 1926, duly audited, has now been circulated among our local members. But as this concerns for the most part a period in which we were still involved in denominational associations by reason of the buildings we then occupied, we do not feel it calls for publication here.

We render grateful thanks to God for all His sustaining grace, and for the spirit of willing sacrifice in His people's hearts, so manifested in the figures of this report. Even financial figures can glorify God, and He Who saw the gifts that were placed in the "Treasury" in that temple of long ago still scans the secret giving of those who love much because they have been forgiven much.

But we are now concerned with the stewardship that devolves upon us by reason of this increased ministry with its increased and increasing obligations. And we solicit the prayers of all our wider fellowship in the world that He shall " order His house " in this matter.

The Guest Fund, which is now necessary for the "Guest House," as well as for the monthly conferences has already received the seal of the Lord upon it in some measure.

Unless friends desire to send their offerings for this work of God to or through either of the pastors, Mr. G. Paterson is the one to whom they should be sent, addressed to him at the "Centre."

### THE DESIGNATION OR TITLE (Of the 'Fellowship.')

In our last issue we had to correct the printed address over the "Ministers' Letter," apparently copied from an old number issued from our former premises when we called ourselves "Honor Oak Free Church." It was because of our stand as against all denominational association as a "free assembly of the Lord's people" that we were led to abandon those premises to their denominational trustees. But upon our coming out we were led, we believe, by the wisdom of God, to take to ourselves the present designation, "The Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre," because such a title saves us from the implication of starting a new sect or body. At least it should do so. But we find that there are not wanting misunderstandings, and these among the Lord's people, as to what we stand for. This was made perfectly clear in the October number of last year.

In our enlarged issue we shall have space to refer more particularly to the specific emphasis of our testimony, "The Testimony of Jesus." We would simply declare here that we stand for the full message of the Cross, and the resultant free fellowship in the Spirit of all members of the One Body of the Christ.

Thus not for pedantry but for principle we desire that our correct designation should be emphasised, "THE HONOR OAK CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CENTRE"—open to all the children of God through Jesus, the Christ.

# THE EASTER CONFERENCE

WE believe the Lord purposes to make this time of gathering together unto Himself one of very special and vital significance even unto the ends of the earth.

We are looking to the Lord, as Head of the Church, to call by His Spirit such as shall thus be gathered. We do little more than make the matter known, and continue in prayer that there shall be the Lord's ordering. This is not our province, and we keep much before Him that, in accord with the Conference theme, all things shall be according to the pattern in the heavenlies. His it is to unfold, and to take the initiative : ours to be obedient unto the heavenly vision and direction.

There will be three sessions daily with times for open conference and personal ministries between.

It would seem as if the Lord is leading us to devote the morning and afternoon sessions to consecutive ministry along definite lines, and that these will be taken by Mr. Sparks and Mr. Jeffreys respectively, while the evening sessions may be held for general ministry as the Lord indicates His instruments. But we are ready to go from hour to hour as led by the Holy Spirit, and consequently do not publish a set order in advance.

We trust that the inaugural gathering on the Thursday evening will be one of great joy and praise, and would ask our friends to prepare themselves to regard it as having a place of very definite importance, and thus to enter into the mind of the Lord for the Conference. As the new Conference Hall is not yet erected we expect to hold the main meetings in a large marquee.

It is also possible that the "Guest House" will not be fully completed in its alterations and adaptations. This will mean that the friends who join us must seek grace to accept the best arrangements that can be made, though we trust this will not mean any serious discomfort or inconvenience.

If friends who are coming from a distance will advise us as to the approximate time of their arrival at any of the local points or termini (cspecially such as have luggage) we will try and have them met and conveyed to the Centre. Do not forget that if you are in any difficulties our Telephone No. is Sydenham 5216.

A syllabus with plan of the locality and directions for reaching the Centre will be sent upon application.

# HOLIDAY CONFERENCE CENTRE

WE are being strongly exercised concerning the need of such a ministry for the children of God as would result from our establishing a Centre for Conferences during the spring to autumn months, from April to October.

These Conferences would probably be midmonthly, alternating with the regular week-end Conferences at Honor Oak, which are fixed by the first Sunday in each month.

If this be a vision of God it will materialise. Meanwhile we ask our readers to co-operate with us in prayer that the locality may be Divinely chosen, and that His will may be realised in the means to provide the equipment.

This brings us to say a further word upon The financial ministry of the "fellowship," and our own responsibility before the Lord. We are made the more conscious of this responsibilty because nearly all the means already provided for the building of the Conference Hall and the equipment of the "Guest House" have been entrusted to our personal stewardship and discretion. We venture therefore to assure those who share this "Testimony" with us that we are giving ourselves very fully to waiting upon the Lord for His revelation to come through as to the practical avenues whereby His purposes at this time shall be achieved through these resources.

These lie in many directions, and there are many needs. Our friends who are thus led to share our ministry by placing at our disposal any resources, can do so with the confidence that (Continued on page 45).

# THE HOUSE, THE NAME AND THE GLORY

Notes of an Address given by Mr. Sparks at the December Conference.

- St. John xvii. 1.—" Glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee."
- St. John xvii. 24.—" That they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."
- St. John xvii. 10.—" All things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine: and I am glorified in them."
- St. John xii. 28.—" Father, glorify thy name. There came therefore a voice out of heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."
- St. John ii. 17.—" The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."
- St. Matthew i. 1.—" Jesus Christ, the son of David."
- I Chronicles xvii. 11, 12, 13.—"1 will set up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.
  - "He shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne for ever.

"I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee."

Hebrews i. 5.—" For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee ? and again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son ?"

SOLOMON became a type of Christ, building the house and having a throne. Remember always that the house and the throne are combined in Christ. The spiritual temple or church, and the sovereignty of the Christ throned and eternal-these two things always go together. Now you have heard read already this evening that portion from the 11 Chronicles vi. where Solomon has built his Temple and dedicated it to the Lord and in his prayer he asks that (the Lord had said His name should be there) whenever prayer was directed toward that House and any man in any part of the earth looked thither with eyes of longing and spiritual hunger because the name of the Lord was there such a man should realise the Lord's loving-kindness and experience the Lord's power and deliverance. You

naturally as we have mentioned these passages picked up the link of association of three things—

THE HOUSE—THE NAME—THE GLORY.

"The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," said The One Who was to build a more glorious house than that of Solomon, a more wonderful temple than that which almost stunned the Queen of Sheba with its amazing beauty. Christ "as a Son over His own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confession of our faith," and over that house, which is more familiarly known to us as the Church which is His Body, is His Name : and the Name is the object of the glory-" Father glorify Thy These things you may more fully Name." connect, but we take up the inclusive suggestion of them in this word this evening that from eternity to eternity the object and basis of God's glory is His Name. And that glory, because of the Name, is to be revealed and manifested in the House upon which the Name rests. You notice our syllabus :-

### THE GLORY BEFORE TIMES ETERNAL; THE GLORY INCARNATE;

now put these two things together-" The zeal of Thy House hath eaten me up." Isn't it remarkable that immediately associated with that prayer "Glorify." that declaration-" The zeal of Thy House hath eaten me up," the Pharisees say-Give us a sign; show us your credentials, what is your authority for doing this—using these knotted cords and driving out of the temple them that bought and sold? Give us a sign of authority for doing this. That was asked on the ground of this saying—" The zeal of Thine House hath caten me up." His answer was, " Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up; this said He concerning His Body." The vindication of the sovereignty of Christ is in the Resurrection Body. in the triumph over death in the Body of the Resurrection, and when you get on to resurrection ground and talk about the Body you always remember that, so far as this world is concerned for present purposes, and beyond that of course, but immediately for present purposes, that Body is a corporate Body. Composed of all who have been united with Christ in resurrection life. You have no need that 1 remind you of 1 Corinthians x. 11.

realise the Lord's loving-kindness and experience the Lord's power and deliverance. You is it not the communion of the Body of Christ, will have, without my pointing it out, quite seeing that we are one loaf, one Body." There is the loaf which represents inclusively the Christ and His members as one loaf.

XI. 24—" This is my body, broken for you." Now here you have this fact that He immediately refers to His Resurrection Body corporately as the vindication of His activities and the establishment of His sovereignty. Destroy this Sanctuary, this place of divine abode, in three days I will raise it up. That is my sign, and that is my vindication, the Resurrection Sanctuary, the Body of Christ. God vindicates Him, justifies Him, and upon that Body His Name rests. As the Lord's name symbolically rested upon the temple of Solomon, so the Name in reality rests upon this Resurrection Body, and the Name is the basis of the Divine Glory. "Glorify Thy Name."

Now if we had time and were so disposed we could go through the Word and trace the phrase—" The Name of the Lord" or "My Name," or "My Holy Name," and you will find a vast amount of light thrown upon this, that the one thing over which God is jealous is His Name, and the upholding of His Name is that upon which He displays His Glory.

Now all that is basic. I think it is perfectly clear, but it carries us back to the beginning of things which had their beginning, before times eternal. Let us remember, that the name does not necessarily represent a human title. It is that intrinsic value which is enshrined within the Name of the Lord. Lord. It is what the Name represents. Weymouth gives us such a splendid translation which helps us out here when he is translating about the Name that is above every Name, he translates it "Title of sovereignty above every title of sovereignty," and for purposes of definition I would make a further improvement and say—"The title to sovereignty above every title to sovereignty " because that is where you begin. You find that it was the title to supreme and all-inclusive and undivided sovereignty in the Universe which was assailed. It was assailed in heaven. The equality of the Son with the Father in the title to sovereignty was -as we have so often said-challenged and assailed by one who sought to have that selfsame equality-to be equal with God--and thus to get in and divide and occupy a place to which he was not entitled, and to take that name for himself unlawfully, ever to be worshipped as God. His last all-inclusive effort will be sought in the Temple of God being worshipped as God in the Anti-Christ. When I say the

"all-inclusive," I mean that he will sum up every form throughout the ages of his attempt to get that possession. Every form in which he has come through the ages at different times. in different places, to take the place of God in the race and to capture the race for himself. In the gods of the Egyptians you have the thing back of a system with all its paraphernalia. In Canaanitish worship you have a system of demonology, the worship of demons and the initiate right of passing through the This aspirant for the position of the Son fire. of God has sought to capture the race, and in the Anti-Christ you will find that all these methods are summed up, in spiritism, and demon worship, veiled, covered and glorified as far as he can clothe it with all kinds of things which will capture the imagination and the soul of man, and he will be worshipped as God. Against the Name of the Lord has this thing been organised and projected and asserted. The title to sovereignty on the part of the Son is what the Name represents, and it is for the hallowing of that Name that the Son has come out from the bosom of the Father, and entered upon this tremendous work in and through His Cross, and gained by inheritance a more excellent name than angel and archangel, and that Name being the symbol of his rightful authority and sovereignty in the universe, in the heavens and in the earth, is the thing which God desires to glorify, and the devil desires to slander.

Now you understand, perhaps, if you look at it in this light, why it is that every diabolical trap and snare and resource is instituted and thrust forward against those who bear the Name of the Lord, for we, beloved, have to meet what no one else has to meet in these efforts of the Adversary simply because the Name is upon us, to slander and dis-hallow that Name in us and through us. In as much as the Lord has determined that His Name shall rest upon a spiritual house, a temple not made with hands, and that that Name shall be the thing which he will make glorious in and through and by that House, so, in the same degree and measure, the Adversary has determined if he can by any means to dishonour that Name as it is upon us as we hold it, and every time he gets an advantage where we are concerned, he is able to that degree to dishallow the Name, and therefore to rob God of His Glory. So then, the Glory of God is wrapped up with the hallowing of the Name. The object of the Lord is to get a people for His Name, and such as are 🐒 consumed with the zeal of His House, and who at

the same time will go forth as of that House "for the sake of the Name."

In those early days the Lord always glorified the Name as it was used corporately against the attempts of the adversary to assume the sovereignty and challenge the Divine authority. Wherever those men went upon whom the Name rested the enemy opposed and God vindicated the Name. In their act of witness and testimony to their identification with Christ the Name of the Lord was called upon them. James says "They continually blaspheme that Holy Name which was called upon you." The Name is not merely a label, it is a title or entitlement, and ultimately universal confession shall be made of that right to reign.

Now then the Lord says, in order that it might not be slandered, that there might be no ground for it to be dishallowed, "let everyone that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity"; for immediately you take that Name and iniquity is found in you the Name is dishallowed and dishonoured and the glory is arrested, because there is ground there upon which the enemy can operate to destroy the works of the Lord. I can see in all this an explanation of the enemy's assaults upon the Body of Christ and members in particular. As one has often said to you, it is not simply because of your individual importance or my individual importance. We don't count for anything in ourselves, but it is because of that Holy Name which has been called upon us that we become as out from Eternity the object of the enemy's interest and malice. Before times Eternal, but started on a much higher plane than ourselves, than the human race, he started upon the Son of God Himself who bore the name. the title of sovereignty equal with God. And this, beloved, on the other hand, is the motive for our standing fast and refusing, no matter what the cost is, to yield to the pressure of the enemy and to go down. We cannot, because of the Name, fail Him. We cannot yield because that Name is upon us. We cannot dishallow that Name by giving way to the enemy under his pressure. The motive is the Name, for the sake of the Name we must stand fast. But then this further thing is that God's glory is going to be manifest where His Name is, and that glory of course is the more enhanced by the intensity of the adversary's assaults upon us if we stand in the power of that Name. Christ, as we know was the centre of assault and attack. All hell raged upon Him because of Who He was and what He was, but in the prosence of Hell's

most vicious assault as He came immediately under the shade of Gethsemane and the Cross He said—"The hour is come. Father, glorify Thy Name." and the Father responded—"I have and I will."

Beloved, believe this, that the hour of the fiercest and most awful assault on the Name may be the hour when the Name is the most glorified. When you feel that all hell has opened up to swallow you, then the Lord is to be most glorified. We have found it like that in the hour of direst and deepest anguish by reason of the pressure, we have appealed for the honour of that Name, and the Lord has come in and has been glorified in that hour—in that hour !—when the Cross was being shared in its deeper meaning, He has come in and been glorilied in what He has done.

The Lord is very jealous for His Name, the hallowing of His Name, and He has said-"When ye pray," do not say this prayer, "but pray after this manner," according to these Eternal laws- Father, Thy Name be hal-That is the quest, that is the fight lowed." of prayer, that is the issue on the battlefield of prayer, the hallowing of the Name in a realm where the Adversary is seeking to dishallow it, and believe me, Beloved, we are called into the fight and into the fire, into the conflict, into the very blood of Christ. and the anguish of Christ in the behalf of the Name. We are in this thing for the sake of the Name, we are being baptised into the honour of the Name. The honouring of the Name in this age is a terrific business, you know it. You recognise that this is registered in your own life, you know that in a hundred ways every day the Name could be easily dishallowed. Oh ! the traps-we could never mention them all. We could not catalogue the traps that the Devil sets for the people of God. If he can only get an unholy alliance, some little fleshly link, some moving out from ourselves in the resources of the flesh, something he can make us say or do in any way whatever, if only he can get at that Name which we hear, so that that Name is dishallowed and dishonoured.

Now this then is the cry for the hallowing of the Name by the hallowing of ourselves who bear the Name, the consecration of our lives in the interests of that Name that God may be glorified where His Name is honoured. Life has got to be adjusted by the grace of God through the Cross to the hallowing cf that Name—the cutting off of the flesh and you appear in His presence because of His

Name that is amongst you. Be sanctified! Sanctify yourselves, and there is only one means of sanctification, and that is the cross.

The cross is the means of sanctilication, and therefore the means of the hallowing of the Name and therefore the means of the glorifying of God in Christ. This then is the emphasis upon the necessity of the Cross being accepted and planted deep in our lives to the cutting off of all that upon which the enemy can to the slightest degree achieve the ends which he had in view from eternity to take the glory from the Son of God. The cross must cut off all flesh. So the Lord is glorified in us, but there is the other side, more positive and practical in the outworking that the Lord might be glorified through us, by our moving out as in Himself by the Spirit for the sake of the Name. This is one's confidence and one's hope. What is our assurance that, as we go forth, something will happen, something will be done, something will be accomplished ! What assurance have we that when we move out there must be an issue ? Weil, we have no assurance in ourselves. It is not the value either of our praying in itself, nor of our preaching in itself, nor of all our labours in themselves. It is nothing that we can do in any way whatever that can give us an assurance of any effectiveness, but it is in THE NAME: That is a sound enough basis: That is a thing which is recognised in heaven, earth and hell, in the things above and under the earth. We have often quoted that passage very usefully, always coming in and helping us, concerning the Apostle meeting that situation in the Name, and effectively meeting it, but someone else came along and took it in a secondhand way-"In the Name of Jesus whom Paul preaches," and the issue was very different indeed ! Instead of success, utter failure, and more than failure—an awful wreck ! But to move out in the Name, not just using it in a secondhand way, adopting it as phraseology, but moving out experimentally in the Name because we stand cut off by the Cross from the thing which dishonours the Name-move out in that Namethis is the ground of our assurance that something must happen. God is jealous of His Name, very jealous, and God will always glorify His Name where it is truly and soundly proclaimed in the Spirit and acted upon under the leading of the Spirit. That is our assurance.

Beloved, you take the Name of Jesus, everyone of you, and you see that it is a tremendous thing to bear the Name, to take the Name. It links you up with a thing of infinite significance

and importance which began before the world It links you up with the battle of the was. ages, and it links you up with the glory of eternity when he shall come to be glorified in His saints, that is His church, where His Name is. We are linked with this eternal thing, to the glory of God associated with the Name which is to be established through the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and we, in time, joined to Him in His cross. Even so shall the glory of God be revealed, and in a thousand ways the glory of the Lord may be revealed every day. 1 am not sure that the Lord is anxious to give a demonstrational display of His glory to mortals—" to cast His pearls before swine," but there is a realm in which the glory of the Lord has a signification which transcends that of this world by dimensions infinite. Oh ! amongst principalities and powers the glory of the Lord means something, it is not an empty show. It is the establishment of His infinite title to sovereignty and the manifestation of the power of that sovereignty. We are in an enormous thing, and so your daily triumphs, by grace, go a long way beyond the local situation, a long way beyond our own gratification that we have not failed, they have registered something to the glory of God in a universe, the height and breadth and depth of which you have never imagined. The glory of God is manifested by every victory won, by every standing steadfast, by every refusing to give up ; the Name is saved from dishonour, and the Lord Himself, the Christ of God who bears that Name is vindicated before angels and before demons. There are elements of mystery about it, why it should be necessary, but there it is. It is the revelation of the Word that it is so, so our union with Him is a union with His Name in order that He might be glorified, and because He has called us under His Name to meet with Him this challenge with all its fury, its vehemence, its relentlessness, and we feel also the impact of that challenge and the hatred to that Name. He has assured us that if we suffer with Him we shall be glorified together with Him, and if we were chosen before the foundation of the world in Him, it is true, as the Word says, that we were chosen into His eternal glory-we shall arrive in the glory, experience the glory, know the glory, just as now we for the sake of the Name endure hardship. Stand steadfast, that that Name may be delivered out of the hands of His enemies and vindicated as the title to all sovereignty above every title of sovereignty in this age T. A.-S. and in that which is to come.

### (Continued from page 40).

we have no personal ends to serve, no ambitious schemes or plans, as of this earth, to realise. Our one burden before God is that the Testimony of Jesus shall be truly established, and that the Church, which is His Body, shall he edified and fitted for its ministry in the heavens, and thus upon the earth.

The spiritual needs of our time are very great, and the Lord seems to have set before us a door open to much service for His children in all the world. We are deeply concerned, therefore, that every penny shall be turned to account in direct and sanctified usage to His ends. T. A.-S.

T. M. J.

# THE ALMIGHTINESS OF THE RISEN LORD IN HIS IL CHURCH ON EARTH "

### (Continued.)

### Notes based upon an address given at the Centre, Sunday morning, February 27th, 1927.

"For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."—Matthew xviii. 20.

THE Church of the living God. however, is a very different thing to such churches as we have mentioned. They represent earthly conceptions and creations, the fruit of the carnal mind. The Church which is the Body of Christ is a Heavenly Fact, realised here on earth under certain conditions; and these are laid down in the words we are considering.

Firstly, it is obvious that the persons gathered - together are not 80 ordinary persons. They are gathered-together unto a Name, the Name Josus. But this Name indicates at the outset salvation—a con-dition of salvation on their part. "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins." It is the Name of God as Saviour, and the people called together are His people. They have become His possession. In a peculiar and especial sense they are His. He is not ashamed to call them "Brethren." They form a brotherhood with Him. The devil's counterfeit to this is, of course, the socalled "brotherhood of man." But this is the "Brotherhood of the Christ." These have been saved from sin through His Cross. He has tasted their death, their spiritual sentence. They, having been convicted of the hidden

thing called sin, that mystery of iniquity in the human heart that involves all men in the satanic system, have gladly accepted His salvation. From their wrung hearts has issued a cry that has brought to them salvation. And now, they belong utterly to God. They are redeemed, and the price of their redemption, to their own praisingheartknowledge (not head-knowledge) is the outpoured soul of Incarnate God in the Blood of Jesus. So the Name for these has its full content, both as to depth and height. He it is that descended into the lowest parts of the earth: His love took Him down into the nethermost regions of evil : He descended into Hades. But He it is also Who has ascended, as very Man as well as very God, far above all heavens that He might fill all things, and become the fulness of all things. Here is revelation. These two or three possess no ordinary knowledge. Angels desire to ken the mystery of that "Godliness" which is the song of their heart. They know God in Jesus Christ. This is fundamental. This is the rock experience upon which alone Christ can build His Church. Without this knowledge the counsels of hell would easily prevail against it. Indeed this is what is happening, not only in Christendom generally, but even where the orthodox credal acceptances are without the living faith that comes from revelation. And surely these are such as have not only had the Son of God revealed to them, but He has been revealed in them. They are born-from-above, and therefore share one Spirit with Him. Marvellous two or three, therefore, in every case !

Secondly, we note that they are gatheredtogether not only upon a specific basis but in a specific manner. They have been called by a Voice, convened by an Authority. Here we come to the essence of the word "church." We cannot do better than quote Trench as to the meaning of this well-known word. Probably we already know it, but it will bear revision. A church, then, or assembly (ecclesia) "was the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship for the transaction of public affairs." This is very full and explicit. It is evident they are summoned, called; but it is also apparent that only certain privileged persons are called, namely, "those possessed of the rights of citizenship." And so it is we have seen with the church of God. None but the Bloodbought, Spirit-filled, are convened,-those whose citizenship is in heaven, whose life is hid with Christ in God. There is, as it were, an outer and an inner call. Many would hear the voice

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of the herald, but only those whose hearts responded to the challenge of citizenship, the privilege and obligation of belonging to the state or kingdom, could accept the invitation; and further, be free to obey the call.

This obedience to the call must be emphasised equally with the right to hear and to accept the call, for the ultimate ecclesia or assembly would be made up of those who had *obeyed*. These have made their calling and election to citizenship sure.

And the word of God emphasises the especial character of this calling, its specific realisation in the nature of the company of people thus found together. For example, in Exodus and in all references to the " church in the wilderness " (a type of the church of Christ in its pilgrimage here on earth), you have a distinction drawn between the "assembly" and the "congregation." When Israel obeys the call of the silver trumpets of redemption and assembles at the entrance of the tent of meeting (God's appointed meeting-place, via the way of the Altar and the Blood, and the Laver) the congregation becomes an assembly. This distinction first appears in Exodus xii. 6, and may be traced in Newberry's Bible throughout the remaining "Books of Moses." But here it is in Exodus xii. 6; "The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel."

The congregation of Israel had a right to gather, the right of redemption secured in the blood of the Passover lamb, but only as they heard the Voice and obeyed it in the bloodappointed way and according to the Pattern of the House did they become an assembly, a church, an ecclesia.

Is not this significant? "Not all Israel are of Israel: many are called, but few are chosen: a remnant shall be saved: Little flock !" The Spirit stresses the especial character of this calling." How shall we escape if we neglect, merely neglect, the so-great salvation. This is a solemn emphasis. Augustine suggests that the "church" is a convocation rather than a congregation, that is, it is not the mere assembling of a company upon the basis of even an orthodox faith held in common, but such as are convened by a living Voice which they have heard and obeyed. Surely this is so. " Му sheep hear My Voice, and they follow Me.' Only so can He, the Shepherd, fold them, gather them unto Himself, shut them in with Himself, that they may be with Him, He in the midst. This, and much more, is true of the church which is His very Body.

This "gathering-together," beloved, is very important. You come together as those who are spiritual, heavenly, citizens of the Kingdom of God by blood-bought right and by new birth. for none are Christ's save those induct by the Spirit of the Christ. The Holy Spirit Himself, as within you, is the ground and witness of your call, and this always answering to the Blood. But even so you must be "gathered-together." You assemble not as men, but as those who are now joined to the Lord, One Spirit. You press through the Vail of His flesh, of which you are members, into the very Presence of God, having boldness to do so, because of the Blood with which He sprinkles you. And so each indi-vidual saint appears before God in Sion. This is our individual " religious service " when we come together. We present our bodies as living sacrifices, as temples of the Holy Spirit, and worship God in the beauty of holiness, in the Spirit and in the Truth of the Christ, He in us, and we in Him. But do you not see that as we thus gather-together, it is into a Unity of Life, His Life? We are no longer single, individual merely, though we retain the integrity of our persons (one would be careful not to suggest mere mystical absorption), but are meeting as members of the Christ, and the Holy Spirit recognises the Sonship, He descends to dwell upon this unity of the Son's Life in us, and when only two such are so gathered-together, the living God is Presenced, the great "I AM" comes down to function in His Church.

This is the vital principle underlying these words. They unveil the FACT of the Body. These are the two essential discernments of the children of God, the Cross and the Body. By the Cross we mean all that is represented in the death of the now living and exalted Lord. We discern the Blood: it is the Blood of His Cross. But we must also discern the Body. The true ecclesia of God must gather around the Lord's table. Paul had this by revelation (1. Cor. xi. 23). But there they " remember (and by the Holy Spirit) the Lord's death till IIc come." And thus the whole purpose and plan of God in this age is ever before them. The Cross and the Consummation, the Cross and the Church. They discern the death, but they also discern the manifestation of the Life (in the Head, of course) but in the Body. This is the crucial test of true discipleship of the Lord Jesus, the discernment and love of the Brotherhood in the Christ ; in other words, discomment of the Body. Forgive us, beloved. for continually reiterating these truths. We

would not weary you. But it is the Spirit's burden. There is so much individualism among the children of God to-day, indeed as always. And the devil seeks hard to keep this truth of the Body of Christ obscured, or he allows us to hold it as a mere mystical abstraction. Whereas the Holy Spirit has put it with the Cross in the forefront of our "Testimony." It cannot very well be otherwise, if we are faithful to God and to His word. And as we have said it is very practical: for it is in the "House of God," it is in our service and fellowship as redeemed priests as well as sinners, that the truth of the Cross is worked-out by the Holy Spirit experimentally in us. The Body is not an abstraction conceived of as " in the heavenlies " only. It is here on earth as well in a fellowship in the Holy Spirit. We must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, and so much the more as we see the Day approaching. It is so easy to push all these things over the horizon into another world. But the Lord has ordained that there should always be a testimony here on earth to the fact of His Cross, and to the fact of His Body, till He come. And we believe it is not only a testimony to His Victory, but a mode of operation of His Victory unto His Purpose. And so when He says, "Lo, I am with you all the days even unto the consummation of the age," He is speaking to His church. We know He is with (being within) us as His children, individually; but He is with us as the representatives and members of His Body unto the consummation of the age. It is the consummation of the age He is set upon. He has delivered us out of it, this present evil age; but He desires to consummate it, to bring it to a head, to end it. Well, the church through the Holy Spirit is His instrument to bring this about, as well as being the restraining factor against the precipitation of the rage of the anti-Christ. Oh, how we have failed Him; but He is with us for this end, nevertheless.

Now, what is this gathering-together then, but the gathering-together of the members of the Body of Christ? As such, and by the Holy Ghost. Love, as we have seen is the basis of our fellowship, conditional to functioning. And the eyes of the Lord try this narrowly. It must be no make-believe. It must be the very love in our hearts wherewith our Lord loved and loves us. And so John says quite bluntly, "If a man say, I love (iod, and hateth his brother (Christian) he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother (Christian) whom he

hath seen, cannot love God Whom he hath not seen," which is as much as to say if you do not discern your fellow-members of the Body you do not discern the Christ at all. You are yet in darkness, or are walking in darkness

This love of God in us then is basic and essential to our service, for our service is in the Spirit of Holiness, the Spirit of Fire, Consuming Love, the Love that burns in the Altar, the Cross.

How very far removed is this from being merely sentiment and good feeling? It is the practical dynamic of the Cross. It is the power of God. It is in the Blood. And if the Blood is calling us together we come not to indulge merely in a closed social communion, but that the Breath of that Eternal Love might sweep through our spirits, and that we might be gathered into the Heart of God. Then, then, the Holy Spirit will use us as the expression of the Divine Desire here on earth, and prayer that is the mightiest instrument of God in practical service will come through.

But there must be the condition of the unity of the Life. It is this principle of the corporate unity of the whole Body of the Christ that is being emphasised, and so true is this "Oneness" of the Life of the Risen Lord in His saints, that if but *two* so gather-together, He, as God, is also in the midst.

Thirdly, let us note the unqualified character of His Presence. It is His Presence. It is additional to the presence of His children. He is in them individually already by His Spirit. But now when they so come together unto His Name, He also is there. This is the nature and manner of the Anointing.

When the Christ of God was here on earth, He came as conceived of the Holy Ghost, and dwelt in our midst for thirty years a Life of perfect grace; but when He eame forth unto His great "WORK," the work of the Cross, the putting away of sin, and the destruction of the works of the devil, He was ANOINTED as 'MAN' for this purpose. The Spirit of God came upon Him without measure, and as MAN He was GoD manifest on earth. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Triunity of the Godhead, was thus able to tabernacle in Him. This is the great mystery of "Godliness." or "Godinness." But so it was, AND IS.

We know what He has achieved. He went forward by reason of that Anointing to accomplish the work of the Father. Not the incidental works of His words and miracles are here thought of, but that stupendous work of stripping off from Himself, as Man in our like-

ness, the whole range and power of the satanic system. principalities and powers, triumphing over them in iT, the Cross; or in HIMSELF, as man in our likeness. We cannot enter into those shadows of Gethsemane, or penetrate that deep darkness of the Cross when He cried. "My God, My God, why hast THOU forsaken Me" except to receive the revelation that He was made to be SIN for us there and then, when He so cried out. Doubtless it was as MAN He so suffered. But up to that moment when He entered into that thick darkness He went forward to accomplish that stupendous work of GOD, under the Anointing. It could not be otherwise. The Cross is an Act of the Eternal Spirit, the mightiest ever wrought in time and space.

The Lord disappears into the night of death. But on the third day He is raised "fromamong" the dead, and ascends to the Father the same day. appearing and re-appearing to His disciples during the space of forty days that the *physical* testimony to His Resurrection might be fully established as among men.

But when He finally is "received-up" the true character of this Resurrection is revealed. It is the Resurrection of the ANOINTED, but now in the illimitable power and majesty of that ANOINTING. "In Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

But the evidence of His Resurrection in the power of the Anointing is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person in the Trinity. He has received the Promise of the Father. The Holy Spirit is given to Him as the GOD-MAN in the Throne that He may baptise His Church into His Body, to become incorporated into Himself. This is the further mystery of "Godliness." that those who truly come to God through the Cross under the convincement concerning sin, and are born-out-from that Heavenly One, are also made One with Him in His Body. In other words they come under His Anointing. They become together with Him, the CHRIST. I Corinthians xii. 12. This is the true and safe conception of the baptism in the Holy. Spirit. It is not an experience for the "self," but an experience for the Body. It is not a baptism of "the flesh," but a baptism of the spirit (regenerate) in the Spirit of the Christ of God. His Anointing rests upon the Body. But upon the Body, note. It is only as we are members of the Body that the Anointing so exxxiii. again supplies the rests. Psalm spiritual picture of the Spirit who rests upon the Head descending to the lowliest members of

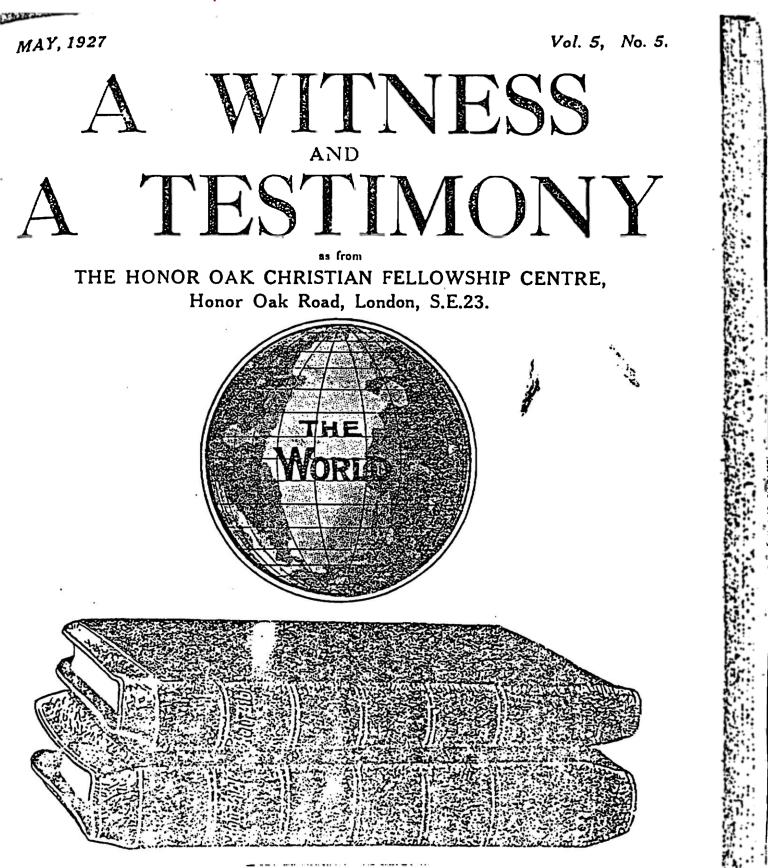
the Body, as they dwell together in UNITY.

So this functioning of the twos and threes. or more, is none other than the functioning of the ANDINTING. It is the power of the CHRIST of God. The KING, Omnipotent, is now set in Sion, the Heavenly Sion, the City of the Living God. He became so in the hour of His Resurrection into the power of that Anointing. "God hath made that same Jesus....both Lord and CHRIST." "Thou art My Son, this day (this resurrection day) have I begotten THEE." Acts ii. 36, xiii. 33. It is on His Throne, as thus set, that it is also announced, "Ask of Me, and I will give THEE the nations for Thine inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth for THY possession." But it is the "Church" that is to ask. It is by means of the Anointing in the Throne descending in power upon the members here on earth that the authority of that Throne is to be vindicated. This is the wonder of our "calling" under the Anointing. The Holy Spirit, as we claim the Blood of that Cross and that Throne (For the Blood is in the Throne: John beheld a "BLEEDING LAMB"-a Lamb as it had been newly-slain) gathers us together under the Anointing, and the power and authority of the CHRIST is manifested on earth, and before principalities and powers, in the church, the assembly.

Finally, the NAME. It is the Name of the King of Kings. But it is a Name only understood of the Spirit. The name of Jesus is familiar enough, but the NAME unto which we are gathered by the Holy Spirit represents all the Nature of that Person Who so descended and is so exalted. It is the NAME of GOD in the MAN.

And we come together to transact public affairs. We meet in the KING's business. We are set on earth to be His vindication and His mouth-piece. His WILL is to function in us, and we are to utter it by the Holy Spirit in prayer, praying IN the Holy Spirit. What is this but the CHRIST praying ? THE "I AM" in the midst of His people. The kingdoms of this world, the sovereignty of Satan, compelled to bow down, to surrender their spoils, to the utterance of the Holy Spirit in the saints. What a ministry! What an "ecclesia"! Citizens of Heaven, of the New Jorusalem, proclaiming and demanding the FACT of Calvary's Victory to be made manifest here on earth to the gathering-out from every nation of that "Testimony" to His Sovereign grace, the completed church of the Redeemer. So we labour unto the consummation of this age. T. M. J.

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 Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Preclamatica of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship, Sundays: 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Mondays: 7.30 p.m. Wednesdays: 8 p.m. Saturdays: 7 30 p.m.
Conferences are held every week-end (Saturday and Sunday), and also a longer week-end at the boginning of each month, this fixed by the first Sunday. (Friday to Monday evenings, inclusive.) All particulars may be obtained from G. Paterson, Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

Ministers : T. Austin-Sparkes ; T. Madoc Jeilreys ; G. Paterson (General Secretary).Guest House Hostesses : Lady Ogle ; Mrs. M. Brand.Telephone : Sydenham 5216Telegrams : "Syndesmos, Forost. London."Cables : "Syndesmos, London."

# MINISTERS' LETTER

Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre.

May, 1927.

### BELOVED OF OUR LORD,

"Ye have need of *patience*, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise."

How many of us become weary and faint in the tests of our faith, not recognising their necessity and import!

The will of God, as revealed in the Cross, has been accepted by us, and our integrity in this consent to our own death is before Him. We are conscious of nothing as against ourselves, for we have come to His Light, and dwell in IT; and though the experience be a constant humiliation on the one hand, on the other the Blood is speaking and cleansing, and we have peace. Yet are we still hedged in, our path is trouble-thronged and straitened. There is no break into service, fruitfulness, the open ways of blessing, the prosperity of His kingdom. What is the meaning of it all ?

Beloved, this is it. Now is the vindication of God's grace in us. He is able to say before principalities and powers concerning us, "Hast thou considered My servant?" He knows the sacrifice is fully upon the altar. But will that "love of God" as now within us keep us bound there? Will Isaac, the son of promise, consent to his own execution, so to speak? For this is the test of sonship, the trial of His grace. The triumph of the Cross must first of all be made manifest in us ere we can become the public proclaimers of that triumph. Fear not therefore because of present straitening. The works of our salvation are all complete. By one offering He hath perfected to perpetuity them that are sanctified. We have free and blessed access into this continual grace wherein we stand as in the Presence of God in His Son, but to the glory-praise of His grace this thing must be tested, tried, proved

For this reason is it not added to the full declaration of our salvation? " And not only so, but we exult in the tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh *patience*."

It is well to correctly discern this word "patience." It is not the "long-suffering" we usually designate as that virtue. The New Testament discriminates between these two phases of Christ's grace in us. Both words occur, for example, in Colossians I. II. This " patience " is steadfast endurance, fortitude,

or literally "an abiding-on-top" during trial. It is the unconquerableness of faith." Ye have heard of the patience of Job?" But Job was: not merely long-suffering. Indeed, one does not always discern that virtue in his speeches. But he had the fortitude of his faith; he endured and believed in God despite the confusions of his circumstance and the contradictions to his former experience of God, and in this patience he said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." This is Biblical patience, the steadfastness of saints. We also have need of it, and more so as the conflict thickens.

Recently we saw a mighty battleship newly launched, a magnificent and costly piece of worldly armament, perfect in all its parts and fully equipped for service. But we were told that although perfect it was going for its " trials." Its engines, its boilers, its guns, and the whole fabric of the vessel had to undergo. the strain, prolonged and real, of a thorough testing. There would be heavy seas and hard driving and utmost pressure, severe demands made upon all its parts and equipment, before it could be passed into active service.

So with us. We also arc on trial, and we have therefore need of steadfast endurance, patience. And in this the apostle is quite plain. as to the reason, for "patience" says he, works, "experience,"-or as the Revised Version has it, "probation." So we are going through: probation. The Lord sometimes allows the devil to experiment upon us in this way: he experiences the truth of God's grace in us, and we discover also with thankfulness that the faith of the Son of God that weathered Calvary can meet other; storms.

Wherefore, "Stand fast in the faith; quit you like men; be strong." In your patience gain possession of your souls, for he that endurcth unto the END, the same shall be saved

Yours in the joy of the Warrior,

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS. T. MADOC JEFFREYS. のにあっては、大学にないないのないとのないの

### THE FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

### THE PATTERN

The outlines of this have come out luminously since our last issue. The theme for the Easter, Conference, 'The Cross, and the Pattern in the Heavenlies' was prophetic and has been abundantly vindicated. While the House was not ready for its full complement of guosts

there were some rooms available, including the dining-room and the library; and the seal of God's peace was upon the household fellowship.

But it was in the things the Lord began to do in certain lives that we saw the "pattern," and our hearts have been uplifted in marvelling praise. First of all, the Conference came to us as a time when we felt the Lord would reveal something with regard to our brother, Mr. Paterson. We were convinced the hour had come for his liberation. Our brother, and his dear wife also, have for a long while been ready to come out into the Lord's service ; but they with us had felt that the time and manner of appointment must be plainly of the Lord. It was evident that the demands of his ministry as the "general secretary" of the Fellowship Centre were too heavy a tax upon time and energy, and that these were increasing ; but we were equally clear the " call " must be of God. For to come out thus into full-time spiritual service means that our brother gives up a lucrative and secure Government appointment, and must cast himself upon the Lord as to material resources. This is not only a test of grace and faith, but must also be done in the wisdom of the Lord, under His distinct call and guidance. The question was the "hour."

It had been borne in upon us that the responsibility lay with the Fellowship, and thatwe had to "call" our brother to specific ministry, under the anointing, in the " house of God." But it was not expected that the Spirit would give so clear a witness to our brother's separation as He did. An assembly of all who felt that they shared with us a spiritual fellowship in this WITNESS AND TESTIMONY of the Lord Jesus as in His Body, the Church, was convened from the platform of the Conference for the Monday evening at 6.30. This took the place of what used to be called in the old days a " church-meeting "; but this gathering was open to all children of God, whether resident locally or afar, who could truly confess fellowship with us in life and service.

We met in the Presence of the Lord. A very solemn consciousness of our responsibility to Him and to one another tilled our hearts. It was an opportunity for a testimony to the essential fellowship and ministry of the Holy Spirit in the assemblies of the "Church." And it was then that the strong conviction came that this was the appointed time for calling our brother to a separated life of ministry in and to the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit gave clear

witness in our hearts, and accordingly with a dcp sense of our responsibility before God, but with great joy of faith, we called our brother George Paterson to the service of eldership in the church of God, and prayed with him "after the manner."

Our brother resigned his position the very next day, and is now installed in his ministry at the Centre. We feel that his function is distinctly that of an "elder," as one having oversight over administrative ministries and also having a care for the "flock." Our brother takes over the whole of the administrative supervision of our work ; but while endowed with rare business ability and experience, it is not upon such capacities that his ministry is based, but upon the spiritual equipment of the Holv Spirit as under our Anointed and Anointing Head. His ministry will be wholly spiritual, and we shall not be surprised to discover a breaking forth of other ministries of helpfulness, and in the word of God, as this grace of Christ for service is increased in the power of prayer.

The call of God, was coming into other lives during the Conference. Indeed, Monday seemed to be a day of "decisions." The result has been to thrust upon us responsibilities, and to make clear the lines of our service as to "training."

Three of our young brethren who have been preparing for ministry at training centres were independently and without word from us, led to come out into a free ministry of the Spirit as in the "House of God."

When their decision was made known we at once saw the Lord's call to commence immediately our long-spoken-of "Training Centre," and so it is that these three young brethren are now in residence with us at the Hostel.

As we go to press other requests are coming in that we should meet this need, and it would appear that very soon our accommodation will be fully taxed. We wish to make it plain, however, that by "Training" we do not propose the usual curricula of seminaries or colleges, but rather that intensive fellowship in prayer, and over the word of God, by which the revelation and equipment of the Holy Spirit shall be given, and that then those who share such fellowship with us shall go out as the Lord directs, preaching the gospel, returning here as to their " base " if need be.

Already a large field of ministry has been opened up to us for these summer months, and we can find a rich ministry for a dozeyoung folk who know by experience first in their own lives, the fulness of the Divine Victory secured by our Risen Lord through His Cross, and are ordained and empowered by the Holy Spirit to declare it.

We strongly mark this last clause, for "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" The gospel can only be effectively proclaimed in the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, and to go out at one's own charges or impulse would be fatal. Thus in every case we throw the responsibility for decision in this matter upon the individual concerned, reserving the spiritual freedom to discern whether they are called of God, and also whether He directs us to receive them. This in all tenderness.

But, as we have said, the Lord has surely thrust before our eves the "pattern" as to this "training": He would have us receive such as are in a measure already equipped for service as far as academic qualification is necessary (we do not say that in every case it is) in order that in fellowship with us a further spiritual equipment may be given of His grace.

### THE EASTER CONFERENCE

Little remains to be said of this, for its main purpose is revealed in the information already given.

Yet it should be said to the praise of God that the gatherings throughout were full of spiritual power, and the word of the Lord came through in great liberty. From the the Monday forward we were able to meet in the Marquee. It came just as the weather needed it, and is commodious and comfortable, pitched in a sheltered spot.

Our brother, Mr. Sparks, was able to take his full share of ministry in sustained strength. Apart from two helpful messages from our brothers, Captain Wallis and Mr. Crowe, the Lord gave the ministry of the word to the two pastors. When it is considered that there were sixteen meetings, it will be realised how wonderfully our brother was sustained. While Mr. Jeffreys dealt chiefly with the principles of the Life that served God in the Cross, and now in the church serves God through the Cross, Mr. Sparks unfolded the principles of government, administration, relationships in ministry and membership in the House of God. In this connection a very helpful and timely word was spoken with regard to the ministry of women, and of their place in the Body of Christ; this according to the scriptures, and not according to such forced interpretations of the

word of God as are prone to this generation. Yet neither was there a limiting of the Spirit in His operations as revealed in the ministry of women in the New Testament. The whole of this difficult question was seen to hinge upon the principle of government, authority, and relationship in the Body of Christ, always having regard to the need of "covering" because of the principalities and powers. This important subject may be further dealt with in these columns as the Lord directs, and also some of the addresses may be edited.

#### THE LORD'S MONEY

The "pattern" of the administration of these resources is also coming through. Our quarterly income for all purposes, up to March 31, amounted to £2,490. This includes the offerings given in the "Treasury Chest" at the Hall, viz., £285, under the heads of (1) Pastorate; (2) Expenses; (3) Missionary. It will be seen therefore that the sum of £2,205 has been given anonymously, apart from the local fellowship contributions. This capital sum was referred to last month as being given for the equipment of the Hostel and the new Conference Hall.

We are full of gratitude to God that this means that the needs of the Hostel as for adaptation and equipment have now been almost met. We have spent during the quarter  $\pounds726$  upon this work. There is, of course, work still in progress, and when all is completed the Hostel requirements will have demanded some  $\pounds1,500$ .

The Conference Hall which we intend building in the grounds will soon become a pressing necessity, and must be put in hand forthwith. It is estimated that the total cost will be about  $\pounds 2,(00)$ . Of this about  $\pounds 1,640$  has come to hand.

There have been, and they are still arising, many incidental needs, which require a constant outlay of capital. Of these, we may instance the Marquee, about £80; fixing light and water supplies for the temporary buildings in the grounds, and fitting these out as tea rooms, &c., say £200. Then we have to meet the L.C.C, regulations, and provide safety exits and other safeguards in the present Hall and Hostel. We might say that £500 will cover these counts.

But we have every proof that such thing being required for the work of the Lord every need will be fully met. As an example of His provision, one of the Lord's stewards desired to present us with an instrument to lead the praises of God in the new Hall, and this month we have accordingly secured a Bell two manual organ; this with two other instruments placed at our disposal, make it possible to have the needful accompaniment for the Lord's praise alike in the Hall, the Marquee, and the House.

To come back to the local quarterly account,  $\pounds 285$ , the expenditure under the three heads has been  $\pounds 281$ . It will be seen therefore that the Lord has just met the needs.

But the whole question of the MAINTENANCE of the work is the aspect of spiritual finance which now confronts us, and it is for this we seek the Lord's ways.

For example, the disbursements during the past few months have been far in excess of current income, but there has been sent in special provision for this transitional period of extraordinary expenses. Thus the Hostel, though it had been running with some staff for six weeks prior to the Easter Conference, had had its current needs met privately.

From this time forward however we must seek the Lord for the current expenses. These will amount altogether to about £50 per month (including rent, &c., domestic staff, and additional service). As there come into residence those who are preparing for ministry these current costs will, of course, increase. It is estimated that the cost per individual will work out at about 25s. per week, and while in some cases this, in whole or in part, may be met by the person concerned, we must be free to receive all whom the Lord shall send. The hospitality of "Guests" has also to be considered, and we wish to be able to entertain such of the Lord's servants as could not meet their own expenses. For these purposes both a "Students' Aid Fund " and a " Guest Fund " had been thought of.

Then the question of "Ministry" has also to be adjusted. Hitherto this has been partially sustained under the head of "Pastorate," but now that our brother, Mr. Paterson, has joined us (with a great welcome in our hearts) we feel this need must be met under the head of "Ministry." In this wo are quite confident that the Lord is as easily able to meet the needs of three as of two, and this He has abundantly proved, for it must be manifest to all that the local offerings, generous as they are, could not have met these needs hitherto.

The whole matter of "Missionary" offerings has now to be looked at from the standpoint of the "Fellowship's" obligations and ministry

to the Body of Christ. Hitherto we have acted as conveyers of gifts to various "missionary societies," though these in many cases have been "ear-marked." Now, however, with the clearing of the mists from the "pattern" we see that it is the "Extension of the Testimony" with which we have to be concerned. The Lord, we feel, would lay us under obligation to meet the needs of any who stand with us for the full truth of the Cross, and are faithful in their discernment of the "Body." These, together with us, will be suffering because of the " testimony of Jesus " and need our cherishing both in prayer and resources. Already there is a number of such as have passed through our fellowship, and of others who are in correspondence with us from many lands, and share our prayer-life. To these surely the Lord would also call us for fellowship in sustenance, as we are able.

These also who shall come into the Hostel for "training" are a charge upon the "missionary" vision and service of the church. This summer as mentioned before we propose sending out a band of workers for an itinerating ministry in the villages of a populous district. The maintenance of conferences in various parts of the country has also to be met upon an increasing scale. The question of extending the "Testimony" in other parts of the world and in this country is arising.

From our scanning of these horizons of ministry and services it must be obvious that we need to re-cast our thoughts concerning maintenance, and to pray the Lord's ways and means through.

We have arrived at the conclusion that our local "Treasury Chest" should henceforth be divided into three compartments, allocated as follows: (1) Ministry (instead of Pastorate); (2) General Expenses (to cover current charges upon maintenance of Hostel, Halls, staff, &c.); (3) Extension of Testimony (this will include such needs of the servants of the Lord, both in this country and abroad, as are mentioned above). We realise also that the time has come when these obligations shall not be merely local, but that as we have now a ministry that reaches into many lands, these divisions of our resources may also serve for all whom the Lord leads to support this "Witness and Testimony."

### THE PAPER

It will be noted that the issue is increased in size, and we are also compelled to increase the number issued to 2,000 per month. The

cost of this (with postage) will be about  $\pounds 16$  per month. The Lord has honoured the publication of this little paper by sending in sufficient donations to meet the current cost, and we shall therefore still keep separate the special fund.

Now that our brother, Mr. Paterson, has taken over the whole of the administrative side of the "Testimony" he will act as receiver of all monies. In the case of the paper these donations have been hitherto sent to Miss Sach, by request. Will our readers note that from henceforth Mr. Paterson should receive all such gifts, and that he also is taking over the "Mailing list" hitherto in the charge of Miss Hawes. We are grateful for the diligence in service that both Miss Sach and Miss Hawes have given to the issue of this paper. Theirs has been a labour of love efficiently and consistently carried out. All other communications, such as refer to the subject matter of the paper should be directed to the joint editors, T. Austin-Sparks and T. Madoc Jeffreys. It may be that in the near future we shall deal with spiritual difficulties and problems in these columns.

Now that we have taken our wider fellowship into our confidence we leave these questions of administration and finance. We have referred to them purely as matters of our stewardship and of our obligation to those who share with us the vision, and we mention them that in spending as in giving the Lord may be glorified. And it will be understood that these references have nothing in them of the nature of an appeal for monetary help. We leave the maintenance of the work in the hands of Him Who has prepared these ministries that we might enter into them, and serve Him in the Spirit to His glory.

# "THE HOUSE AND THE GARDEN"

#### WEEKLY CONFERENCES

It has come to us that every week-end should see a gathering of the Lord's people as from Saturday afternoon at 3 P.M. over the Sabbath, and this will be inaugurated on May 28th, which we shall treat as a kind of "Opening Day" for the "Guest House" and promises. There are so many of our fellowship who share with us an interest in all that the Lord has done for us, that we feel the opportunity should be afforded them for seeing the rooms, Ac. We shall therefore make arrangements for parties to be conducted over the premises on that date, May 28th.

Then we realise the Lord has not given us these spacious and sunny grounds that they should lie idle. They must be used for the fullest spiritual ministry of which they are capable. We are having them put into better order, with seats and shelters so that our visitors may enjoy rest and . personal fellowship. It is for this reason mainly that the thought of a weekly conference came to us. And so while we wish our friends to enjoy, this retreat we realise the need of making each occasion profitable. There will accordingly be a meeting of fellowship from 3 to 4 P.M., and thus a good interval before the further gathering at 7.30 P.M., in which these opportunities for enjoying the grounds may be given. Teas will be provided at a moderate charge.

May the Lord be as nigh in the garden as in the house. We wot of a garden where He sorrowed the sorrows of God for us. May we remember Him in our garden, rejoicing in His salvation, and giving Him praise and spiritual service.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MISS SACH has received the following sums towards the expenses of this paper during the past month: Palmer's Green, £1: Tunbridge Wells. 5s.; Glasgow, 5s.; Reading, 5s.; Swindon, 4s. 8d.; Cardiff, 3s.; Friern Road, 3s.; Dover, 2s. 6d.; Swindon, 2s. 6d.; Chatham, 2s. 6d.; Denmark Hill, 2s. 6d.; Ryde, 2s. 6d.; Maida Vale, 2s. 6d.; Mortimer Street, 2s. 6d.; Leigh-on-Sea, 2s. 6d.; Central Hall, 2s.; Worthing, 2s.; Cheshire, 2s.—Total £3 11s. 8d.

There are also local contributions which Miss Sach will continue to receive, but will our readers once again note that all contributions and remittances should be made payable and sent to the General Secretary, Mr. Paterson, at the Centre.

We are full of praise to our God for His signal blessing upon this WITNESS AND TESTIMONY. The total cost of printing and mailing during last year was nearly \$80, and yet without making any appoal we had \$12 8s. 8d. in hand at the end of the year. The cost for the current year with the enlarged issue and increased number of copies, and a growing mail list, will amount to about \$159. The Lord is meeting the need, as we go along.

#### BOOKLETS

(WITNESS AND TESTIMONY).

- Nos. I. and II. 'Incorporation into Christ, by T. Austin-Sparks. 2d. each.
- No. 7. 'The Inner Man of the Heart' with diagram, by T. Austin-Sparks. 4d. each.
- No. 111. of 'Incorporation into Christ.' is now in proof, and will be ready for issue int the end of the month: Particulars with regard to further booklets by Mr. Sparks and also Mr. Jeffreys will be given in our next issue.

# WHITSUNTIDE CONFERENCE

We are anticipating that a larger company representative of many lands will gather with us on these dates, June 3rd (Friday evening) to the 8th (Wednesday evening). Accommodation, while increased in some measure by the completion of the Hostel, will still remain somewhat limited, but there will be accommodation for 12 to 15 guests at the House. We are able to make arrangements, however, and friends need have no hesitation in coming upon this account. But we need to have due notice, and therefore it is essential that application should be made as early as possible to Mr. Paterson.

The theme has not yet come to us, but we feel sure the Lord will have something to say to us upon 'The Cross and the Holy Spirit.'

### NEWCASTLE

The proclamation of the message goes on from month to month here. The interest in the Conferences is well sustained, and there is much hunger for the word of God as given in the power of the Spirit.

The three days' Conference in which both Mr. Sparks and Mr. Jeffreys will (D.v.) be God's messengers has been arranged for June 9th—11th (Thursday to Saturday) and there is promise of interesting developments in the surrounding district.

### AND ELSEWHERE

We ask for fellowship in prayer for ministries at Chalk Farm, May 19-21. Central Hall, Westminister, May 25. Jersey, May 30-June 3. Honor Oak and Newcastle as above, June 3-8, June 9-11. Jarrow-on-Tyne, 12-15. May the "utterance" of His Word be given in every place and 2nd Cor. ii. 14 be fulfilled in us.

# SUMMARY OF THE MAY CONFERENCE

### (April 29th to May 2nd)

On the eve of issuing this number we come through this "strong" time with the Lord in His truth.

Arriving so quickly after the Easter Conference this series of gatherings was more in the nature of a domestic rally; but a few of such as we do not doom strangers came, and for these as for the home circle, the time was one fraught with decisive meanings.

No concrete theme had been thought of, but the sequence of subject was most striking.

The following key-words may mark out the progress of the teaching: Priesthood, Faith, Ascension, the Truth and the lie, the Flesh and the Spirit, Intercession, positive and practical Faith *in the next step*.

We thus commenced on the Friday with "PRIESTHOOD." Every believer is called to be a priest (I Peter ii. 5, 9; Revelations i. 6) in a life lived by the "FAITH" of the Son of God, faith being a principle of the Divine Life.

The believer as priest was already assured of his salvation. For him the finished work of Calvary registered a complete confidence in His Lord's saving and keeping power. He was indeed kept alive in the world by the power of His Lord's intercession in the Throne in order that he might function on the earth with all other believers to bring about the consummation of the age, in the completing of the church, which is bound up with the "coming" of the Lord.

As an opening address this proved to be a survey of the theme as it afterwards unfolded, for the following gatherings were largely taken up with "FAITH" based upon its revelation in Hebrews xi., as a principle of Divine This being 80 activity among men. because it manifested a dependence upon the TRUTH of God as against the unseen satanic LIE in the universe, appealing in its manifold forms to the wisdom of men. The invisible things of God were realised and apprehended by this God-imparted and God-witnessing principle of "RIGHTEOUSNESS." It was pure, without possibility of corruptness, because it depended not upon tangible and visible rewards, being what it is called—faith. Therefore it was an abiding principle of pure spiritual life, the activity of the Divine love : "Faith that is energised by love "Galatians v. 6. But this faith in us as the children of God was the faith of the Son of God, and therefore meant an ASCENSION life, a life that had conquered death and the Lord of death, through the putting away of sin. It was a Life hid with Christ in God, and therefore it was not to be found in the "FLESH" or the psychical nature of man. Thus there is stated what seems to be a two-fold condition of inability to please God. Romans viii. 8 declares that " they that are in the *flesh* cannot please God ";

Hebrews xi. 6 states that "apart from *faith* it is impossible to please Him." But this is the same thing as to say that true faith is of the SPIRIT. There is no such principle as faith in the flesh.

Coming back to the question of " priesthood " it was seen that this vocation was an inevitable result of the Life of the Son in us, since we were One Spirit in Him as baptized in the Holy Spirit, Who is the Intercessory Spirit as in Him and in us, albeit with different functionings. He, living in the Throne to intercede for us; we, also united with Him by One Spirit in the Throne to intercede as by and for Him. The Spirit as now given to the Church. His Body, was of necessity the Spirit saturated, so to speak, with Calvary, " the oil was mingled with blood." This urge of prayer in the Holy Spirit in the Body was God Himself coming through in this way to effect His Purpose in the universe. It was a form of His manifold wisdom now being manifested before principalities and powers, in that we erstwhile sinners (conscious still in the Light of His Presence of a sinful self-nature that needs the continual cleansing of the Blood) but called and sanctified heirs of the Divine Nature in Christ, were now moved by the Divine interests rather than by our own interests to pray in the groanings and strivings of the Spirit within us toward the effecting of the Divine purposes, notably in this age the completing of the Church, the Body.

The final meeting gathered around the pertinent question, " How can the believer, while believing in and relying upon the Divine Initiative through the Spirit, avoid passivity?"

It was seen that while salvation and works were wholly of God as wrought in us by the Spirit, there must be an intense practical cooperation on the part of the believer, a continued, sustained, positive assent of "FAITH." This meant "steps of faith," and thus a school of discipline and education in the life of the Spirit was entered into. Each step of faith demanded a new enterprise of the spirit, a practical stepping forth with God every time. The experience of the past did not suffice for the triumph of new emergencies. Each new step was also harder, since these steps were progressive. Abraham's life was a typical example. He might fail in the further steps despite the previous victorics, as witness his declension when he went down to Egypt. This meant he had to come back to the place of the altar, the Cross. So with us. We have to come back to the Cross to put the matter right wherever

we began to decline, or to go astray from the faith-way. It was a principle in the believer's life that if he shirked an issue with God, a step of faith, he would get no farther with God. This was the secret of many an arrested life. There had been a failure to obey the voice of God in some new demand of faith, and no matter what might be the pretence to spirituality in such lives because of past experience and ministry, such lives were now profitless to God. They were barren and dead whatever might be the outward show. There would have to be a re-tracing of the path back to that place where they had failed God.

The practical question for every one present was, "What is the next step for you?" We knew what it was. God had spoken to us in that Conference. He was demanding something from us. What was it? It might appear to be only trivial; it might appear tremendous. But in any case it had to be obeyed, if we were going any farther in the Divine Fellowship. It was fundamental to further advance. TAKE THE NEXT STEP!

We are glad to record that the Conference saw the issue decided for some. There has been a coming  $\operatorname{out}_{\underline{a}}^{\mathcal{L}}$ upon God in a new and decisive way, and in some cases, a definite act of faith.

The acts of the Holy Spirit are all acts of faith.

# NOTES OF ADDRESS AT EASTER CONFERENCE

# "THE PATTERN IN THE HEAVENLIES"

April 19th, 1927.

1 WANT to read the statement of a very humble man in the Philippian Epistle iii. 13:

"Brethren (speaking to the brotherhood in Christ) I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Or "the calling from on high of God in Christ Jesus": God calling in Christ Jesus to us His sons on earth that we might come up to Himself and find our abode in Him and realise in Him that Life Eternal. And this not individually, but corporately. This

is the confession of one with a true spirit of humility, who counts himself not to have apprehended; and yet he speaks as a "perfect" man, and it is this thought of the "Perfection" of the Christian that one wishes to dwell upon this evening, because each one of us as we go from this series of gatherings should be "perfect" Christians, children of God who arc made perfect.

He says in the following verse.

"Let us therefore as many as be perfect, be thus minded "—that is, all who are perfect with the Apostle both in this humility, and in this unquenchable desire to apprehend, and to press on "According to the mark for the prize of the high calling—Let us be thus minded."

Now it was the continual burden of the Holy Spirit in the Apostle that the children of God were so often not found in this state of perfection. You find in all His epistles that he is ever pressing this cry of the Spirit home, calling to the children of God to be perfect. But we must know what he means by this word "Perfect." This is essential. He does not mean "sinless perfection." It is very easy to discern that. He is not speaking of such a thing, neither has he it in mind, because he speaks of not having yet apprehended, of not having attained; he is the chiefest of sinners in his own sight : he is the less than the least of all saints (in his own estimation); and is not worthy to be called an apostle, as far as he is concerned. There is a constant deep humility of heart in this man; and yet he accounts himself to be "perfect" in another sense of the word. And there are others who are perfect, for as such he exhorts them—"As many as be perfect, be thus minded." Now this word " Perfect " simply means to have attained the condition of a normal Christian, to have come to that stage which is the initial stage upon which there can be progress in the divine life. That is to say until this stage has been reached there can be no possibility of progress in the divine life. We shall be for ever moving in circles and coming back to the same place. Many of you here to-night will bear this out. That was our experience, a continual wandering around in circles, never getting through. You have the illustration of this anomalous life of a professing faith in the wanderings of the children of Israel. They had come out of Egypt. But you remember how, despite the manifestation to them of the mighty hand of God, they never passed

through Jordan. When it came to passing through Jordan they failed, there was shrinking and fear, and lack of faith in their hearts, so that they failed to cross into the land, or the realm where the purposes of God in them could be achieved. Then follows the history of their wandering in the wilderness, a coming back to the same altars, the same camps, the same places, the same historic remembrances, anniversaries and all sorts of recollections, but never getting through. They never came to the basis of a life in which God could take them into His purpose and work in them that which He desired. They had not been made "perfect." And you remember how in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Holy Spirit stresses this, and warns us as the children of God, saying

"To-day if ye hear His voice, do not make your hearts insensible."

Do not make your hearts dull to the repeated hearing of exhortations which you do not obey; and through neglect your hearts at last become insensible and you fail to enter into that rest of God. And He says—

"There remaineth a rest for the people of God."

He uses this experience of the children of Israel failing to enter the land of promise because of a lack of faith, to urge upon the children of God in Christ that they in like manner must have a basis of faith which enables them here and now, in time, to enter into the rest of God, and he says : " There remaineth therefore a REST (a keeping of Sabbath) unto the people of God." A basis of rest in heart upon which we can begin to realise the thing for which God has called us into this spiritual fellowship in Christ, His Church. This is to come to perfection, maturity, a stage of life that should be normal in Christ, and which He intends for everyone who is called. The Lord never intended that His children should be a congregation of spiritual invalids, freaks, people of arrested development who need all kinds of outward props and helps. He meant His people to have in them a Life as sufficient in itself. As He lived by the Father through the Holy Spirit and had Life in Himself so He told us that they who truly partake of Him, who cat of His flesh and drink of His blood (this also by the Holy Spirit), they too shall have Life in themselves. Now only as you have Life in yourself, can you go on unto those things that God has prepared

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for you from the foundation of the world. A coming to perfection, a coming to maturity, a coming of age, a coming to full-growth, this is (lod's intention for every one of His children. And this not at the end of a Christian experience lasting as we so often describe it forty, fifty or sixty years in this world. It is His purpose and intention that every child of God should come as swiftly and as quickly as possible to this stage. The Holy Spirit is ever stressing the necessity of this, and it is one of the griefs of the Spirit, as expressed in the exhortations of the apostle, that so many of the children of God remain babes, carnal, in a stage of imperfect development. Perhaps that brings us to the best definition of what the Apostle means by "Perfection." He means a perfect development, a normality, a stage of life where we can function, where we begin to live truly in Christ, and know that this salvation of His is a real salvation which gives to us a perfect rest from all those things which otherwise trouble, harass and hamper our Christian progress. It is upon the basis of this Life we begin to harmonise with God's purpose, and work together with Him as priests in His House, and function in the church, which is His Body. "As many as be perfect, let us be thus minded." Minded to this tremendous urge of the Holy Spirit, to realise the purpose of God in this age. Now so often when one has to speak of this purpose of God, this consummation of God, one finds many of the children of God becoming depressed and bewildered and saying, "This is far beyond me, this is impossible to me, this is some other gospel far beyond the horizons of my vision." "Give me the simple Gospel," and thus they supply the very evidence to the necessity of what the Apostle is here stressing—the need of our coming to perfection.

Now if you turn to the Hebrew Epistle you will recognise that the subject matter of that epistle gathers largely around this vital fact in the Christian experience. The Lord, through His Spirit, and through His servant, is seeking to bring home to the hearts of those to whom He is writing the necessity of going on to perfection. He says in the 6th chapter, after having already spoken very blunt words in the 5th chapter. (And do not, my friends, become depressed when the Holy Spirit says hard things to you: "For whom the Lord loveth He chastencth." If you are being pressed by the word of God, well thank God for it; and

if you are being smitten by the word of God, open your hearts more to the smiting. Let the Lord search you. Don't shirk the searching, and the chastisement of the Lord. Some of us are beginning to love the chastisements of the Lord. He humbles us every day. We come before Him every day as nothing. And if you knew the secrets of our hearts before Him, you would recognise there was a great difference from what might seem to be the assurance with which we speak upon this platform, and our hidden attitude before Him. He does chastise us and makes us to realise our nothingness in His presence. When we speak strongly in this fashion, it is because of the burden of the Lord, and because we know it is truly needed.) Now, the Holy Spirit is saying some very hard things here. He says it is impossible to give out the word of revelation with profit, because those who are hearing it have become dull of hearing. He means spiritual hearing. Now very often in our evangelical circles, we think we know all about the truth because we have just the stories of the gospel, and some elements of the doctrine, and we think that is all there is to But the Holy Ghost is taking "the know. things of Christ" in the Hebrew Epistle and unveiling the eternities, opening the heavens. causing the glory of God to be manifest in the face of Jesus Christ, and the writer has to say " Of whom (even the Lord Jesus) we have many things to say and hard of interpretation. seeing ye are become dull of hearing," that is, the spiritual senses have become insensible. They do not grasp the JDEA when the revelation comes, it passes over them, or seems vague and imaginary, and the thing is not gripped. The Holy Spirit addresses such words to the children of God, not unbelievers but believers "Hard of interpretation, Recing yc have become dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of rightcousness." The living word of God which divides asunder between soul and spirit, and is effectual and operative, ye are not able to bear it "because ye are babes; but solid food is for full grown men." Here you have another picture of those who are perfect—ful-grown men who have come to maturity, the age of service, when they can enter into spiritual service in the

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Lord's House; "Even those who by reason of use have their spiritual senses exercised to discern both good and evil." And then he says in the next chapter, as we have indicated, "That we are to leave the first principles of Christ and press on unto perfection. He also shows what arc those things which reveal that we are not come to full growth if we are still concerned with them, if they do not lie behind us as settled facts. That is, you and I before ever we can be perfect or mature, have to come to certain settled facts, certain things have to be determined, we must come to a decision upon them, and they are to be behind us, once and for all settled, so that we have no longer any difficulty about them. It does not mean, that we ignore them. There are some friends who would suggest that if we ignore these vital initial and fundamental truths, facts and testimonies, this forsooth indicates perfection, that you are to consider yourself as superior to them, they arc beneath you, you ignore them, they don't come into the horizon of your faith. It does not mean that. It means you have passed these mile-stones, you have realised their spiritual import, you have settled them, and you have no longer any question about them. You are not debating them any longer; they belong to the stage of initial revelation. They came in at the very gateway of Eternal Life, for they are those things which marked out in your heart the testimonies of the grace of God, "Not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works."

How often we find the children of God, owing to an imperfect revelation, everlastingly "laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works " (coming back to the same thing, harassed by the same doubts, never coming to a realisation of the perfect finished work that God has wrought for them in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ through His cross); "of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, of laying-on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." If we are still asking questions about these things, troubled about them, revolving around them, it indicates a stage of immaturity. They should have been settled, and we should have come to that point where we ask no more questions about them. We have heard the commandment of the Lord in them, we know the obedience of faith; we are fully yielded to the exhortations of the Holy Ghost, and the thing is done with and settled

for ever as far as we are concerned. Our heart is in perfect peace about the testimony of Jesus, all that which should be the basis of His faith is settled for us. One knows when the Holy Ghost comes and does His work, for this is the fashion of His doing it; it is a perfect work, for He cleaves the depths of our hearts, and lays bare our inner being in the presence of God. There is a swift work done then, and the initial stage of the Christian Life is soon won through. One knows this from personal experience, for when the Holy Ghost came down upon those who were seeking Life in the Revival in Wales some twenty years ago these things of which we arc speaking were all settled very swiftly, men and women were prepared to obey and to do everything the Lord commanded in His Word. He had called them out of darkness into His most marvellous Light. They were not tentative Christians, for somehow the heavens had been opened, and they saw that they were not playing with some temporary thing, some notion and idea of faith, but they were dealing with the living God. The living God had come down to them in the Holy Ghost revealing the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus, revealing the utter necessity of a complete break with the old creation and all that it represented; and they came out upon a basis of utter obedience in which life could be built up into the Body of Christ to the glory of God.

The Apostle is urging this; but it is not the Apostle only. Do not make the mistake of hearing the voices of men in the Scriptures. Do not hear the voice of say Paul or James or John. A great many Christians are making this mistake and straining their cars, saying Paul teaches this and James and John teach that. No, the word of God is not divided. It is the word of God, it is the Holy Spirit's Voice. And once you and I come to a clear realisation of the word of God as "The word of God," we shall understand that the truth of God is not divided into different kinds of teaching and different kinds of revelations; but that there is one great all-inclusive r velation of God in Christ going through His word from Genesis to Revelation. When the Holy Chost comes down and makes a man see the Cross with His God and Saviour upon it, things are swiftly settled. There is no debating about them; there is no running hither and thither, asking is it right to do this or that. The foundations of repentance with all the initial truth and tostimony are laid; the man is born

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

out from God by the Holy Ghost. Well, here is the Holy Spirit, urging upon the saints, as you and I are being urged by Him in the final hour of this Conference, that we should press on unto *perfection*, and that in this very hour, not at a stage in years to come, but in this very moment we should leap to that Life and Ministry of God which He offers to us in Christ. We should take the things of Christ which are given so freely for our salvation, and have the basis of our spiritual life well and truly and finally laid—perfection in us. He says in the third verse

"And this will we do, if God permit"

We would like to hear you say "Amen" to that. Come to that resolution, dear friends. Make an end of dilly dallying and hesitation and looking at the thing. Say with all your heart's desire and purpose in it—

" This will we do if God permit "

And God will permit it. He will this very night do a thing in you, if you come to that place where He wants you to come, even to Calvary with all its significance and make a clear end of all pettiness and littleness. Get to the place where you are out for God and nothing else. Make an end, a break with everything that is temporary and everything that temporises.

T. M. J.

(To be continued)

# INCORPORATION INTO CHRIST III.

### ASCENSION AND GLORY.

WEILE much emphasis is laid upon the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, it is not generally realised that His ascension is no less important as a truth basic to our life in Him and for His universal purpose. In the fuller unveilings of spiritual life in Christ which came progressively through the anointing of the Holy Spirit we have much said, on the one hand, about our having been made to sit in the heavenlies in Christ, and, on the other hand, we are reminded that we are strangers and pilgrims here. This revelation interprets the whole Bible along a certain line, and the key declaration to this sweep of the word is that the seat and base of all life and work,

the place of the pattern, purpose, and entire resource of our calling in Christ is in the heavens.

There are two words which represent or signify two halves of one great truth—Ascension and Translation; these are complementary to each other. The one makes possible the other, and the other demands the one. Ascension is an act, conclusive and definite. Translation is a process culminating in a climax. When the Lord Jesus ascended up on high and was "received up" it was representative and relative just as was His death and resurrection. As the representative of the "many sons whom he would bring to glory " He immediately and definitely transferred from earth to heaven the source of spiritual life, the spring of spiritual being; and in fact everything that pertains unto salvation, sanctification, service, glory, is now in the heavens, and cannot be found in the earth.

From the point of being "born from above" everything implied and involved in both nature and purpose is out from above. An exquisite cameo of this is found in the 87th Psalm. The terms are typical or illustrative. Here the partiality of God is seen for the spiritual as against the carnal habitations Then the things of glory are related to this spiritual city. Then the boasted nativities of men are reviewed: they boast in having been born in Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, or Cush. But transcending all boasts is his whose citizenship is of Zion and upon whom Zion's franchise has been conferred.

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The Lamb's book of life looms into view, and the names are mentioned, and the all-inclusive realisation of these heavenly citizens is that " all their well springs " are there. Their's is a heavenly calling, life, vision, citizenship, walk, hope, country, kingdom, &c. One of the most marked things in the pre-ascension experiences of God's people is the failure of anything of this earth—though given of God—to satisfy the vision and expectation of His truly spirituallyminded people. Abraham had promise of a country and a city. He moved out with God, but it is quite clear that as his faith expanded the fullest possibilities of realisation on the earth failed to fulfil his hope and the promise. He came into the land but he was not at all satisfied that the promise was fulfilled; in fact, though there may have been blessing and increase he grow less satisfied. The truth is that his spiritual life was expanding and with it his faith demanded something more than that of earth. That to which he looked for-

### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

ward at first as adequate to meet the expectation through promise, he came by closer fellowship with God to regard as altogether insufficient. This led him to a series of refusals and rejections of things of earthly glory. The "Promised Land " ultimately ceased to be for him a thing of earth, and so writers umler the illumination of the same Spirit as was leading Abraham tell us that he looked for "a heavenly country," and "a city whose builder (architect) and maker is God." Placing over against this such passages as Matthew iii. 9, John viii, 56, Galatians iii. 7, iv. 26, Hebrews xii. 22, we are surely compelled to recognise that Abraham's vision became more and more "other-worldly" as his faith became clearer. Simultaneously with this throwing back of the horizon, and as a means to that end, everything of earth was taken down into death to pass through and out on to resurrection ground by resurrection life. It then was a thing no longer of this earth but of the heavens. This applied to possessions, relationships, prospects, vision, promise, faith, service, capacity.

An important principle is here revealed as basic to all the accomplishments of God and of all effective life and service in fellowship with God. We must come into every Divine thing cs out from above, and not from the earth level.

Such phrases as "taking up Christian work," getting into Christian service," contain a very dangerous and false concept. Unless such would-be workers have had their own workseven for God—brought to death, and they themselves also, to get into things which are related to God is to result in one of three things; one to be smashed by them, or to find themselves sooner or later at deadlock as in a cul-de-sac, or to go on with a show and appearance of success, but really effecting nothing in any heavenly sense; the thing being of this world, though religious and well meant.

Moses undoubtedly had a heavenly revelation in Egypt. By illumination of spirit he saw that the poor oppressed, crushed, distracted mob of Semites were the elect of God (Hebrews xi. 25). He further saw that the Cross as the reproach of Christ was the method of redemption (v. 26). Then he saw that sin in his case would be to retain the pleasurable advantages of this world in denial of that Cross and its objective. In the light of this he made his decision ; he refused, he chose, he forsook, and feared not. But even when he had arrived at that position in his spirit he had : by a quickened and renewed spirit the infinite to learn the main lesson of his life, namely thet

heavenly visions require heavenly instruments for their realisation. He assayed to put his revelation into effect from the standpoint of some natural or earthly vantage ground. This jeopardised everything, brought confusion. delay, shame, and fear. He had to go out and through discipline be brought to his famous "I cannot," and then come into it as from above. The real effect was to have been taken out and up and then to come down on to it as from above; for afterward Moses was a man linked with the throne of God. It has ever been thus. For patterns, commissions, and powers, a place of ascendency has been the Divine method. In "the patterns of the things in the heavens " a mountain will do, but for the actual things a spiritual union with the ascended Lord is essential.

This can be traced as in the case of Moses, David. Isaiah, Ezckiel. Paul, and others.

"Then the Spirit lifted me up and set me down " is a clause which implies the Divine order.

This is not the elevation of the soul by imaginations, ecstacies, idealisms, or mental visions.

Such, as well as false or true presentations of great prospects, may be presented by the Devil.

The Master refused the elevations and visions given by the enemy because the true prospect was only by the way of the Cross.

Paul called himself " a wise master-builder," but this in his actual language only meant one who had been allowed to look at the Architect's plan and was working according to For this look he had been "caught up," it. but to be " in the Spirit " is always to be caught The Lord Jesus said much about being uD. as in heaven while on earth. "The Son which is in the bosom of the Father." "Whatsoever he (the Son) seeth the Father doing that doeth he, and in like manner." His Spirit had a heavenly union by the Holy spirit and so He wrought. It is one thing to take even the Bible as a manual, text-book, or system of truth, teaching, practice, and order. It is quite another thing to see the Eternal spiritual principles behind the precepts, practices, and system. The one is to live and work according to the *transmission* of truth through the medium of human intelligence: That is, an infinite truth has been shaped in finite terms to make it intelligible to men. The other is to apprehend significance of the revelation. The transmission

represents the human range, the spiritual revelation infinitely transcends this, and requires a heavenly mind—the mind of the spirit as against the mind of the flesh.

Only such as have been made one with the ascended Christ have His mind and can effectively serve Him. In so many ways the fact, nature, and need of ascension union with Christ is emphasised in the whole Bible and especially in the New Testament. He ascended with the keys of authority in His possession. As man and for man the dominion had been wrested from the Prince of this world. As a mighty conqueror He was "received up." This victorious return was foreshadowed in the spirit of the Psalmist when he sang

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in....The Lord mighty in battle...."

If it is true that Christ has taken our humanity, redeemed, purged, sanctified, into the very throne of God, and is reproducing this corporate union of Himself with us and of ourselves with Himself in His Body—the Church, then ascension union means that we now have a place in the place of His sovereignty to have dominion in Him over principalities and powers. The safer way to state this is that His Sovereignty functions—or is meant to function—through His Body and all its members.

There are other doors mentioned in this connection beside the Everlasting doors. There are "The gates of Hades," which means the councils and schemes and judgments of hell. These arc represented as being against the Church. It is therefore said that, because of the heavenly union with and in Him who has passed triumphantly through the everlasting doors, these other "gates" shall not prevail, because His sovereignty is in the Church and the Church is in His Sovereignty. Not to a Jewish group as such, or to the nucleus of an earthly kingdom related to any one age, but to the nucleus of His church He addressed the above words about building that church and its ascendency over the councils of hell. To them as such He also said " Behold I give you authority." This in the light of His Cross which was the abiding background of all His utterances and actions. There can be no resting of the Holy Spirit in and upon believers only as incorporation in Christ Crucified, Buried, Risen, and Ascended has taken place. For Elisha to receive the "double portion" of his master's spirit he must pass through Jordan with him and be with him in the place of ascension.

It is ever thus. The Holy Spirit mediates the sovereignty of the Head to and through the Body, and for this "Holding the Head" heavenly union is essential. The Church is a heavenly body not an earthly society, institution. organisation. The ccclessiastical systems of this world which call themselves "the Church" and "the Churches," arc too often a grotesque caricature. There arc no sects, denominations, "branches of the church," with God. Only one Church exists in the mind and interest of God, and that "the Church of the Firstborn," and all this other mess is because there has been an attempt made again and again to set up something for God on this earth as of the earth. God is not in this, but leaving it to compass its own end in confusion, or proceed apace in its delusion, He is quietly, without sound of axe or hammer putting His elect stones into a spiritual temple, a heavenly house. Only such as have the vantage ground of the heavenly places will see this, discountenance the false, and find full blessedness in doing what the Father is doing.

We now proceed to say a little about that half of this truth implied in the word "Translation." At the outset we said that "translation is a process culminating in a climax." The climax is, of course, the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The whole course of Christian experience when wrought out by God is one of progressive transition or translation from earthlies to heavenlies. Faith is the principle of translation and its very nature demands a basis which is spiritual and not of the senses, which is heavenly and not of the earth. The Lord's dealings with His people have ever been resultant in their losing all earthly ground of confidence and assurance and being made utterly dependent upon Himself.

Faith always brings us into precarious and difficult situations. Faith always demands a letting go of things seen and temporal. Faith threatens and carries out its threat to bewilder and confound our natural judgments, wisdom, acumen, hope, confidence, and security. Faith never fails to cut the ties of our natural safety, and dry up the springs of our human resource. All this must be in order to open up an entire system of heavenly fulness.. God makes revelation indispensible and His own heavenly realities absolutely essential to existence. Thus He meets us in some challenge and demand, a with they read

crisis is precipitated, a step in the obedience of faith is required, and when it is taken it is a step upward which gives us some spiritual vantage ground where we see what we did not know before. Thus by a succession of upward steps in faith we are having the faith of God's elect wrought in us in preparation for that climax in translation. It is corporate faith in the whole Body of Christ, proving it to be what it really is-a heavenly Body-that will bring about the advent of Christ. "The Second Coming of Christ " is not some merely historical event in a Divine time-table of prophesy. It is the climax of faith in the Body of Christ, which faith has severed that Body absolutely from the world and merely earthly things, even though they be religious things and systems. The obedience of faith increases capacity for apprehending the spiritual, eternal, and unscen principles of God's cternal purpose, and thus makes possible the effecting of that purpose. Surely this is the principle running through Hebrews xi. as a summary of the nature and course of faith. But it is " One Faith," even "The Faith of the Son of God." This faith is a mighty energy, spiritually militant, and the means by which the battles of the Lord have ever been fought. Thus it is that the final great conflict with the Satanic heirarchy will be brought to a victorious issue by the faith of the Christ triumphant in His Church (Revelations xii, 11). Thus shall the sovereignty of the *heavens* be established over the "gates" (counsels) of hell by the Church, and the earth will feel the impact of that triumphant faith.

This kind of translation faith is rare and few there are who will pay its price. Well might the Lord ask if He shall find it in the earth at His coming. Let it be emphasised once more that transferring of all things to the heavenlies so that we arc feeling more and more the strangeness of strangers, and the homelessness of pilgrims here, and the athomeness in spiritual and heavenly things is the natural course of a true life in God. When we are finally translated, or when the climax comes, it will be no great change for our inner man; there will be no awkwardness or feeling of being out of place and strange. But just the last phase of the spiritual journey where the glory breaks upon us, and like Enoch, "We are not, for God took us."

It only romains to be said that this is the path of and to the Clory.

The glory is always heavenly glory. Ultimately it will be manifested in a perfected

humanity. At present it is secretly within the spirit of the believer, and with each fresh step up in faith, that which cannot be defined to others becomes more wonderful to him. It would be a poor reflection of the Divine Glory to say that it is incorruption and incorruptableness, perfection of understanding, perfection of harmoniousness, perfection of capacity, perfection of graciousness. But almost imperceptably the movement of faith and the action of Grace is leading on to this. The incorruptible seed which makes possible the incorruptible body is already in the sons of God by faith. There is an opening of the eyes of their understanding, and heavenly things for them are much more real than the things seen. There is a peace which passeth understanding realised in deep crises which is the fruit of a harmoniousness in the will with God's will. The word peace "would always be better translated harmony. So also spiritual capacity is that which transcends the limitations of time and space, and bounds the universe in effects and issues. And the graciousness of Divine love, compassion, tenderness, considerateness, humility, &c., need no pointing out to be the glory of God.

These things, however, do not touch all that His glory means. Perfection of character, capacity, and service, bring perfection of satisfaction, this is but the basis of His Glory. Here we have to stop short. This glory can only be known in spirit and not portrayed in words. We remind ourselves that it is written that we have been "called unto His Eternal Glory," and that our "salvation is with eternal glory" and that "the light affliction worketh an exceeding weight of Glory."

So as we have been "crucified together with Him," "buried with Him," "raised with Him," so we are ascended and glorified together with Him.

May we have grace that every movement of God by which He would make our ascension union manifest and experimentally real may find an "Amen" in our heart, cost what it may in the uprooting of our lives from earth.

He would have us see the heavens open always and the representative and inclusive "Son of Ma" in the glory as us, even while we are on the Earth; everything in ministry here moving from and to the heavens.

T, A.-S.

A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

# THIS MINISTRY

### (SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES.)

THE Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre is, as its name plainly implies, nothing users and nothing less than a centre of fellowship in the Holy Spirit for such of the children of God through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord as shall be led to gather with us from time to time.

It is entirely free in such sense from denominational associations of any kind.

This heing so it should not be necessary to state further that we do not consider ourselves to be any other than a fellowship of the Lord's people: we are not a new hody or sect. On the contrary we are open to fellowship, as given by the Spirit, with all members of the One Body of Christ, His Church, in all the world.

Nevertheless we realise the Lord hus called us into this liberty as out from systematised and organised "churches" for a specific ministry of testimony in and to the Body of Christ, and to this trust we must be faithful.

Our basis is none other than the revelation of God in Jesus the Christ as given by the Spirit in the undivided word of God, the holy scriptures, both Old and New Testaments.

We proclaim Jesus as the Christ of God, Only Begotten from all eternity, but become MAN for us: Him, crucified, risen, ascended, glorified in the Godhead, and the Godhead in Him, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We recognise the work of the Holy Spirit in this age as forming the Body of Christ in a calling and election out from among the nations, and that the completion and perfection of this Body is bound up in the Spirit with the "coming" of our Lord Jesus, the Head of this church, which will then be glorified together with Him, both those who sleep through Jesus, and these who shall be alive on the earth, having remained unto His "coming." We recognise only One Body. The unities of Ephesians iv. 4 and 5 being our safeguard from schism and error in this direction.

To this end we believe it is the call of the saints that this gospel of the Sovereignty of Jesus as Lord, by reason of His Cross, should be preached for a witness among all nations.

We emphasise the Cross therefore as the means that the Spirit uses to accomplish the ends of God : by the Cross we include all that mighty work of God through the Eternal Spirit whereby our Saviour put away sin, judged the world, nullified death, and vanquished Satan, in the sacrifice of Himself; it embraces consequently His death, burial, and resurrection into the Throne of God. This Victory is sealed to us in the Blood of the New Covenant.

As "obedient children" wo bear specific testimonies to the death of our Lord and to the unity of His body as these are revealed in the New Testament, namely, the one baptism of identification with our Lord in His death, burial, resurrection (Romans vi. 3, Colossians ii. 12): the Lord's table as proclaiming His death until He come and as a discerning of the corporate nature of the Body of Christ, the Church (I. Corinthians xi. 29, x. 16, 17, &c.). We also recognise the Divine authority of James v. 14, 15, and respond to the call of tho sick members of Christ, praying with them and anointing them with oil in the Name of the Lord, this privately, and only in such cases as those in whom we discern a spiritual recognition of the significance of this testimony, viz., an acknowledgment of the Anointing Spirit Who rests in and upon the Body of Christ because of the Anointed Head, under which anointing the believer can claim covering through the Blood. We also pray, with the laying-on of hands of the presbytery, over such as in the assembly of the Lord's people have borne witness to their identification with their Lord in baptism, and also over such as the Holy Spirit has called to specific ministry. In all such cases it is kept in mind that these are corporate acts of faith in prayer on the part of the assembly in which the elders are but representative.

For in all these matters of the Lord's House we claim no peculiar authority, nor do we make ourselves other than that which should be ever found where the Lord's people are gathered in the Holy Spirit unto His Name. *There He is*.

We do not regard these testimonies as ordinances in the ecclesiastical sense, neither do we regard them as conditional to salvation; but we have proved them to be means of grace, pleasing to the Lord as acts of obedience, testimonies to the faith once for all delivered unto the saints, and revealed as such in the scriptures. We therefore cannot but choose to honour them even as we honour the Lord the Spirit Who gave them.

Our financial basis is one of faith, relying simply upon the Lord's provision for His own work through the stewardship of His people.

Grace he with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

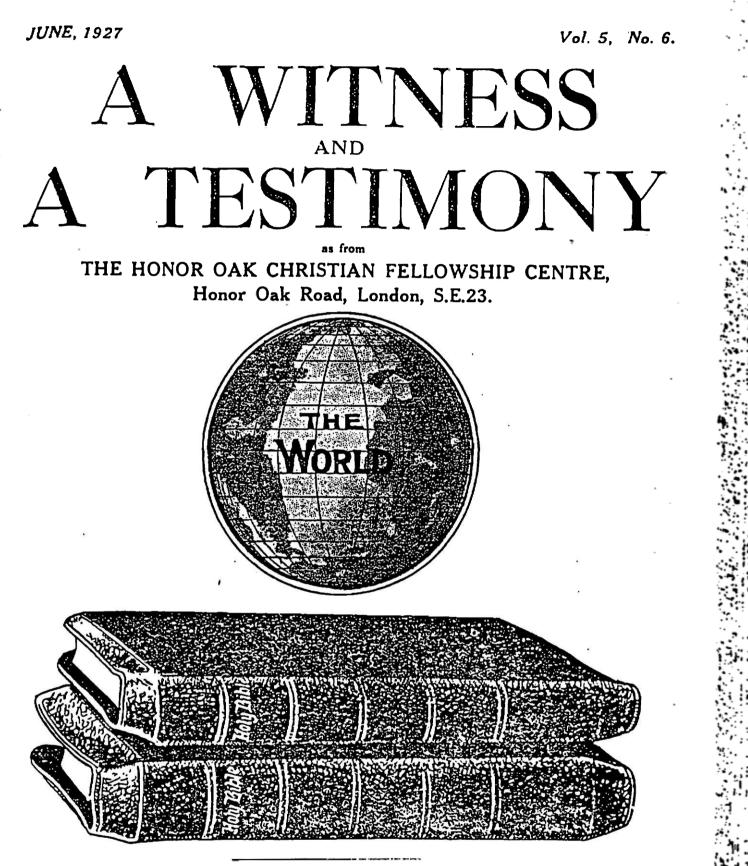
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Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Proclamation of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship. Sundays: 11 a.m. 3 p.m. & 6.30 p.m. Mondays: 7.30 p.m. Wednesdays: 3 p.m. Saturdays: 3.30 p.m. & 7 p.m. Conferences are held every week-end (Saturday and Sunday), and also a longer week-end at the beginning of each month, this fixed by the first Sunday. (Friday to Monday evenings, inclusive.) All particulars may be obtained from G. Paterson, Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

Ministers: T. Austin-Sparkes; T. Madoc Jeffreys; O. Paterson (General Secretary). Guest House Hostesses: Lady Ogle; Mrs. M. Brand. Telegrams: "Syndesmos, Forest. London." Telegrams: "Syndesmos, Forest. London."

A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

# MINISTERS' LETTER

(Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre,)

June, 1927. +

BELOVED IN OUR LORD,

He is giving to all of us, as we abide in the Anointing, both grace and glory. And these twain must needs be together, for we not only need grace to sustain glory when it shall be manifest, but the present operations of glory are so painful to our "flesh" that only His grace is sufficient to endure them.

For the principle of glory, as in us now, is that of fellowship in the sufferings of the Christ. The glory is not now manifested—tho universe waits for that, and we hope for it it is a hidden glory of the heart. In the deeps of our being God is fashioning that glorious conformity to the image of His Son. Many sons shall be brought unto glory.

"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction," and "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," are two words that indicate the character of that grace which now works in our hearts as being the very filial nature of Him Who learned obedience through the things that He suffered, and so came to consummation as our Saviour.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with thy *spirit.*" Yes, for there is the operating sphere of grace, a deep inwrought likeness to the Spirit of Him Who pleased not Himself at any time, neither had pleasure in His own will, undefiled as that will was, but subjected Himself to a WILL that became a Gethsemane of pressure, and a Calvary of passion, but emerged in a shout of Victory and a Resurrection into Glory.

But this is the miracle of grace, His grace. And He still addresses us encouragingly as we wonder whether we can possibly endure the weight of His yoke. "My yoke is casy, and My burden is light" because also, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Does this need the telling? For you have heard of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, ....It is the wondrous story. The loveliness of that filial obedience to such an emptying, and such a humbling consequent upon the emptying, is the Theme of our new song, "Worthy art Thou!"

Then let us not utter cry, nor even entertain the smart of our hurt flesh, because God is educating our spirit in Sonship that we may be able to sustain the weight of glory. For the invisible glory already is ours. He is storing it within our hearts. The daily dyings, the pressures almost beyond measure, the battle in the gates, but drive us to entertain Him in the hidden shrine of our spirit, where the blood speaks peace, and the glory of our Beloved is made manifest, even Jesus, crowned with glory and honour, who by the grace of God tasted death for every man. Yes, by the grace of God.

Shall we not also, by the same grace, taste our own death in His. For "The bitter is (or should be) sweet" now; "the medicine food." Marah's waters are sweetened by that Tree.

And so, maintain the affirmative "IFS" of our faith, which are confirmative also, "IF so be that we suffer-together-with Him, that we may be also glorified-together-with Him."

Yours, counting it joy,

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS,

T. MADOC JEFFREYS.

# THE FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

### INAUGURATIONS

The "Opening Day," May 28th, found the "House" meet and prepared for the Master's use, but much service had to be packed into the immediately previous days. However, all things were serviceable and ready. A large company of such as have a spiritual interest in the work came together, and meeting first of all in the tent the Lord gave us a spirit of reverence and praise, so that the element of sight-sceing was quite eliminated. Indeed, there was small danger of this for those who came had gathered in the fellowship of the ministry that this "House " stands for, a ministry in and to the Body of Christ in all the world, and the responsibility for this work of faith and labour of love lay as a burden of prayer upon all hearts.

Parties of twenty were conducted through the House by the brethren, and explanations were given of the Lord's goodness in providing directly so much of what was seen, as well as of the extensive alterations and adaptations that had been made. The prevailing feeling was one of wonder and even of awe at what God had wrought. All things were so manifestly of Himself in their order and perfectness.

and the fact that the provision of all these had come without any of the usual appeals stamped the whole matter as one of His doing.

### WHITSUNTIDE CONFERENCE

The chief impression that remains with us of this time of great refreshing is that of a Divine carrying through in a tide of Life and of the Spirit's witness to the will of God. It was a season of blessed confirmations. First, the "House" was full, and this was not only with guests but with the Presence of the Lord in peace and power.

The gatherings were unprecedented in sizc, and the tent proved too small to hold the Monday afternoon and evening assemblies. Over 300 met that evening around the Lord's table.

One of the results of this increase in attendance has been to change our thought as to the required capacity of the new Conference Hall, and the plans have been altered to arrange for a seating accommodation of 600.

But it is far from our mind to think of spiritual prosperity in terms of mere number, for there are always perils to be found in any kind of popularity, and in a testimoney of this character that places the Cross of the Lord Jesus as the central dynamic of life and service, only those who are prepared to pay the price that the Cross demands are going to endure unto the end. Nevertheless it is encouraging to note the real hunger for the Truth that gathers such companies together from distances near and far, and it is a further call for praise that the Lord met the crisic needs of many hearts and that throughout the conference the messages were clear and strong. While the theme of "The Cross and the Holy Spirit" was adhered to in the main the Lord gave some fresh emphasis and revelation upon the nature of His Blood, and also upon His Body as the first fruit of the New Creation. Towards the end of the time (and perhaps the final but smaller meetings of the Tuesday and Wednesday were the more significant) the chief emphasis was upon the reenwed spirit of the believer, how this is the organ of the Holy Spirit, and that the primary need of the children of God in these days of perilous deceptions is a clear and right discrimination between soul and spirit. The "excavation " of the spirit, so to speak, its severing from the soulish or psychic elements of our natural religious life, is a work that only the living word of God can accomplish. Not only are the days fraught with the peril of the Satanic invasion among the children of God in deceptions and counterfeits, but the spirit of schism and of failure to recognise the Body of Christ according to the New Testament pattern and testimony, all comes about because of a lack in appreciating the true realm of the Holy Spirit's operation, viz., the renewed spirit, the inner man of the heart.

Nothing less than the Holy Ghost applied power of the word of God can pierce asunder to the dividing between soul and spirit, so that the pure life of that which is God-born may come under the Anointing. The Holy Spirit does not come upon the "flesh" or soulish nature. Such so-called baptisms are the counterfeit of that which marks the Christ of God. The Anointing is the recognition of the Spirit of that which is begotten of the Spirit, and therefore is spirit.

#### EXTENSION OF THE TESTIMONY

The need for taking out the truth received and declaring it in the "field" is pressing upon us, and the time has come when for the summer months at least those who have been in residence with us during the past weeks, must go forth bearing the "precious seed."

As indicated in our last number there are doors already open, and we feel the hour has come for these young people to go out. Particulars of the proposed ministry, localities and itinerary, cannot at this time be given, as the Lord's method with us appears to be that in every particular the principle must be that of faith, and that then the way opens up further. It will therefore be interesting to see what the Lord will do with these young lives in the coming months.

It may be stated here that if there are any centres known to our readers where there is an urgent demand for the proclamatian of the "Testimony" we should be ready, as the Lord directed, to respond to such appeals.

MINISTRIES FROM WITHIN.

It would appear also that the clamant need for an increased number of such as can give out the full message of the Cross as the testimony of the Body of Christ from the standpoint of a personal experience of its power is going to be met in some measure from within our fellowship.

We have been prayerfully watching for indications of the Lord's Anointing for ministry in the Word in this direction, and it has been an 68

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encouragement to recognise the hand of God upon some of our brethren. We can only trust that as they abide under His Shadow in true humility of heart this ministry shall increase and that the time will come when the Lord shall manifestly separate them unto the work.

There arc already indications that we shall be shortly obliged to meet the demands of some centres for a more continuous ministry. The present visits to such places arc too few and far between to satisfy the need. So many children of God are crying out for corporate fellowship in prayer upon the basis of Calvary's full vindication, and it would seem that it is almost impossible to have this need met in the churches, so named. It therefore becomes an imperative challenge to this "Testimony of Jesus" as in and to the Body of Christ to meet these scattered children of God, hungry not only for the Word, but starving for that fellowship in the Holy Spirit which is a law of life in the Christ.

But this work needs to be free, without suspicion of any attempt to organise a new denomination (the Lord forbid !) and so each step must be taken along a way opened by the Spirit of God, and in His wisdom.

At Jersey, Newcastle, and Jarrow, this crying need of the Lord's own people became almost tragically evident. In each case there was great liberty in message-giving, the hungry were fed, and a situation has developed that would seem to require further ministry. May the Lord watch over the seed sown, and over the ground also, for we know that the enemy is busy.

#### THE GUEST HOUSE

All the rooms are now equipped, and we are able to accommodate many of the guests for the weekly and monthly conferences as well as such as have come into residence for training.

All particulars as to this service should be addressed to our brother, Mr. Paterson, at the Centre.

Lady Ogle has been obliged to leave us for some while to take up a personal ministry in Italy. She hopes to rejoin us as soon as the way may re-open. We thank God that distance does not destroy the sense of her close association with us and of her real fellowship in the work.

#### AUGUST CONFERENCE

We have felt that the August Bank Holiday week affords an opportunity for a Holiday Conference. The time for gathering is suggested to be from Friday evening. July 29, to that of August 5th. The syllabus will be issued in full in our next issue. Meanwhile it would be wise and desirable for friends who would like to join us to send in their applications immediately.

Our week-end conferences now make the ministry almost continuous, but we shall have the longer week-end season, July 1st to the 4th (Friday to Monday).

### NEWCASTLE

The next Monthly Conference, 3rd Friday in the month, will be held July 15th. Jarrow will be visited 13th and 14th.

# THINGS THAT DIFFER

LACK of spiritual perception and discernment is accountable for more confusion, paralysis, ineffectiveness, and failure in Christian life and service than we realise.

This lack is itself an indication of many things, but primarily of failure to mature or develop in spirit. In other words it implies spiritual infancy. There are very many of the Lord's children, truly born again, who, while they have become mature men and women, rich in experience so far as Christian work and works are concerned; and more or less mellowed by years, made steady by dis-illusionments and the vanishing of fancies, dreams, idealisms, romances, before the chilly winds of frigid facts; whose sympathies are enlarged because of an expanded knowledge of human weakness and suffering, and who, in many other ways have become good and kindly and full of that knowledge which restrains from extremes and checks preponderances, are, nevertheless, still very immature in those spiritual faculties which discriminate in things that differ.

It would seem almost impossible to lay too great an emphasis upon the fact that to fully satisfy the mind of God in its eternal conception and purpose initial conversion is not enough, and at least twenty of the New Testament hooks were written for "The perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering."

It is not one of the least important of these vital discriminations that the laying under grace of our natural life, its temperament, disposition, and constitution, so that our soul is purged and sweetened is not the same as having our spirit quickened, energised, endowed

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with spiritual gifts, and exercised unto essentially spiritual service. There are many benevolent and benign old saints who are pathetically lacking in this latter sense.

The first may be passive in temper, though active in "good works," but the second will see through and beyond and know by spiritual discernment (not shrewd natural judgment) whether a thing bo of God or not, and what are the limits of the Lord's acceptance, approval, and seal.

There arc "many mighty works" in His Name which stand in no relation to Him, and only that which the Father is doing can carry His resource. The knowledge of such things is spiritual discernment. Not all work FOR God is service to God. A child's sincere desire to help its mother may only result in more mess. So in the matter of service there is the great difference between engaging in work in His Name which seems to us to be good and right and necessary and even scriptural but which fails to achieve His end even while it seems to be successful: and on the other hand there is that which springs firstly out of a revelation of self which brings one to an end of their own works for God, and then a revelation of the Lord which makes spiritual ministry possible. We must be constituted ministers by the things wherein the Lord has appeared unto us, and will yet appear unto us (Acts xxvi. 16).

This limits all effectual service. Is it by revelation or is it on any other ground ?

We propose from time to time to give a little space to the presenting of these differentiations on such matters as Salvation, Prayer, Preaching, Revelation, Suffering, &c.

T. A. S.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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### BOOKLETS

#### (WITNESS AND TEST(MONY).

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#### THE SENTENCE OF DEATH

#### II. Cor. i. 9, iv. 10.

"Yea, we ourselves have had the sentence of death within ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves but in God which raiseth the dead....Always bearing about in the body the deadness of Jesus that the Life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal body."

THE burden of the Lord's word is mainly to His own people, but there may be just at the outset a simple word which may take us right back to the beginning of things and reach any who are not quite sure that they are the Lord's, or are quite certain that they are not, but who may nevertheless be reaching out to find Him; and to such I would like to say again, with renewed emphasis that to belong to the Lord, to know the secret of His fellowship, and to have the realisation that you have passed from death into life, to be a child of God, is not to enter into any system of religion, though you might call it "Christianity"; and it is not to join a company of religious or Christian people whom you may call the Lord's people, or " the church," wherever they may be found or under whatever name they may go. To be the Lord's is to receive into the centre of your very being a gift of God which is called LIFE: a LIFE which we by nature do not possess : a LIFE which is God's own LIFE, and which alone can bring us into a place where sin no longer has dominion over us, where we are saved from sin, and where we have the assurance of that salvation.

There are so many who are struggling to be Christians, to be good, to be better, or the best they can be; struggling to be the Lord's and Austin-Sparks.Net - AWAT Volume 5

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to live as belonging to the Lord ; struggling to to move with the Lord and to do those things which are pleasing unto Him; struggling and striving and yet all the time despairing. And I tell you why; Satan cannot cast out Satan ! Satan is Lord of Death, and he has gained a foothold in the very race at its beginnings, and death has passed upon all, and is in all. The nature of that death is separation from God, and thus it is with every child of Adam. Death reigns by the work of Satan, and by it he has this hold, this standing, this established place in the race, and everyone in that race is in this sense dead. Now what is the good of a dead thing trying to cast out death ? What is the good of the thing which is but the fruit of death trying to overcome the very source of death ? Satan cannot cast out Satan, and so you may struggle to the end and despair. You need LIFE—TRIUMPHANT LIFE—PERSONIFIED LIFE—for if death is personified in Satan, LIFE is personified in the Lord Jesus who says :--

# "I AM THE LIFE," AND "I AM THE **RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE."**

And you need Him as the Life resident within your very being to eject death, and "To overcome him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil." So to be the Lord's is to have the Lord, to be a Christian is to have Him as LIFE resident in your spirit, mighty, triumphant, able to resist the powers of death, and to make you to overcome by HIS LIFE. "The LIFE "-as this servant of God, Paul, put it :-

"The LIFE whereby Jesus conquered death." Now that is the basis of all Christian experience, and, as we may see, of Christian service, and I do want to urge upon you, for I know it is necessary, that it should be emphasised that it is not joining a fellowship, it is not coming into a company of religious people and associating yourself with them; it is not accepting some system of teaching; it is not merely deciding for Christ, it is something infinitely more than that, and all that may only prove the instrument of your undoing and your despair. You may be wretched even in the presence of heavenly joy, you may he miscrable even in the place where heavenly light is, you may be a hanced where the glory of God is, you may be despairing in the very presence of the "Hope which maketh not ashamed" if you have not the one Life of the Son of God with all His children. The one LIFE ! What

Life in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. That is the essence of the gospel, the beginning of the gospel, the end of the gospel: it is the gospel in sum total. THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE HIS LIFE.

Now, beloved, having said that, one goes. on to speak mostly to the Lord's people, though the others listening may by the Holy Spirit's aid sec something more for themselves, and the burden is this—

# DEATH COMPLEMENTARY AND DEATH ANTAGONISTIC.

You will see by a glance through the word of God, with this two-fold thought in your mind, that death can be either of these. Death can be an advantage, or it can be a disadvantage; it can be complementary, or it can be antagonistic; it can make possible the higher purpose and blessings in God, or it can be absolutely paralysing and nullifying to all fruitfulness in Him. Now you wonder how death can be complementary or advantageous, the very ground of fruitfulness, because you so often hear it said that death is death, and that it is desolate and barren and there is nothing that can come out of it; but you must remember that it prepares the way for all the other, it brings you to the point where everything else is possible, and not until you have come to death is anything else possible at all. Now you notice the passages we read-

"Yea, we ourselves, had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves."

That is the very basis of everything in real spiritual fruitfulness and effectiveness. "The sentence of death in ourselves." Of course here Paul is undoubtedly speaking in the first place about something very serious which had overtaken him. In the beginning of the chapter he speaks of this something which had come in the way of a terrible affliction, and he said he despaired of life, and had the very sentence of death in himself so that there was no hope whatever for him from any human standpoint, there was no hope according to all human judgments and verdicts. He ought to have died—the very sentence of death was in him, and I do like the way he puts it, it is so richly significant, he uses just the little word THAT, and it gives an entirely different complexion to the whole situation. He might have put it, "We had the sentence of death in ourselves and we cannot trust in ourselves," you need is the gift of God, which is Eternal | but he did not put it like that. Of course that

would be quite logical to say, "We had the sentence of death in ourselves, it was there, and of course, that being the case, we were no good for anything at all, and there was no hope whatever and therefore we cannot trust oursclves." But he did not put it that way. "We had the sentence of death in ourselves THAT-" There is purpose in it, there is an object in it, there is something in it as a basic and fundamental principle. Hc realised that it was not the end but the beginning, with a design that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead. So that the sentence of death was not the end of everything it was the beginning of everything. There was a real purpose in this thing, and if you take up the Holy Spirit's teaching in the New Testament you find that this has become the fundamental principle of all divine activities and operations. The sentence of death passed upon us, and registered in us, and working out in us, and all the time another thing doing the work of God, triumphing over this sentence of death in us, this other thing which is in us, working through us, giving us ascendency over death in Christ: so that the wonderful things of God are manifest by us and yet there is no accountableness for them in us. The Lord has swept away with one stroke the whole basis of our trust in ourselves, has wiped out for ever any hope in ourselves, not to destroy us, not to make everything impossible, but THAT He who raiseth the dead might show the mighty works by this Resurrection Life which is fruitful in us. Have you ever noticed this, I do not know where it came from, whether it was Satanic or Divine inspiration, that even Herod, "that old fox," when it was reported to him that the Lord Jesus was doing His many "This is John tho mighty works, said Baptist risen from the dead, "therefore these mighty works arc shown !" Risen from the dead-mighty works! How he got that inkling I don't know, but there is this principle in it, that resurrection from the dead implies mighty works, works mightier than those before death. There is that there, and this is the principle all the way through the word, that on the ground of a Life wrought in us through the cross by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God is able to achieve and accomplish His supreme purpose. But, in order to do it, the sentence of death must be planted right at the centre of our old life to rule it out, so that where we despair of life in ourselves and have no trust in ourselves, we know we cannot of

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ourselves accomplish anything, there is the mighty life of God for everything. This that is "Christ in you," the Life of God, the hope of glory.

God has brought us to this very point, in order that we might not trust in ourselves, but in God "Who raiseth the dead." You notice that Paul puts the three-fold rescue work of God immediately over against that—and we do trust in Him who hath rescued us and doth rescue us, and we believe that He will yet rescue us, that we shall not be wholly swallowed up of death, but in death, maintained in Life.

Now this is only the beginning of things, the basis. This is the thing that is with one with tremendous force in these days, that if you are going to be effective in the realm where the prince, the Lord of Death holds sway, you cannot be effective by the means and resources in which he has got a stronghold, and he has that in all the resources of our natural life, however fine and splendid they may be from the natural standpoint. The only thing that can be effective in that realm is the Life whereby Jesus conquered death, and in order that that Life might have full sway and free course, and the utmost and fullest fruitfulness of that Life as triumphant over death might abound, all that in which the enemy has any hold whatsoever (our natural life) has got to be put out, and we must have no trust in ourselves for this work.

Now that immediately defines and delimits the measure of spiritual effectiveness. It is the measure of His Life coming through by the sentence of death being in ourselves. These cries of the Apostle in the fourth and sixth chapters of this second letter, concerning oppositions, adversity, trial, affliction-he sees in all this a great advantage for the Life of God, and that this death is complementary really to the purpose of God, that it is aiding the purpose of God. Paul always looked upon things in that way. He saw that those things which might be reckoned impossible of fruitfulness to God were essential to make that fruitfulness possible. Death itself, is not tho end of all things, but is the beginning of things where God is concerned, and so he will say " a great door and effectual is opened unto me"-and with no repining or complaining, " but there are many adversaries," rather with the complementary "AND there are many adversaries." That is, that these things are included in the great door and effectual to make it all the more effectual. The fact that there are

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adversaries is not any reason why we should sit down and refuse to go in through the door, but the very reason why we should go in that very door to prove how effectual it is. Things which men would consider to he *against* are the very things which are for God, and death becomes His captive and the Lord of Death His slave to serve His higher ends, so that death must be registered in us in order that His Life might show what a triumphant Life it is. These paradoxes of Paul are very beautiful.

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Now, beloved, we are right up against this whole situation, the situation of dealing with the system of spiritual evil and spiritual death. We have often said of late that we have passed, and are passing more completely, out of the era and time of certain orders of Christian work. I think it is recognised by most spirituallyminded people that the old forms of Christian enterprise, organised religious activity, are breaking down, are failing everywhere. It seems that the thing has been rejected, and cannot meet the need. We have passed into a new time, a new phase which we believe to be that culminating phase in the age when we shall come more directly into conflict with the forces of darkness, with the power of Satan. The church has been meeting him for a long time through things, and now it is going to meet him face to face, and that is the time and condition into which we are moving now. We are finding that means and old forms and institutions and organisations cannot meet the more direct encounter with the enemy. We are being forced to recognise the need of something more, and that something more is simply the naked Life of God as manifested in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ coming into tremendous contact with the whole system of death and of darkness. That is our position. How many of you are able to appreciate this I do not know, but I know there arc some who can appreciate it. God synchronises His provisions with recognised and realised needs. Now the movement is to be along this line where the Life of God, unmixed with the resources of men, with human machinery and human drive and human enterprise, the very Life of God has got to be directly, immediately, nakedly manifest in the church for the last phase of the battle unto the ultimate triumph. In order that this might be so, there must be this tremendous emphasis of God upon the need for the wiping out of all that which stands in the way of a pure and clear maniestation of His Life, and of the intermingling

of those things in which there is death, that is, the natural life of man. All that intermingling has got to be removed, and God is coming to the time, has come to the time, when He is going to have very close accounts with His people, so that you cannot touch the earth, you cannot ' touch the flesh, you cannot touch the world, you cannot touch anything in which death is, without at once having a check and an arrest put upon your spiritual effectiveness; you have to stand absolutely clear. Now that is why Paul in this fourth chapter, speaking about the Life of God being manifest in us because "We are always bearing about the deadness of the Lord Jesus" immediately goes on to say, "Be not unequally yoked together with an unbeliever, for what is there in common between God and Belial, light and darkness ? " What fellowship, what in common ? These two are poles asunder, and absolutely antagonistic, "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate." And in as far as there is that coming out and being separate, and being cut off from all that in which death, and a coming into that in which Life is, can there be a manifestation of the triumphant and effective Life of the Risen Lord in us. There is always a big purpose, as big as eternity and as big as God Himself, in every injunction in the scripture, not just some little bit of spiritual advice; it is as big and great as God Himself, and as vast as His Eternal purpose, and when He says, " Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," He is not just giving you a bit of spiritual advice that will save you trouble in your domestic arrangements. He is laying down a vast principle that spiritual effectiveness to the maximum depends upon your being out of the range of the grip of death so far as your spirit is concerned and your life voluntarily lived.

Now I want to stay for a moment here—the Lord might just help some. Beloved, the principle of Life in your spirit is to be the guiding principle of all your service in the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not mean Life in your surroundings. The Lord may take you to a place where death reigns, but if death reigns in you, you may as well give up the whole thing at once. You may be there, and the Life of God may be in you to meet that situation, to triumph over it; but mark you, if you begin to touch what you call pieces of work for God and there is no Life in your spirit, and the thing is dead in your spirit, you have no right there until you get in your spirit the Life of God relative to that thing. Don't touch it,

or you will be found in dead works, trying to do something where there is no vital principle at all. Now note, it is all very well to have a broad view and say, Yes, but the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Life, has come into the world where death is in order to save the world, and that Life can be taken as the broad basis upon which we should enter upon any work for the Lord that seems to offer itself, or is presented to us. But that is no criterion. There was a time when the Lord Jesus recognized in His spirit that the living purpose of God was arrested with regard to certain situations, and He had no Life witness there and He came We believe that that was so in the out. case of Israel as a nation. He gathered the whole situation up in the incident of the fig tree. Ministered to, witnessed to for a long time, but the moment the curse of God had to fall upon it (What is the curse of God? It is death), from that moment He was cut off from Israel. He had no ministry to Israel as such ; He recognised in His spirit that there was death there, and it was no use being sentimental about poor Israel, no use trying to act upon a basis of human sympathy and compassion and having imaginations and mental pictures of what could be done and what might be done; that was an end. I am only using this by way of illustration, for spiritual effectiveness demands that we should have the witness of LIFE in our spirit. A lot of people hold on and continue in certain realms, certain spheres, certain companies, certain connections, and they are there merely from the standpoint of natural reasoning and argument, sentimentally, traditionally, or somehow thinking that by staying in something is going to be done; and in their spirit they know the thing is dead, and they have no Life there. May that not be the Lord's witness to them that they should serve Him where they have Life, where the witness of Life is in them, and a spirit of promise? If all around is dead but they have Life in themselves , it is all right, but if all around is dead and they have no Life in their ministry surely something is wrong, the door is closed. It is important that for spiritual effectiveness up to the hilt the witness of Life in us should be born. Of course we have swept aside in ourselves that which might bring the death-we have stood by the cross and seen that the sentence of death must be in ourselves as such, in order in make the Life possible, but if that has been dealt with, and we have the sentence of death, and we no longer trust in ourselves but put our

faith in Him who raiseth the dead, then we have the right to claim and receive the witness of Resurrection Life in ourselves for ministry as the Lord appoints, and the day in which the Lord brings death upon one's spirit in any sphere or kind of ministry, that is the day when one will begin to look to see where the Lord is going to bear the witness of Life for ministry. Now that is important. I do not know why the Lord should give one such emphasis upon this, but it is no use your going on to do God's work when you have death in your spirit. Nothing will come of it; drop it, and ask the Lord to bring you into a place where you can in your spirit bear witness by Life-the Life whereby Jesus conquered death, to meet the situation as it is around you.

Now you notice one thing Paul says in this very connection, in this opening chapter of his second letter: "The afflictions of Christ came upon us above measure. We despaired of life, the sentence of death was in us." - How did the Apostle regard the afflictions of Christ ? You read anything that the Holy Spirit says about this matter, and you will find that it is always related to a testimony, or to put it in this way, the afflictions of Christ, the sufferings of Christ are intimately related to, and, in fact, inseparable from, Who Christ is and what He is going to do. The impact of Christ with the purpose of God upon the system into which He has come has immediately precipitated this whole matter of affliction. You may go out and do Christian work, and you may do it in such a way and by such means as to reduce suffering to a minimum, to have a comparatively smooth and easy time. You may seem in that realm to be having a tremendous amount of success, the thing is beginning to get big and prosperous. Beloved, do not think for one moment that that is always a testimony to spiritual vitality. On the other hand, you may go out in the service of what you call the Kingdom of God and you may suffer much because you run counter to the traditions of men, or to the accepted system of the day, or to the popular public mind, and, as a reformer, die a reformer's death, being rejected and refused and perhaps murdered. That need not be a criterion either of spiritual effectiveness. How many there are who are deceived along both of these lines, and O, tragedy of tragedies, how many of the Lord's dear children are suffering in what they call His work without real spiritual value and result, without breaking through, without planting the standard of the victory of His cross in the

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enemy's territory ! They are out for the Lord. and they arc suffering, having a hard time, a bad time, but nothing is coming of it all, they have run counter to a system, to traditions, they have run counter to the personal preferences and likes of mankind. You may take it that you can never, in corporate union with the Lord Jesus Christ move for the fulfilment of His mission without bringing His sufferings upon you. As to this, if you are in corporate union with the Lord Jesus and you are out with Him, and He is in you for the accomplishment of His purpose, there need be no fruitless sufferings, all the suffering will be fruitful. The explanation of course is that the world, not being an end in itself, but being embraced, circumterenced by this whole system of spiritual antagonism knows Who Jesus is and knows the destiny of Jesus according to the will and determination of God, and therefore all its antagonism and wrath is stirred up from the bottom against Him and against Him in His corporate presentation as well as in His personal, against Him in the form of His Body, the one Body which is Christ, just as much as against Him as a separate entity.

Well now these are the sufferings of Christ relative to the work and person of Christ, but they are mightily effectual sufferings, and the Apostle recognised that and pointed that out. The sufferings are fruitful sufferings, they are mighty sufferings because they represent the challenge of the Christ of God, and they imply not His defeat, but His triumph. Satan would not bother himself if he knew that Christ could and would be defeated; he bestirs himself because he knows the end of this thing, what it means, the coming of the Christ of God into his domain. Now in order that this might be so, that deadness of the Lord Jesus to all that to which He died is the thing that has to be ruled out in order that the issues of His Life might be realised and manifested, and O, that God's people had discernment, spiritual discernment ! The one cry in our spirit is that His people might be more discerning, be able to discern in their spirit where Life is and where death You know it would accelerate and expedite is. the whole business if we had more of this discernment as to matters of life and death. You know how frequently we have tried to do a thing for the Lord, to do a thing with the best motive for the Lord and inside there has been death. Dead! And yet we have tried to do it, to force it, and there is nothing but

waste of energy and waste of time. We have got to get on to the thing that God is doing for only in this can we have the witness of Luc that it is the thing of God and we shall gethrough. In order that He might bo able to consummate His purpose, gather up His plar and bring it to a mighty victorious issue in the coming of the Lord, our need is to have Life more abundant, and the spiritual discernment by Life to know where Life is and where death is. You may be doing what you call the work of God and have death in your spirit, and that very doing of what you call the work of God, because there is death in your spirit is antagonistic to the purpose of God. You may have Life in your spirit and death all around, but the fact that you have the witness of Life is both the key and the assurance that something is to be accomplished. I believe, beloved, that we dare not do a thing unless we have definite witness in our spirit that it is the thing of God to be done through us. We cannot take these broad sweeps, we must have the witness of Life, and not take the general conception that the world is to be saved, and. therefore we ought to get out into the world to save it. Do not make that mistake, the world will not be saved. You may say "the whole, wide world for Jesus," but God is looking to take out a people from the nations, and this part of the dispensation will not see the whole wide world for Jesus. Is God in this, is God in that, has God undertaken it? The answer to that question in your spirit will not be an audible voice, it must ever be the liberty and the freedom, and the uprising of His Life in you that gives you a clear way through in your spirit. The Lord teach us how to be led thus in our spirit by the Holy Spirit that He may bring us to the place where the maximum of spiritual effectiveness is attained, and, in order that it may be so, beloved, "We must have the sentence of death in ourselves (our fiesh), that we should not trust in ourselves," and " always bearing the deadness of the Lord Jesus that His Life might be manifested."

God only works now on resurrection ground, by resurrection life, and this life in us is the basis of the Holy Spirit's operation in revelation and service.

The law of the Spirit is life. Romans viii. 2.

T. A. S.

### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## NOTES OF ADDRESS AT EASTER CONFERENCE

#### upon

"THE PATTERN IN THE HEAVENLIES."

## "CHRISTIAN MATURITY OR FULL-GROWTH."

### (Continued.)

THIS matter of "perfection" is a very simple one, as we have seen, when once the heart is laid bare.

The first thing necessary is the realisation of the Person of Jesus Christ. This may seem very elementary, but we shall never exhaust that revelation. We must see Jesus, and Jesus in terms of God. It is this qualification that bars the way to the "flesh." He that thus sees the Son hath life: Jesus, as the very image of the living God: Jesus, not in the denominators of our own thought about Him, but Jesus, as revealed by the Holy Ghost: Jesus, as coming out from the Father : and Jesus, as Regnant by means of His Cross in the Father. Jesus in terms of God!

This is the first and essential basis of all revelation, and we must remember that revelation is essential to *realisation*.

And when once you have realised the Person of Jesus you discover that you are not dealing merely with something in human history, something that has come along the level of anything that has been wrought out in the earth only, but that you have come into touch with something that has come forth from eternity and goes on into eternity, but which has been manifested in time and upon this earth for our sakes. It is the Incarnation ! God, manifest in the flesh.

You are now in touch with the living God, and the realisation of this comes as a tremendous blaze of Light upon your spirit. There is an amazement, a wonder, and an awe now upon our heart. You echo the apostle's word, "Let us have grace, whereby we may servo (this) God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." It is thus you get the first element of perfection, or maturity, coming into your heart, for it is till true that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Have you noticed that the Holy Spirit uses cight chapters of this Hebrew Epistle simply to establish this revelation of the Person of Jesus in terms of Infinite fort, before He passes on the work of the Divine Saviour, the full and eternal character of His Cross, as revealed in the Blood of the New Covenant ?

In the ninth chapter the blood is the theme, for the blood of Jesus contains all the eternal elements of His Cross, and the writer is speaking of the blood of the Lamb as in the midst of the Throne: it is the Cross as realised *in* God, the passion of God Triune revealed in the Cross. The blood has been taken through into the Holicst of All. A Life has been given, poured out as through the eternal Spirit, and then taken through into the Heavenly Sanctuary. Ho causes us to see the Sanctuary in the heavens open, and you and I see the Cross as it stands in the heart of God.

This then brings us to the realisation that the finished work of Jesus on Calvary is something wrought out in God for you and me, and this fact should settle all questions of time and eternity as far as we are concerned, for we now know that we arc saved upon the basis of a Life that is hid with the Christ in God, and sealed by a Blood that is in the midst of the And this is the basis of perfection, Throne. the revelation of the two-fold Divine Fact that He Who is the Son of God from all eternity poured out at the Cross a Life, the nature and value of which can be measured only in terms of the Eternal Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit He offered Himself as Man unto God, and through the same Spirit He has taken the value of that offering right into the Throne of God, and the Cross therefore stands in eternity, not only as God's means of bringing His church into relation with Himself, but as His means also of securing the universe in the ages to come in the Sovereignty of that Life. Henceforth the THRONE of God is also the THRONE of the Lamb.

This is the revelation, and upon such a basis you arrive at maturity.

We come to the tenth chapter, and here is unveiled the Body of Christ, and in relation to us, the Vail, His flcsh, is spoken of. The Vail is rent, and you and I now, because we are perfected, and know that everything for our salvation is secured in the Blood, are ablo to come into the glorious Presence, not in that old nature in which we were born and which still seems to cling around us in this body of death, but in the New Man Who is Christ Himself as before God. We share His nature in the new birth by One Spirit. We ascend by the Holy Spirit into the very presence of God, but we do so only as the members of the Body of Christ, by passing through the Vail, that is to say, Ilis flesh. But you see, beloved friends, here is mystery, for we are members of that

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

flesh. "This mystery is great, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. We are members of His Body, of His flesh and of His bones." It is to those who are perfected upon such an assurance of faith in the Person and Passion of Jesus that this tenth chapter applies.

For we have come not to the shadows and types of things, not even to the patterns of things, but "to the very image of the facts" x.1 (marg.). This reminds us how the writer sets out upon this Holy Ghost argument by declaring Jesus to be the very image of God (i. 3). or as the apostle expresses the same truth in Colossians i. 15: "Who is the visible image of the invisible God & (Conybeare). We have thus come to things that are of God, out-from God. Oh, how the Holy Spirit reiterates and insists that it is GOD in Christ, for if only we can be brought to the revelation of Deity in Christ everything changes into Infinite Dimensions. and we see the Cross is of God, the blood is of God, the resurrection is of God: "all things are of God." We have come therefore to the very image of the facts, eternal things, heavenly things, the things of the Christ-Reality. This present universe of things seen, as far as we are dimly able to apprehend it, through our limited senses, is but the shadow of a very different reality of God that lies behind it-"" the things which are seen, are not made out of the things which appear," xi. 3; but in JESUS we have come into touch with the living God, the only true or actual God, the Reality Who is the great "I AM." There will come a moment, we do not know how soon it may be, but it will be the moment of our Translation, when we shall pass through this present aspect of things as seen, and become One, identified with the Christ of God through all eternity. Then shall we know as we are known, I Corinthians xiii, 12.

But do you not see that as born-children of God we have already arrived there? We are there in *spirit*, and therefore in truth, in life. Later in the epistle we read, "But ye have come unto Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to myriads of angels, the universal gathering; and to the assembly of the firstborn, registered in the heavens; and to God, the Judge of all: and to the spirits of the just who have been perfected : and to Jesus the Mediator of a fresh covenant : and to the blood of sprinkling. speaking better things than that of Abel " xii. 22-24 (Lit.).

We have arrived ! We have come there ! . O, beloved friends, do you not know that this Life which you now possess is not a mere

devotion to religious belief, but is the very Life of God within your spirit ? This is the amazing nature of the Christian experience—" Christ in you, the Hope of Glory." He in you, and you in Him, by One Life, One Spirit. If the Holy Spirit has come to you, He has come to unveil this, and to take you into this—the Life hid with Christ in God.

It is God to Whom we have come in this "Testimony." We are not dealing with religion, so-called. systems of truth, organisation, neither to a "witness and a testimony" in terms of men, or of the leadership of men. It is the fact of God in the church, the Body of Christ, to which we have come. It is the Holy Ghost seeking to do in the earth the thing that shall bring about the end, the consummation of the age. God is in this. It cannot, and must not, be man's work. God is coming to His people, seeking to build-up and perfect the Body of Christ that remains in the earth so that we may enter into that corporate Life; and in the energy of the One Spirit, in the travailing and intercessions of the Holy Ghost, shake the powers of the heavens and of the earth, and bring to an end this horror that is in the world, the satanic system.

In the very next verse (x. 2) we read that those sacrifices which were but mere shadows or types could never make the comers thereunto *perfect*, as pertaining to conscience. You must be perfect, in this sense, to draw nigh to God, to stand before God, to act as priests in the Presence.

How is this possible ? By the revelation of the power of the blocd of Jesus. We often quote Revelations xii. 11, which prophetically relates that final issue of the Lord's battle with the adversary, this time in and through His saints on earth, "They overcame him, because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their own lives unto the death." But you will recognise that these must have pressed on unto perfection in their standing before God. These surely knew the Holiest of All, their intimate relation with God Himself in the Person of His Son, their identification with the Christ in the Throne, their membership of the Body of Christ as a functioning Life in the Spirit. These know the power of the blood to enable them to stand where the cherubin and the Glory are, and are presenced before God in the Christ.

Now right through this tenth chapter you find that the key thought is the fact of the

"Body" of the Christ: "a Body hast Thou prepared for Me." This was spoken by the Holy Spirit centuries before the Eternal Logos became flesh at Bethlehem, and I believe we are entitled to take this Body as the One taken right through the progress of the Divine Humiliation and Glory. It was ever the "naos" or sanctuary of God. It was begotten "holy " though in the likeness, or effigy, of sinful flesh; nevertheless it was never sinful flesh, but holy flesh, given for the life of the world. When the Lord was challenged by the rulers to give a sign to justify His authority over the temple of God, He answered, "Destroy this 'sanctuary,' and in three days I will build another; but He spake of the ' sanctuary ' of His Body." This same Body was offered upon the tree, but it was resurrected the third day, manifested on carth, and received up into the glory of the Godhcad. It is now in the heavens, the Habitation of God by the Spirit, and yet it is the Body of which we are members, the dispensing of which we remind ourselves as we gather around the Lord's table.

For this is the fulness of our incorporation into the Christ, that we become members of His Body, of His flesh and of His bones. We partake now of His flesh, by faith, in the power of the Holy Spirit; and also drink of His blood. So the Body has become corporate, He and His brethren, subsisting in One Life. And all the teaching of the Book, the summing up of the revelation is this: "A Body hast Thou prepared Me."

This, then, is the thing that God is after. It is the extension of that Body, or its consummation in corporate manifestation. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth for the manifestation of the sons of God, in and with the Son of God, as in One Body. This is the burden of the Spirit.

It is this Body of which you and I partake by faith, and in which and unto which we should minister by the Spirit.

If you desire to have the spiritual revelation of this dispensing of the Body of Christ among His members, read prayerfully the 6th chapter of John's gospel. There we see how He gives of that bread which seems to be, according to visible and human estimate, so insufficient : and in His Hand's it becomes satisfying food for the multitude, for a great company. But the whole objective and purpose of that " sign is to lead on to the miracle of the dispensing of His Body, the teaching concerning which was such a cause of stumbling to all who had not the discernment that Ho alone had tho words of "Tho Life of the Ages." For He teaches that He is the Living Bread, that we are to cat of Him, to partake of His flesh and of His blood. His Life and Nature and Substance are to be imparted to us. All true believers, by His One Spirit, are to be incorporated into the Christ of God, so that at last, when He is manifested they also shall he manifested as One Christ of God in One Body that has been prepared before the foundations of the world.

Now it is obvious that you and I can never hope to attain by merit unto that consummation, and so this *perfection* as a matter of acceptance and standing with God must be finally settled in our conscience, and this is what we are assured of in the following words: "For by one offering He hath *perfected* for ever them that are sanctified."

That is to say, we must come to a final and settled conclusion about our salvation. You cannot enter into spiritual service as long as you are troubled about the matter of your personal salvation. You don't lay again the foundations that lead up to that blessed state of absolute assurance. One is often led to say this, and I hope it is not misunderstood, viz., that one is no longer concerned about one's own salvation, in the sense of worrying about it. I cannot save myself. I cannot add a single thing to what God Himself has accomplished on my behalf. He has completed a glorious work of salvation for me : He has met sin in its depth for me; He descended into Hades. And so as I discover the depths of sin in my carnal human nature, as the Holy Spirit shall, for my own humbling and means of grace, unveil the iniquity of the human heart in me, I am not going to allow the devil, the false accuser, to take advantage of God's grace in my chastisements, but I will look again at that marvellous Cross, and I hear that blessed God and Saviour say, "IT IS FINISHED." And the Blood is always saying that. Beloved child of God, the matter of your personal salvation is eternally settled in heaven. Be thou therefore perfect, even as thy Father in heaven is perfect. Your Saviour says that : not I.

You see, if this be not so, you are not ready to go into His Presence this moment; and you have no gospel of assurance of salvation to proclaim. You cannot go to the world to proclaim an uncertainty, a doubt. You cannot tell desperate and needy sinners that you are not quite sure about things. No, the Christian

experience is always the experience of being ready to go into the Presence of a Thrice-Holy God. One used to hear the saying, "Sudden death, sudden glory!" It is just that. Your sins, and your SIN; your failings, and everything about your carnal nature, have been settled forever in the death of the Christ of God. And though there may be about you, as you well know, many imperfections of natural disposition, you are forever trusting in the power of that costly blood, which even now as you walk in the Light, *is* cleansing you from all sin.

"Them that are sanctified."

Those who are scparated, set apart, unto an end that God has in view. What is this? Is it not epitomised in the 19th verse : " Having, therefore, brethren (these are the 'holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling ')liberty for entrance into the Holics in the blood of Jesus, by a newly-made and living Way which He dedicated for us, though the Vail, that is to say, His flesh : (He sanctified Himself in His own Body for our sakes, the church, that we might share with Him One Life, One Nature): and having a Great Priest over the House of God (this House, which is His Body), let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having been sprinkled (as to the heart) from an evil conscience, &c." This is the only possible ground of our functioning as members of the Body of Christ. The service in the House of God is that by which we must first of all be continually able to come into the Holiest of All, into the very Presence of God. It is there we serve, surely, first in worship and fellowship. The Light and the Bread and the Incense are there. The Vail is gone, for we arc members of it. The Blood speaks in the Presence.

Thus we see our priesthood, the fundamental ordering of the House. The basis of the ordered House is the priesthood of all believers, that is, true believers. You cannot become anything in God's House until you become a priest. You need not worry your heart about any other service, apostleship, the prophetic ministry, pastorhood, teaching, evangelising. You are none of these things, whatever men may call you, unless you arc first a priest in the ministry of the Spirit Who intercedes in the saints. This is to be a saint ; and you must be a saint before you can be anything else.

Our ministry is to come continually into the Presence of God through the Vail, there to worship and to make intercession before God, in the NAME. Not for ourselves do we make

Oh, no! The priest does not intercession. make intercession for himself. It is HE, Who *Liveth* to make intercession for us does that. And the priest in that Great Priest has his own matters settled by the precious Blood. He intercedes for other things. This is what God wants. The basis of all ministry is prayer. The essential character of all spiritual service is intercession. One well knows you cannot preach until you have interceded; you cannot do or be anything in the House of God until you know what intercession is. And this is the burden of the Holy Spirit in these days of much so-called Christian activity which simply gets nowhere, and is not known in heaven. It is to get the children of God to this first, primary, stage of ministry. We are talking about ministry. Why, the beginning of all ministry is "praying in the Holy Ghost," and this is not beyond us as the humblest and weakest of the children of God. The more humble and broken we are, the more we recognise with the deepest gratitude of heart that all the works of our redemption are finished, and that we can add nothing to them; the more we see that the same Mighty Hand of God that took us down into the grave of the Christ has also raised us up into His resurrection Glory, so much the more shall we gladly yield our whole being to the Holy Spirit to make this work of God true in us, and to identify us with the Christ in the heavenlies.

One wishes that this might be made so real to us that in this very hour we should humble ourselves under the Mighty Hand of God, for the world is waiting upon this : God Himself is waiting upon this.

Read again the 8th chapter of Romans upon the character of this Life of Christ in the Spirit and you will see that this Spirit of Intercession is the fundamental guarantee of the Spirit's Presence in the believer. If we have received the Spirit of the Christ of God we begin of necessity to experience the groanings that cannot be uttered in the terms of our flesh, and therefore need the Spirit's power for utterance. If the mute creation groans, are we, the children of God, less sensible of the desires of God than the creation? Arc we who have received the first fruit of the Spirit less sensible to His Eternal Purpose ? 'No, it says, "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Sonship, to wit, the redemption of our body."

But do not interpret this in the narrow, selfish, and exclusive way I have heard some children of God speak of it, as if all it meant was that

we were waiting for a consummation to our own personal experience, an individual translation. No, the redemption of our body is incidental to the manifestation of *the* Body. Our desire is to see our Christ receiving His fulness, tho church, and the glory and the blessing. Our longing is to see the Lamb of God, of Calvary and of the Throne, meeting His full reward. We pray that *He* may see of the travail of His Soul, and be *satisfied*. It is such longings that mark the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Have you received the Iloly Spirit, dear friends? The Holy Spirit, mark. This that we have indicated, is the *truc sign* of the baptism in the Holy Spirit of God in the Christ. A baptism that is not merely a blessing, an experience, something to talk about, to put into the papers as a sensation, to discuss with your Have we received this Holy Spirit, friends. the Spirit Who speaks in the blood of Jesus, the Spirit of travailing? "Unto you it is given in the behalf of the Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Our flesh would like to stay in the beginning of that verse, and proceed no farther. We are prone to stay at Elim where there are many comforts of fountains and palm trees, and forget that the pilgrimage of faith means not only an escape from Egypt but an adventure in the worship of God to the conquest of a Canaan. We take such words as "Let not your heart be troubled; yc believe in God. believe also in Me" and apply them to our personal comfort and consolation (for which, of course, they arc), but forget that they were addressed to the disciples in the face of the great Conflict with the enemy. Oh, the faith of the Son of God, by which we now live, is something far more than a way of escape from personal disclination to face the real issues of life. It is a fighting faith: "Not only to believe—but to suffer.'

It is tho sufferings of the Christ that you and I are called to in the ministry of intercession. The beginning of ministry is this. The Holy Spirit is calling you to this, and that is why the writer here, and the apostle Paul especially in all his epistles, is over entreating the children of God to cease being mere children, babes; to leave the minding of childish things, the toys and playthings of spiritual life, if they may be so called—the discussions of elementary doctrines and testimonies of faith—and to como to the conclusion of the whole matter, the centrality of the Christian experience. Come

to the heart of things. Cease lingering in these stages of immaturity, as infants, perambulated by every changing doctrine. Come into the Holy of Holies. God wants to burn in you with the burnings of His own passion. He wants to fill you with His Holy Spirit.

Now are we prepared to be filled with the Holy Spirit? You can only be filled with the Holy Spirit as you are emptied of yourself. This oil does not come upon flesh.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the baptism of your born-again spirit into the Spirit of the Eternal God in Christ. If you are filled with the Holy Ghost, you will be filled with the love of God, the passion of God, the longings of God, the travail of God; and you will understand something of Calvary wrought out in your own heart. This is what God is after in His church. The Body of Christ means this. It is not an academic doctrinal truth, some thing pushed upon your mental horizon, so that you say, Yes, I believe that. Wonderful vision !! The Lord deliver us from the theoretical. I have seen people who preached this truth failing lamentably in the mere discerning of the Body when they were confronted with the practical demonstration of their own theories. The Body is not only a fact in the heavenlies; it is a fact in the earth. There is that of the Body of the Christ in the world to-day, and our service is in it and for it.

But you cannot manufacture this ministry. It is God-given. And so He says to His disciples, "Receive yc the Holy Spirit." He breathed into them. Do we believe He is still able to breathe into us? Into our spirit? Surely. It is the living God in the Risen Christ Who so comes in His finished work for us, and says, Receive ye My Spirit, the Holy Spirit. And we no longer rejoice only because of a personal salvation, but are sent into the world as He was, out-from God; but to Godward are joined to the Lord, one Spirit. O may He cause us to see the nature of our heavenly calling, the character of this Life, hid with the Christ in God, that it is something wrapped up with the Eternal Purpose and Will of God. For His great Name's sake, Amen.

**T.M.J.** 

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### THE BLOOD

Its atoning virtue lies not in its material substance but in the *life* of which it is the vehicle. Moreover the Blood already shed is distinctly treated as living. When it is sprinkled "upon the altar" it makes atonement in virtue of the "life" which is in it. WESTCOTT,

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP

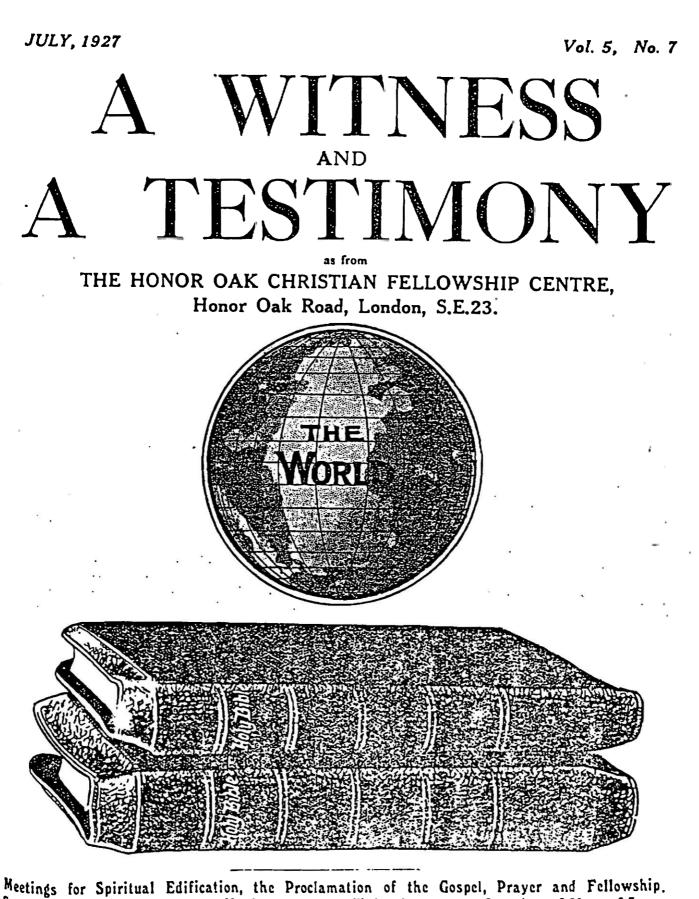
A MAN'S dwelling in one country, and holding citizenship in another and far remote is not an unknown circumstance. In such a case, we may have the singular anomaly of one being most a stranger in the land in which he is present, and most at home in the land from which he is absent. Our blessed Lord was the first perfectly to realise this idea respecting the heavenly country. For He speaks of himself as "He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." So truly a citizen of the other world was He that even while walking with men and talking with men He regarded Himself as there, not here. And this saying of His occurs in that discourse where, with an emphatic "verily, vorily," He declares that "except a man be *born from above* he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Here is the key to the whole mystery. As the only begotten of the Father, Christ's native country was above; and during all the days of His flesh He neither relinquished His heavenly citizenship nor acquired an earthly residence. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for He hath *visited* and redeemed His people," is a significant note in the prophecy of His birth. And four times in the Gospels is our Lord's advent to earth spoken of as a visit. But it was a visit which never for a moment looked toward a permanent abiding. At His birth He was laid in a borrowed manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn; at His burial He was laid in a borrowed tomb, because He owned no foot of earth: and between the cradle and the grave was a sojourn in which "the Son of man had not where to lay His head." The mountain top whither He constantly withdrew to commune with His Father was the nearest to His home. And hence there is a strange pathetic meaning in that saying, "And every man went unto his own house; Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives."

Now, as it was with the Lord, so it is to be with His disciples. "For our cilizenship is in heaven," says the apostle. Herein is the saying of Lady Powerscourt true : " The Christian is not one who looks up from earth to heaven, but one who looks down from heaven to earth." A celestial nativity implies a celestial residence; and with a certain divine condescension may the Christian contemplate the sordid, self-seeking children of this present evil age and say, with his Lord : "Ye are from beneath ; I am from above : ye are of this world ; I am not of this world." Let us be admonished, however, that to say this truly and to live it really may subject us to the experience indicated by the apostle : "Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not." There is a certain quaint beauty in the apology which an old reformer made for the hard treatment which he and his friends received from the men of this world. "Why, brethren," he would say, "they do not understand court manners or the etiquette of heaven, never having been in that country from whence we come; therefore it is that our ways seem strange to them." Would that in the Christians of to-day celestial traits were so conspicuous as to occasion like remark ! Perhaps it is because there are so few high saints in the Church that there are so many low sinners outside the Church, since the ungodly can never be powerfully lifted up except by a Church that reaches down from an exalted spiritual plane.

What means that lofty address of the apostle, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling "? (Hebrew iii. 1). The reference is not merely to our final destiny as those who are to be called up to heaven, but to our present service as those who have come down from heaven; sons of God rejoicing in a celestial birth, bringing the air and manners of glory into a world that knows not God. As such we are exhorted to "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus"; an apostle being one who comes forth from God, and an high priest one who goes in unto God. And Christ Jesus not only fulfils both these offices in Himself, as he says, "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father," but He makes us partakers with Him of the same heavenly calling, sending us into the world, as the Father hath sent Him, and permitting us "to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," as He has entered in by His own blood. A. J. GORDON.

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

### MINISTER'S LETTER

(Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre.) July, 1927.

#### BELOVED OF OUR LORD,

There is no other way of running this arduous race of faith than "looking-away" unto Jesus, with such a vision as we have of Him in the Throne.

But it must be *this* vision,—" Jesus, crowned with the Divine Honour and Glory." Tho heavenly revelation of His absolute Lordship in the Throne of God is the supreme incentive to faith. Such was Paul's constant beholding of Him in the Spirit; and this was Stephen's witness, for which he died, and surely by which he lived through that brief and glorious time of testimony. So whether in the heart, or face to face, this is the heavenly vision, "The Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

Then looking away, or "looking-onward" unto Him. There is not only a direction of the gaze toward Him, but a lifting of the eyes away from near scenes and horizons suggested. Otherwise there must he hesitation, doubt, fear, vacillation. Our only safe way of adventuring this faith-path to the Throne is to maintain our looking-away unto Jesus. Otherwise the spectacle of the seemingly insuperable difficultics of the path to Him will daunt the stoutest heart. Thus it was with Peter's venture upon the heaving sea. There was the initial vision, "If it be Thou, Lord." There was the confidence that it was the Lord Who thus called; hut we read, "when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid." So it always is, when we lose sight of the Lord as the eyes are directed toward the present and near troubles and problems to our faith. JESUS, crowned " is faith's incentive.

This becomes the habit of the believing heart. It is interesting to note that this word "looking" is used only twice in the New Testament, and the other reference is made by Paul with regard to the events of his life in Phillipians ii. 23: "as soon as I shall see how it will go with mc.", He is in prison, of course. His earthly vision is very narrowed, but he maintains vividly his heavenly vision, for it is in this epistle we remember he has that glorious passage about pressing on "toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." His faith's view is God in Christ, and therefore, he sees the things of time, the happenings and circumstances of his life, coming along that path of glory. What a way of looking at life ! Seeing its events in the light of the Throne, andoften seeing them long beforehand, for this is surely the implication : "as soon as I shall see." Coming events thus cast not their shadows, but their glory, before them; for they arc seen coming in the will of God and along the line of His Purpose as we are found "lookingaway" unto Jesus.

This forward look makes the forward step of faith possible. Our vision is not of the present anarchy, confusion, and menace of the earth phase of the situation, but of the Sovereign security of the Divine Will for us, His own.

Beloved, look away, and thus see your lives coming to you as from His Throne.

Yours with such a vision,

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS. T. MADOC JEFFREYS.

## THE FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

#### JULY CONFERENCE

A great time! Yet not so much in the realm of things seen and heard, though here there were many indications of the Divine Favour. It is interesting to note that in gatherings where definite testimonies are being borne to the truths of identification with our Lord in death, burial, and resurrection-life in His heavenly Body, the Church, there is usually a degree of pressure and conflict. It would seem that the devil hates the explicit demonstrations of "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." He does not seem to care a great deal as long as these things are kept in the realm of the theoretical, the mcrely doctrinal or mental vision; but let them come into the positive realm of obedience of faith and become matters of actual and demonstrated testimony, how he rages !

Looking back over this time we are able to see the clear lines of the Lord's leading, and marvel at His wisdom. It is our joy that amid so much that withstands the testimony of our Lord, He is surely bringing His own children through to a clear, not to say a large, place of identification with Himself, and this not only as to that completed Act of God in the Cross, but also in Life-union by the One Spirit; so

that the out-working of the Cross is realised not only in an individual personal life, hut in that life of service in and to the Body of Christ.

One strong word among many others during the Conference was that upon the opening words of the 40th Psalm (Margin R.V.), "In waiting I waited for the Lord." It was seen by this rendering that there is a patience of the Divine Spirit planted in the heart of the child of God whereby "waiting " becomes no longer a passive and wistful resignation to hope deferred, but rather an active co-operation in a knowledge of the mind of God : an assurance of faith that it is the very wisdom of God which necessitates the seeming delay of His promises. This waiting spirit is sure of the event: what it is concerned about is the time of God. The cry, "How long, O Lord, how long?" does not imply a doubt as to the the certain fulfilment of God's purpose, but an inquiry as to His "fulness of time." Thus here is a restraint of faith that will not hurry God, nor agitate the soul, but perseveres in a "waiting" which is itself a constituent of the Divine patience. Such a sense as this is in that age-long cry of the Spirit to the waiting church concerning the tarrying vision of the Epiphany. "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay."

#### THE MINISTRY OF THE GUEST HOUSE

We are praising God that in so many ways He is owning the ministry of what we have called the "Guest House." We cannot think of a better name.

The character of its ministry is becoming more defined, and while this ministry has many aspects, it may perhaps be best condensed and focalised as to description by saying that we think of this "House" as "a house of prayer for all nations." Prayer is its essential ministry, and prayer with a world horizon and purpose.

We are receiving many enquiries and applications as to its accommodation and hospitality, and it may be well to set forth more clearly the limits and character of its service to the Church. Perhaps it would be best to state quite frankly that it is not a "Rest Home" in the usual sense of such designation; that is to say it is not a Christian boarding house.

It is Christian *workers* we desire to serve; those who are or have been engaged in active ervice for the Lord, and who know no discharge in that warfare. For such the House certainly possesses a ministry, with many facilities of situation and equipment, that provide ideal conditions for rest and spiritual recreation.

Already during the brief space of these opening months, many of the Lord's servants from different parts of the world have passed through the Centre, and have gone out with their vision clarified, their faith renewed, and their service for the Lord made definite and enhanced. This then appears to be the nature of the ministry, and the purpose for which the "Guest House" has been provided,—that the children of God shall be brought to recognise the all-inclusive work of the Cross through the Spirit, and the reality of their membership in the Body of Christ; that those who have suffered from isolation, indefiniteness of calling and ministry, incomplete and inadequate knowledge of "The Truth" as it is in Jesus, a lack consequently of corporate fellowship in the Spirit, and an inevitable failure both to discern and therefore to serve the Eternal Purpose of the Christ into which they are called, may through the ministry of the Word and the fellowship in prayer find themselves in Christ even as they find Christ in their hearts, and go forth again into the world as positive factors counting for God, and helping to bring about by the energies of the Holy Spirit the consummation of the age-the coming of the Lord for His completed, perfected Body.

#### HOSPITALITY TO GUEST FUND

While we are obliged as a matter of righteousness to have a rate of expenses for hospitality, we are intensely concerned that none of the Lord's servants should be deprived of this ministry and fellowship through inability to meet such obligations. It may be possible in some cases to meet the expenses, wholly or in part, of those whom we would delight to receive in His Name, but as our own resources arc entirely dependent upon faith we realise it is best to definitely open a "Guest Fund" on this account.

Should any of the Lord's stewards therefore be constrained to co-operate in this ministry, will they kindly direct their gifts, car-marked "Guest Fund," to our brother, Mr. Paterson.

The Lord is opening up avenues of service in several directions. Our young men, five in number, are at present proclaiming the Message of the Cross in and around Newcastle and Durham. The mining villages of this area promise a fruitful field both in the ministry of the

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full evangel, and in teaching those spiritual truths which radiate from the Cross and arc necessary to the building-up of the Body.

The monthly Conferences at Newcastle reach a wide field. There is great interest in, and desire for, the Word all around, and we believe the Lord would have us provide a regular and continuous ministry to meet this need in the near future.

At Lowestoft, our sister, Miss Parnell, has for some years past been arranging "Sand Services" during the month of August. She has now come into close fellowship with us, and realising the need of a living message solicits our active co-operation in this work. Accordingly some of our workers hope to labour at Lowestoft in this connection. Let us pray that the Lord's appointments be clearly made. The "Gilgal" Mission, 48 Annerley Road,

Upper Norwood, hitherto under the direction of our sisters, Miss Bridges and Miss Thompson, has been transferred by them to our care. We have accepted this responsibility as from the Lord.

Will interested friends please note that regular meetings are held at "Gilgal" on Sundays at 3 and 6.30 P.M.; Mondays, 7.30; Wednesdays, 3.15 and 7.30.

### THE HOLIDAY CONFERENCE, AUGUST

As intimated in our last issue we have decided to have a Conference of this character over the Bank Holiday period in August, commencing Friday, July 29th at 7.30 P.M., with a gathering in the nature of a reception. Meetings will then be held daily until Friday, August 5th, at the usual hours; but from the Tuesday onward there will be no afternoon gatherings so as to provide our guests leisure for recreation.

Applications to a considerable number are already in. It will therefore be necessary for our friends to advise us without delay. All particulars of meetings and other directions may be obtained in leaflet from our secretary.

The Theme of the Conference will be 'The Centrality and Universality of the Cross.'

### PERSONAL

It was a considerable encouragement recently to find that the Lord had been leading our brother, Mr. Oliphaut, of Wimbledon, quite independently from ourselves, to a recognition of the unity and corporate character of the church of Christ, and to an obedience of testimony to the truth of IDENTIFICATION with Christ in all its scriptural range. We under-

stand he has now decided that he must be free in the ministry of the Spirit to serve the whole Body of Christ. We rejoice in his liberty and pray God to preserve and empower him in this " Testimony of Jesus."

Those who may have heard of a recent indisposition of our brother, Mr. Sparks, will join with us in praise to God for his restoration to strength and to ministry. Romans viii. 10 and 11 stands!

Several gifts to the treasury of this testimony have recently been received anonymously. We would say "thank you " in the Lord's Name to the senders, and trust that they may sec this grateful acknowledgement.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE following sums, apart from local gifts, have been received up to July 18th towards the maintenance of this paper : Jerusalem 5s.; San-down, 1s. 11d.; Norwood, 5s.; Hook (Basingstoke), 10s.; Henham, 5s.; Monkstown (Ireland), 5s.; Muswell Hill, 91d.; Anon., 2s.; Bermondsey, 3s.; Upper Norwood, 5s; Maida Vale, 2s. 6d.; Streatham, 2s. 6d. and 2s. 9d.; Southsea, 7s.  $7\frac{1}{2}d$ .; Leigh-on-Sea, 10s.; New York, £1; Edinburgh, 5s.; Northampton, 5s.; Blackpool, 6d.; Wimbledon, 2s. 6d.—Total £5 1s. Id.

We gratefully acknowledge also the receipt through the post of the following anonymous gifts towards the maintenance of the Lord's work here : £28 10s.; £2.

#### BOOKLETS

#### WITNESS AND TESTIMONY.

THE following are now available :---

By T. Macdoc Jeffreys-

'The Divine Unities.' Price 3d.

By T. Austin-Sparks-

<sup>•</sup> Incorporation	into	Christ,'				
	,,		No.	2.	Price	2d.

No. 3. Price 2d. The Inner Man of the Heart.' Price 4d.

Vision and Vocation.' Prico 3d.

'The Prisoner of the Lord.' Price 3d.

# THINGS THAT DIFFER

### II.

Or the things that differ we now proceed to say a little on the subject of salvation. Far be it from us to even seem to make the way of salvation dillicult or complicated, but we feel that there are many very strong demands for an emphasis upon the tremendous nature of a conversion. This matter has been made

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all too simple and easy with disastrous conscquences in after life.

While it is true that in many notable cases the final touch by which the new birth has taken place has been very gentle and undemonstrative, this does not by any means weaken the case or take from the terrific nature of the entire new birth. Precautions must be taken against such contingencies as are commonly met with amongst those who have professed faith in the Lord Jesus.

For instance, there are many who come to a time when the whole question as to whether they are really born again children of God arises and they are tossed about in uncertainty, darkness and helpless impotence. Then there are many who after a time of seeming reality drop back into the old life and are carried away into greater excesses of sin and worldliness than ever. Further, the Master spoke of many who in that day will say "Lord, in Thy Name we have prophesied and done many mighty works " and that He would answer "Ye stand in no relationship to Me."

Now while in the two first instances there may have been a real transaction with God at some time and in their case doubts have arisen under extreme pressure from the Enemy, and in the other instance a pure case of backsliding, experience goes to prove that in all too many cases the origin of this "Christian Life" (?) was doubtful or inadequate.

In view of the tremendous sifting which must take place and of the words, "If the righteous scarcely be saved where will the sinner and the ungodly appear" it behoves us to be very clear and certain as to the nature of salvation.

It is a tremendous thing to be born out of God. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is set throughout the scriptures as an example of a new birth. The divine attestation to His Sonship is always reserved for His resurrection, both in type, prediction, and fact. The Bible is written from Genesis to Revelation in the terms of the resurrection of Christ. When the Father says "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee" it refers and relates to His resurrection by which He was the first begotten from among the dead.

Now the Apostle says, "The exceeding greatness of His power to us ward who believe according to the energy of His might which He "nergised in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." This energy of the might of God in resurrection is "to us ward who believe" and represents the nature and requirement of a birth from the dead of such as arc dead in trespasses and sins. The inwrought faith of God Himself is the only adequate faith and the essential principle of resurrection. Apply this to the scriptures and you will find it is true. When we believe we turn with willingness and sincerity toward the Lord and come to Him, thus opening our hearts that His Spirit may give unto us the extra essential requisite, even saving faith.

So often there has been quoted to the unconverted as a simple basis of salvation the familiar words "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," but we must remember that faith in the heart which is justifying faith follows upon a previous work of the Holy Spirit in the deep conviction of sin, and such faith is by the Holy Spirit's energising. In ourselves we have no saving faith—our life in Christ from start to finish is " by the faith of the Son of God."

Then also we must remember that "no man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Spirit." This carries with it the law that, not by any mere mental assent to certain proposed truths about the person and work of the Lord Jesus, not by any mere mental apprehension of the terms of the Gospel can man be saved, but by nothing less than the mighty work of the Holy Ghost upon and within them.

We have not sufficiently measured the force of spiritual death, the authority of Satan, the awful nature of sin, and the real change in the nature and level of man's life through the Fall. To apprehend by revelation but a little of all this would enable us to see that souls are not as easily born and cheaply won as we have been prone to think. Sooner or later in our relationship to Christ we shall be forced experimentally to recognise the infinite measure of the resurrection of Christ wrought—not only for—but in every true child of God.

The Lord make us very sure for ourselves, and to make very sure in the case of every one with whose salvation we have anything to do. T. A.-S.

#### THE BLOOD

WHILE the thought of Christ's Blood (as shed) includes all that is involved in Christ's death; the death of Christ, on the other hand, expresses only a part, the initial part, of the whole conception of Christ's Blood. The Blood always includes the thought of the life preserved and active beyond death.—WESTCOTT.

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"The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid."—Psalm xxvii. 1.

#### Notes of an address given on Sunday morning, January 23rd, 1927.

SPEAKING of Jesus in His absence of selfsufficiency, there was always in His life an uprising of Divine strength as He depended upon it; and we are to walk in no other fashion than He walked. He could not vindicate Himself, for He had no power as from Himself. That was the taunt of His enemies; and through their lips the Avenger spoke—" He saved others, 'Himself He cannot save." His, verily, was a life of faith, and these words could be found on His lips—" The Lord is the strength of My life."

Perhaps for the realisation of this law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus it is necessary to say that the inner man is not formed until you are born again. The natural man is one man, and has no inner man as distinguished from himself. He is the "psychical" man, the man of soul; but the man born from above is two men, so to speak, and you find the duality coming out in Romans vii. Remember Romans vii. comes after Romans vi. In Romans vii. he finds he is a duality; he finds there is an outer man and an inner man. And here starts the real trouble, and a ploughing through a very difficult period of spiritual experience. But it is only the spiritual man who has this experience. The natural man has it not; and very often the natural man who touches these spiritual things, and is found among the Church of the Lord Jesus says-I do not understand, I never have the experiences you have. No, for this two-foldness belongs to the spiritual man.

We are saved out of faith unto faith. It is a big thing when you step out in faith; but the thing is to *walk* by faith. Peter, the natural man, got out of the ship (He did get out of the ship. You must give Peter the credit for that.) He took the first step of faith, depending there and then not upon natural resources, not upon the foundation he could feel beneath his feet; and he began to walk upon the sea to Jesus. But he had not learned that he had to walk by faith all the way there. For the first step is only one of many steps, as Abraham discovered. It was one thing for Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldees, but quite another thing to reach Canaan. You know how he stood still at Haran. He did not move until the "old man" was buried. And when he reached Canaan he had to walk up and down the Land of Promise with a little lapse here and there, such as a going down to Egypt, and failure here and there.

But even in these failures, by grace, through faith ho was strengthened; that is to say he was strengthened inwardly by his faith. It is not the first step, but it is the sequence of steps. Walking after all is a series of falls and recoveries. It is a stumble, and then an arrest of the stumbling-one learns to put out the other step of faith. We are only children, after all, in this walk of faith. We know very little. We have left the boat; we have stepped out of the natural. We have accepted the Cross as far as we see its meaning, and we are saved; but now we are to walk by faith, and not by sight. One's stride of faith is not yet beautiful! If we could see ourselves as the Lord sees us we are stumbling along this road of faith. The two creations, the New and the old are jostling together, and you know something of both. You know the old creation by natural birth, natural intelligence and natural experience. You know the New Creation by faith. You had a glorious time when you were born from above; but you are learning many lessons since—you have stopped at many a place for a while, and there have been many holdings and lapses.

"The Lord is the strength of my life." The Lord is my life, that is true. But we want to feel Him all the while. Just as we can feel natural life, so we want to feel the Lord's But the Word says the Lord is the life. strength of my life, the inward resource of my life; and it is only as I acknowledge Him, that He is there in my experience. I have to rely upon Him, depend upon Him, affirm Him; and as I affirm Him He is there. That is the law of faith. The confession of faith is in the Living God. We believe in our heart that God has raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. We believe it as an inward experience, not only as an historical fact.

He was raised up on high that He might fill the heavens, and His resurrection is the breaking forth of God in our humanity. If you are born from above it means that the Spirit of that living reigning Christ is within you; and therefore His resurrection power is within you, and you are raised together with Himi. His life is your life now and you are to depend upon Him, and to find Him within, not confined and limited, but ever rising in a continual

ascension of life and power and testimony. The Lord is the strength of my life! It is infinite. It is more than spacious. It is universal. It is a tremendous thing to have within you, the Living God—your spirit joined to the Lord, one Spirit, so that there can arise within you all sufficiency, all grace. But you may have no feeling! It is by faith you find this out. The Lord is the strength of my life. The Lord has to teach us that we live by *His* faith. We do not live by His feeling. All the natural exuberance is dried up, &c., Live by faith. God is within. God is faithful, though we fail because of unbelief. He abideth faithful.

God makes you to see in this fashion also the corruption of the old man; that it had to die. It became to us as the corruption of Lazarus; but by the voice of the Son of God, there arises a pure life that can sit in communion in the banquet that is given to the honour of Jesus. And he who thus sits is he that stank! When we come to see that we have no goodness, no power of discipleship, nothing at all and then affirm by naked faith that the mighty Eternal God lives within us, we have discovered the secret of triumph. You find the Apostle Paul continually referring to this. How did he go to Corinth and elsewhere? It was not that the great Evangelist was going to take a successfully advertised mission--- '' I was with you in fear and trembling and weakness-a sense of utter inability," bearing about in the body the deadness of the Lord Jesus. Do you know anything about that deadness, no life going out to ministry, nothing to say, no power? You are going to a service, and you feel you want to run away; nothing in you; you cannot even say at that moment that you have much Christian experience. You do not know how you are going to carry on. But you can say "The Lord is the strength of my life!" You will find that will be enough, and more than enough.

Now as we have emerged in this testimony to a place where there is much pressure, where the enemy breaks in upon us with new weights of his accusations of the helplessness and impotence and impossibility of our flesh, you and I have to learn the secret of this simple word— "The Lord is the strength of my life." And it is thus, you see He will get all the glory, and Perhaps this explains what happens to many of us in these days. For it must be, "Not I, but Christ." Then listen to the Apostle's prayer: "He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit into the inner man" (Eph. iii, 16).

.... In this new life you are related to Godyou are joined to the Lord in one spirit. You have Eternal Life but in His Son. You are His servant; you are to depend upon Him; and you are to walk by faith and not by sight. You do not lose your individuality. It is not that one is absorbed into something which makes you impersonal. But the Lord is going to teach you that you have to walk by faith, and there is only Life in you, as you abide in Him. You are a branch of the vine, and all your resources are in Him. He must teach you that. He is now the fountain of your life. Thus though our outward man perish, our inward man is strengthened. Christ has His settled residence in your heart by faith. When you find yourself cast back upon Him in dependence, with no room for self-assertion; no opportunity for the lifting up of your own head, the exaltation of your own ability; your own flesh no longer glorying in His presence; all this gone, and you weak and helpless, discover deep down within you, that God Himself is the strength of your Life; and as you affirm it you find it true.... Salvation is not merely a pigeon-holed dogma. Salvation is of God. Salvation is God Himself as He gives Life by His renewing.

Shall we place our whole weight upon Him as He lives within. Lean hard upon Him. You will find that He is always there. Underneath are the everlasting arms. He is bearing you up and He is there all the while. Turn to Him as the indwelling Life, the Spring of the inward man that is renewed day by day. Let the outward man perish: for when it has come to this state it is a sign of grace.

"Spring Thou up within my heart, rise to all Éternity."

For unto the end "the just shall live out of His faith ": faith unto faith.

T. M. J.

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#### NOTA BENE

THERE have been those, who, having received some special gift or energy, have in self-will denied the gift its true development, and substituting their own hasty purpose for that of Him Who called them, have sought to use the Spirit to their private ends, thus injuring themselves and the work of God unspeakably.—Adapted.

## THE PRISONER OF THE LORD

" The Prisoner of the Lord."-Ephesians iv. 1.

"Thanks be unto God Who leads me on from place to place in the train of His triumph to celebrate His Victory over tho Enemics of Christ."—II Corinthians xi. 14 (Conybearc).

"We had the sentence of death within ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves."— II Corinthians i. 9.

It is a matter of vital importance that in our relation to the Lord Jesus for the outworking of God's eternal purpose we should have a right conception of our elves. Among the many designations by which the Apostle Paul expresses his conception of himself, that of the "Prisoner of the Lord" is by no means the least significant. This designation had in his experience various aspects. There was that which related to the literal imprisonment at Rome, true, but there were others which we shall consider. But even this captivity in Rome was not regarded by him as a captivity to jail or jailor, to Rome, Casar or circum-stances, but the "Prisoner of Christ." In other words he was a captive by a foreseen and fore-ordained purpose of God and all was according to the divine schedule. There was a sense in which such imprisonment meant liberty. His body may have been in chains and under close guard but his spirit was "in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" and he was traversing the limitless realms of divine truth and revelation. To those who live in the Spirit there are no limits to spiritual influence and effectiveness. The prisoners of the Lord have realised this in all ages. It is not upon this aspect, however, that we desire to dwell, but upon others.

The spiritual experience of the Apostle had become the ground of the great revelation that the prisoner of Jesus Christ is such because he is not in the slightest degree free to draw upon his own resources. The vital discrimination between the inner man or spirit as indwelt and controlled by the Holy Spirit and the outer man with his reasonings, feelings, and willings is very apparent throughout the New Testament, and it is this inner man, enslaved to the Lord Jesus, who has to bring all the rest into that captivity.

In our last issue we sought to show how this is fundamentally true in the matter of our life. But in this respect the Apostle himself would Paul is a sign to us in this matter, for of all i have, with equal emphasis, pointed out that the

men he knew best that he was entirely and utterly dependent upon the life not his own, even his physical body was dependent upon the inner quickening of the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead. He had no life of his own for the work of God. The sentence of death was in him, the lord of death was ever against him, death beset his course seeking to get its advantage at every point, and, but for this energising within by the Risen Lord, the great purposes of God could never have been accomplished. It was not the Lord's will that it should be otherwise and in fact we might truly say that the Lord would have it thus, and Paul himself realised that it was for the safety of the revelation that his own life should be staked through and pinned down. Thus it would be impossible for him to move in any self-directed way and act as out from himself without immediately coming up against the fact that he had no life from above for such a course, and therefore it would prove fatal to seek so to essay. Thus he was a prisoner of the Lord because of his utter dependence upon the Lord's life for all service. The principle is an abiding one for all who are " called according to His purpose." If there should be the full recognition of the principle and obedience to this law then the working out of it in physical weakness and suffering might be modulated accordingly, but who is there who with large resources of personal energy will not draw upon them and count upon them and make them in themselves almost unconsciously a factor of strength. This was Paul's dangerous tendency at the outset and as it might be so with the majority of those whom the Lord would greatly use they have to be brought to the place where by reason of their own weakness and utter insufficiency they draw every breath by the Holy Spirit and come to realise that the Risen Lord, as within them, must live their life for them. It is thus that the Master secures for Himself the greatest percentage of real spiritual life and work and protects His own interests against the judged and condemned flesh seeking to glory in His presence.

We are only allowed to undertake that in which the Lord gives the witness of life and this must remain the basic principle in all purely spiritual service. What is true in this direction is true in all others. Much has been said about the wonderful intellect of the Apostle, just as it has concerning his energy-But in this respect the Apostle himself would have, with equal emphasis, pointed out that the

spring of everything was the spirit of wisdom and revelation as a specific endowment in Christ. He of all men would have most strongly discriminated between reason and revelation, between the judgment, acumen, and intellectual resources of man and that wisdom and discernment by revelation from heaven. In fact he did deliberately say on one occasion that he did not think himself sufficient to gain wisdom by his own reasonings as if it came from himself (II Corinthians iii. 5).

Then again, has he not in one classic declaration shown that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them-they are foolishness unto him." For all spiritual service spiritual revelation is essential and indispensable—our speaking, our plans, our methods, our times must be by revelation. So many there are who have schemes and enterprises, visions and undertakings for the Lord, but who are falling far short of real spiritual effectiveness.

A mentally conceived purpose and desire for God is not adequate even though it be an assent to a programme as contained in the Word of God. What is in the written Word by revelation of the Holy Spirit must also be in the spirit of each servant of God in the same way. We shall be held to this if we really are abandoned to the Lord and walking not after the flesheven in Christian service—but after the Spirit.

On tho one hand we may essay to go here and there in the general conception that the Lord wishes work to be done in such places, but to our surprise and temporary bewilderment we may find that the Spirit suffers us not. On the other hand we may find that while everything according to our judgment and the arguments of Christian men would dictate a certain course of restraint, we have to go "bound in spirit" in the face of all.

Then again it is not sufficient to have received revelation, but for the transmitting of such a special enablement of utterance is necessary. Few men have received greater and fuller revelation than the Apostle Paul, but how he besought the saints that they would pray that he might have utterance! All this emphasises the principle of our complete imprisonment to the Lord Jesus so that every word, every step, every undertaking shall be as out from Himself and not of ourselves. To change the metaphor <sup>for</sup> the service of God to be consumed unto the Lord requires that the sacrifice shall be " bound with cords to the horns of the altar." But if

restriction and imprisonment, those horns speak of strength and might.

Now in the second passage quoted above the Apostle suggests or declares other aspects of this imprisonment (II Corinthians ii. 14). He draws for us a picture of the victorious return of a Roman general from campaign. As he approaches the gates of the imperial city his distinguished prisoners are fastened with chains to his chariot. The whole populace has turned out to greet him and applaud his prowess. He sweeps through the gates and then at a given point the procession halts. He makes a speech telling of his conquests and then with a wave of his hand toward the prisoners would make them the evidence of his triumph. In effect he would say "These prisoners speak for themselves of the truth of what I say." Then the procession would move forward and the same thing would happen again and yet again. It is these prisoners who are on show for his glory and used to celebrate his triumph. Paul takes up this historical background and uses it to illustrate his own relationship to the Lord Jesus. We see this in a twofold aspect. Firstly the subjective. As Paul was led by the Lord from place to place he in himself was the evidence of what Calvary and its triumph means within a man. Many would remember Saul of Tarsus, his pride, his vehemence, his forcefulness, his intolerant and bitter opposition to the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, how that he would stand at nothing; even to the hurling of women as well as men into prison, and fully consenting to the murder of the young man Stephen. And here is this man, the same, yet another, suffering for the "Way" that he persecuted, no longer bigoted, proud, bitter. He who once would brook no interference with his schemes now shows infinite patience with those who oppose themselves. He who once in wrath would breathe out threatenings and slaughters against those whom he had made his enemies, now, when even carnal believers criticise, malign, misrepresent, as at Corinth, would write to them one of the most glorious pieces of spiritual literature ever penned, namely, I Corinthians 13, showing how love when it gains the ascendent, even the love of God in Christ, suffers long, is kind, envieth not, is not pulled up, behaveth not itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, keeps no record of evil, and never gives up. Surely this change would speak for itself and this man's testimony would ever be as in his life a celebration of Calvary's victory. those cords speak of limitation and curtailment, | He was on show to the glory of Christ and being

led from place to place thus to celebrate His victory.

But there was another vital aspect, namely, the objective. Paul realised that the great adversary of Christ was holding sway in the world. He had his hands upon man, was having things his own way, was throwing a world darkness around the mind of man as a precaution against the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus shining. in unto them. And yet Calvary was victory, and the Prince of this World was cast out, and principalities and powers were stripped off, but how was this to be wrought out for the deliverance of man? So the Apostle conceived of himself as being led in the triumphal train of his Lord to meet the enemy back of the situation in all those places of the divine appointment and there to have the celebration of Calvary's triumph in the form of a small company who would maintain in their place the testimony of Jesus, even the testimony of His mighty Calvary conquest. So the Lord would lead Paul first to one place, and there the enemy recognising the significance of his presence would stir up all his resources against him and it might seem that the first encounter ended disastrously, as at Phillipi, or Lystra, or Ephesus, &c., but there was no element of disaster in the spirit of the Apostle and he firmly held on for the celebration to be complete. We know the issue, bow that in a phenomenal way in a few short years the testimony of Jesus was triumphantly established in a multitude of places each of which was itself strategic.

What a conception of our relationship to the Lord ! All our own programmes scrapped, our own schemes set aside, our own resources ended, dependent to the last degree even to a word upon the Lord as our life, chained to Him as prisoners, having no freedom to think, speak or act for or of ourselves, and then led by Him from place to place, and in each place almost immediately encountering a deluge of Satanic opposition, the terrific efforts of the enemy to make it impossible for us to stay there, and yet, held in spirit, ready to die for the testimony of Jesus, at length that testimony represented perhaps in a small company—a nucleus—His triumph celebrated, His victory declared. So dotted here and there as marking the stages of a triumphal march there is that witness to the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father and each of these a testimony, and a prophecy of His possession of all the earth. T. A.-S.

## THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST

"And He is the Head of the Body, the Church'; Who is the Beginning, the First-born from among the dead; that in all things He might become pre-eminent."—Colossians i. 18. (Newberry.)

"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, unto a dispensation of the fulness of times, that He might gather together in one (these last four words are best translated as "HEAD-UP") all things in Christ, both which are in the heavens, and which are on earth, even in Him."—Ephesians i. 9 and 10.

THE Hebrew epistle takes the forward and the backward aspects of the eternal unchanging Christ. Looking forward first, as is the manner of its vision, it states, "Whom He made Heir of all things"; and then looking backward it explains, "Through Whom also He made the universe."—Hebrews i. 2.

God, as the eternal and only-begotten Son, is the Creator. He is before all things, and in Him all things subsist. But He has become Son of MAN as Jesus, and having first of all through Himself put away sin, and also made purification for *our* sins, He has ascended into the Throne of God as Heir, First-born of the New Creation. Thus the paradox of the Creator becoming Heir is explained.

He now sits in the Throne of God expecting. The work of redemption and reconciliation has been completely effected. The Blood of the Lamb in the midst of the Throne is the seal of the Eternal Covenant in God as concerning the New Creation in all its ranges; but the process of consummation is still in time, and bound-up with the full realisation and perfection of the Church, which is the Body of Christ. There is a Headship of Christ over the entireuniverse to be realised, and this is described in the passage from Ephesians as a "heading-up," or a gathering under One Head. This is the eternal Purpose of the Divine Being, or Godhead. But it waits upon a consummation, or fulfilment. There is to be a dispensing of this glorious Sovereignty or Headship in the fulness of times. Meanwhile we see not yet all things subjected unto Him. There is for the Christ a Headship of the universe, the all things : but not yet. Why does it wait? What is the object of the Divine Husbandman's long

patience? The answer is, the Church, which is the Body of the Christ. This must first of all be presented to the Son of God ere He can enter into His Heirship or Headship of the universe; for it is the instrument of His future dominion; and from its very nature an eternal testimony to His grace. This is the precious fruit of the earth out of every nation that the Father is waiting for that He may give it to the Son. This also is that for which the Son is waiting that He might give to it His own Eternal Life. We ever need to remember that the "eternal life" is the Life of the Son of God become Son of Man; and therefore it is only the life of the believer as he shares it in the fellowship of the Son. No man has this life as in himself. It is "he that hath the Son hath life." Which is all to say, that this life is in a Body, shared as from a Head.

But this brings us to the fact of Christ's Headship of the Body, an all-important truth for the believer in these days of the near coming of the Lord, that none of us be ashamed from before Him at His appearing.

For while the Headship of Christ over the entire universe, not to speak of His footstool, this earth, is not realised nor realisable as yet, His Headship over and in the Body is "the present truth."

And so we have it declared, "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church." While in the Ephesian epistle it states that God, the Father of glory, "gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body."

Thus God has not only given His only-begotten Son that He might be made a sacrifice for the world's sin (John iii. 16), but He has also given Him, and He has sanctified *i.e.*, dedicated Himself, that He may be the Life of His Body, the Church, as its Head. So we read such passages, "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be truly sanctified, &c." We have for this ago a King-Priest over the House of God, Who ever lives to rule in intercession for us and over us. This and much more is contained in the fact of Christ's Headship of His Church.

It will be noted that in each place where it is explicitly declared that our Lord is Head of the Church the statement is related to His universal Lordship and Dominion.

In the Ephesian epistle it is the superlative position He occupies as in the power of His Resurrection that is being emphasized, for this is the measure of the exceeding greatness of

the power of God toward us, as believers in the Resurrected Christ that we might sit enthroned together with Him, " according to the energy of the strength of His might, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from among the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above every principality and authority, and might, and lordship, and every name that is named; not only in this age, but also in that which is to come ; and put all things under His feet"; and it is this Supreme One, be it noted, that God gave, "to be Head of the Church, which is His Body"; and this Body (ideally, now, and actually when it is perfected) is also "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all "; that is, the Church is the fulness of Christ, as Christ is the fulness of God. But this is involved in the Headship.

Perhaps the simplest and most direct meaning of the term "Head" is that which suggests sovereignty or lordship, authority over. This is the simple sense of the word in I Corinthians xi. 3, "I would have you know, that the *head* of every man is Christ; and the *head* of the woman is the man; and the *head* of Christ is God." Here the word suggests sovereignty or headship in the Spirit. But the word must be measured by its context, and it is obvious from the passages in which it is used that it possesses an unique fulness of meaning, where Christ and His Body is concerned, that can only be discerned by revelation.

Usually the thought is coupled with covering. This is so in the passage already quoted. The relationships indicated are those that provide covering. In this sense the woman must be covered, as also the man, as also the Christ. There is a Divine order of acknowledged relationship that protects. So God was ever held as the Head by Christ in the obedience of faith. He met the Satanic atmosphere not in the naked thrust of His own self assertion, pure as that self was, but under the covering of a voluntary submission to God the Father. And He learned this obedience unto a consummation, viz., the Cross, through the things that This was voluntary on His He suffered. part, for in His pre-incarnate God-form He was equal with God, as a constituent Person in the Divine Being. Thus also must each believer hold fast the Headship of Christ for this is his covering, and while in Christ there is neither male nor female, nevertheless here on earth are those psychic relationships, determined by sex as long as we are in these bodies of humiliation, and there must be a due observance of these

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relationships, as set in the Body of Christ, if the head is to be protected from the fallen angelic hosts. This vexed question of relationship as between the sexes would easily he solved if believers, instead of discussing it from the standpoint of earth relationships, would accept the wisdom of the word of God, and be consistent also with their professed belief in its inspiration, and recognise that Paul is speaking of relationships in the Body of Chirst, and of the danger of our emergence into that conflict in the heavenlies (Ephesians vi. 12) which should be the direction and impact of the Church's spiritual ministry in this age, unless we are covered. This, of course, not only applies to the relationship of man and woman in Christ, but also to that of every member of the Body. The Lord is our Head or Covering in this direction, and submission to the law of relationships as ordered by Him is imperative and vital if unity in the Body is to be attained and preserved. In this submission to one another in the fear of God He has left us an example that we should follow His steps.

In the Colossian passage at the head of this article, Christ is declared to be the Head of the Body as the visible image of the invisible God, the First-born of all Creation, and there follows the marvellous logic of what such ascriptions must include. He is at once the Lord and Sustainer of the Universe in its known and unknown dimensions. Surely here the Name of El-Shaddai is included in the Name of Jesus. But it should be recognised that the Creation spoken of here has in view the New Creation, for the Creator Himself has become through His "out-resurrection" or "resurrection from among the dead," the First Born of this New Creation.

It is *He* therefore with all this wealth of title who is already and actually *Head* of the Body, the Church. He is the Beginning of the New Creation; in Him it subsists, and it is as the all inclusive Sustainer of its life that He is the Head of the Body, that He in it as in the universe to come, might be Pre-eminent.

Here the thought of Headship includes derivation. origin, begetting. He is First-born in order to beget. It is He Who gives eternal life (John xvii. 2). Here, as One with the Father, but now as Son of Man. He quickeneth (maketh alive) whom He will (John v. 21). The church of the first-born ones (Hebrew xii. 23) have their inheritance of Life in the Firstborn One. They are not separate from Him. If they have eternal life, they have it as sharing

it with the Only-Begotten from eternity, Who now has become First-born from among tho dead for their sakes. We could multiply texts to shew the Headship of Christ as the Source and Sustainer of this eternal life. As He lived by the Father, even so we live by Him, but this is One Life of which He remains the Fountain Head.

It follows that if Christ be Head over all things to the Church in this all-inclusive sense, to *hold-fast* the Head (Colossians ii. 19) means far more than the single personal relationship that each believer should maintain with Him.

"If we have eternal life, and this life is in His (God's) Son," it must soon dawn upon us that others also share this life, and that therefore an unique Divine Family in the One Spirit is discerned and desired. We cannot discern the Body without immediately desiring and cherishing the fellowship of that Body, for it is a fellowship of the Christ in the Oneness of His Life in all its members.

Have we come to Christ as the Fountain-Head of Eternal Life ? We discover the " from Whom " almost immediately: " from Whom all the Body, through joints and uniting bands, being supplied and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." But here is an organic, a functional, Life of God. Christ as Head is not only the Lord of the Body's intelligent motive or direction of Life, but He remains its Life as uniting every member to every other member in a Oneness of Life. So the apostle cries, "When Christ Who is our Life shall be manifested, then shall we also be manifested with Him in glory." But not as individuals! As a Body! "Beloved, now are we the children of God." We have this witness of the Spirit with our born-again spirit. But it is not yet manifested what we shall be. Why not? Because it is as that wonderful Body of Christ we shall be corporately manifested together with Him. It will be as that finished, perfected, temple of God which He is building-together as unto Himself, a habitation of God. It is as that church of glory which He will present to Himself as Bride, the Divine Love's counterpart and help-meet, not having spot. or wrinkle, or any such thing. It is the corporate Church of the living God, the mystery of all generations ! "The Fulness of Him who tills all things everywhere with Himself !"

The Body therefore is revealed as His Fulness, complementary and essential to Him as the organ of His Expression. Without it He docs not choose to function; and since this is the counsel of

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(lod's Eternal Purpose, outside of it as in this Purpose. He *cannot* function, for He has so limited Himself to a form of energy as revealed in the Resurrection of the Christ.

The Body consequently is revealed as essential to the purposes of God. It is the crowning conception of this dispensational triumph. The building-up and completion of the Body is the first great realisation of Calvary's victory over sin and Satan upon which God has set His will. This is the Mind of the Spirit. The Body is the first-fruits of that New Creation ushered in by the Resurrection of Jesus as the Christ of God, and must be presented before the Father in a joint heirship with Jesus Christ as Head before those millenial harvests can be gathered in.

How vital then is a revelation of what the Headship of Christ as over and unto the Body involves. Out of such a revelation all prayer and spiritual ministry must issue. Without it we are beating the air. For God's Purpose is revealed not as saving a multitude of souls, but the gathering of such as are saved into a definite corporate Life, in which and unto the full and perfected expression of which, they must minister.

Yet the tragedy is that such a number of believers seems to have no conception whatever of the Purpose for which they are saved, and so they absolutely fail to serve God as ministers in and to the Body of Christ. Salvation is considered only from the standpoint of the individual, personal problem. Of course, it commences there. The foundations of repentance-faith toward God, and all that are involved in these by way of personal holiness are implicitly included in what we say. But unto what are we saved ? What is God's Purpose in His Son ? These are the matters that should concern the saints, and not an eternal repetition and re-iteration of the elementary foundations of our so great salvation.

Yet this is the sad state of things at the very end of the Dispensation when the coming of the Lord is a favourite topic for platform utterance, that even the "Coming" is viewed from the individual standpoint rather than the corporate experience it must involve !

Some of us have seen what one has called these "wanderings of God's Israel." Thirty and forty years ago the Holy Spirit seemed to be quickening the whole church of God throughout the world unto this end. The great truths of the Cross were unveiled, the Spirit was manifest in a dawning conception of the Body, and it looked as if the children of God would move forward to greet the coming of the Lord in a sense and experience of corporate fellowship. But alas, so often the amazing fact is discovered that the highest expression of spiritual activity as represented in conferences and conventions is to recover that lost ground in measure, and personal salvation, from justification to santification of the individual believer are the greatest things presented, and this to "mature" Christians!

Let it not be thought we minimise the essentiality of these foundational truths, but the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and this is not an individual matter, but a corporate experience. It includes the whole Body. And the Spirit of God would have us know unto what we are called, and what is our ministry as saints.

Holding-fast the Head then includes a realisation of what His Headship involves. It is not only our covering, but the Fountain-Head of supply for all life and ministry for the Body's sake. *He* lives for the Body, and if we are truly holding Him in a spiritual fellowship, He will use us in a Body ministry.

As is often emphasized in these columns that ministry commences in Holy Ghost praying (Romans viii. 26-27). He maketh intercession in and with the saints according to the Divine Purpose. It is out of this travail wrought by the Spirit in the matured believers' heart that those gracious ministries of knitting-together and fitly framing our fellowship in the Spirit proceed, uniting bands are thus formed, and joints of supply are brought about in the unity of the Spirit. Thus ministries of utterance become safe as they are realised to be not individual ministries but expressions of a corporate Life upon which the individual ministry is dependent and the increase of God becomes manifest.

(To be continued).

T. M. J.

### MEETINGS FOR SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION, THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL, PRAYER AND FELLOWSHIP

SunJnys: 11 a m., 3 p.m. & 6.30 p.m. Mondays: 7.30 p m. Wednesdays: 8 p.m. Saturdays: 3.30 p.m. & 7 p m.

Conferences are held every week-end (Saturday and Sunday), and also a longer week-end at the beginning of each month, this fixed by the first Sunday. (Friday to Monday evenings, inclusive.)

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## "BRING US NOT OVER JORDAN."—Numbers 32-5

THAT is the request of two-and-a-half tribes, the tribes of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. It takes you right to the heart of this extraordinary phase of Israel's history. It is quite impossible to study the whole subject of God's plan for Israel without seeing beyond a shadow of a doubt that God's purpose for Israel was that they should as a whole, in entirety go over Jordan and possess the land. That was His covenant with Araham, confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. The whole programme of God for Israel lay inside of Canaan, over Jordan. We have already seen in our previous studies in the Book of Joshua and the letter to the Ephesians the spiritual significance of this history. Canaan, bounded by Jordan, clearly represents the life of fulness in Christ, and Jordan represents the Cross of Christ, as it invariably through the Bible marks that clear, distinct division between the old life, where self, the flesh, the world are still uncrucified, characterised by defeat; and the new life, where God Himself is supreme in the midst of His people, characterising their life by victory and enrichment. Now, that being the historical event with its spiritual interpretation, we come up against this-that the two and a half tribes decided not to go over Jordan into Canaan. "Bring us not over Jordan" is their request to Moses and the other leaders of the people. In effect they were saying, "We don't want absolute separation unto God. We don't want all that is involved in this aggressive programme. We are not prepared to risk all that is implied by going over into the land and subdue it for God. We are not prepared for that programme, that aggressive life, that life which you call fulness of life. We have found a certain satisfaction this side of Jordan, wc have found here a good deal that is good, a great deal that satisfies us. We are quite content with the life we have this side of Jordan, without driving this distinct barrier of the Cross between. There are risks involved, possessions, children, &c." So they would live their lives there and not risk the dangers and the sacrifice which seemed clearly to he involved in this aggressive programme.

What did it all amount to ? Well, it amounted to this—they were prepared to go so far but no further. They were prepared to be reckoned in with Israel but they were not prepared to accept the entire programme. They had world desires, a limited salvation and  $e_X$ , perience. "Bring us not over." Moses used the words, "bave not wholly followed the Lord." That is the point of the division; that is the mark which runs between the two and-a-half tribes and the remainder; that is the line drawn between those who lived on the edge of the wilderness and those who had gone over Jordan, the question as to whether they would or would not wholly follow the Lord.

Now the meaning as regards the rest of Israel: the position was parallel with the position of a preceeding generation, when they rejected the report of Joshua and Caleb. Moses says "this is rebellion against the purpose of God, a reservation in your acceptance of the divine programme. It is not only in yourselves, but see what it means to the rest. They will lose heart, they will say. "Here is Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh having a good time without any fighting." If they had followed their example, Canaan would never have been conquered. Canaan would never have become the land by which the revelation of God would be given to the world. Moses saw the peril for all the people of God and all the purposes of God. "No man liveth unto himself and no man dieth unto himself." Bound up in your attitude to the revealed will of God is the life of another or many others.

Then there was a compromise made. It looks as if it was a perfectly satisfactory one, but you have got to read the story in the light of later history. "Well, we will leave our cattle, our flocks, our possessions, our wives and children here. We will arm ourselves and go over before Israel and help them, and help them into the land, and then we will go back again." You see the distinction between certain things. "We will help you, but we will not identify ourselves with you. We will recognise your programme, but we will not identify ourselves with it. Not that we would do it ourselves, but we will do it for you. Our hearts are not in this thing, we are not abandoned to it, but we are prepared to stand by. place our services at your disposal, but we are not with you." So they would do everything to help, but for the rest of their lives they were back there with their flocks and their children. Their heart was with their treasure, not in the real purpose of God.

There are plenty of people like that to-day, prepared to help in the work of God, associate themselves in the programme of the Kingdom.

They come to God for their salvation, they have a share in the work, but they are not in it utterly, they are not in it because they cannot keep out of it. Their hearts are somewhere else, because their treasure is somewhere else. They are not prepared at all costs to risk all their possessions for the Kingdom. They cannot accept the Cross and all it demands, to live or to die, to sacrifice to the last degree, that the Cross may be vindicated utterly, they are not in it like that.

A compromise was made. What did it result in? Division. That spiritual breach between them, for all time. It was seen in the schismatic altar. There was a breach between them. How true it is in the Church, in Christian work. There we are, all together, apparently, on the surface, working for the same ends, in the same big thing.

But we know that clean through the centre is a spiritual division. They are not in this thing by absolute identification with the Cross as represented in Jordan. There is that which marks a division and some live this side of the Cross and only accept a certain limited interpretation, and others accept it in its full meaning. It created a spiritual severance which for all time meant a strain of relationship. It only commenced there. That was the first thing, and a terrible thing. What else happened? It meant that the two-and-a-half tribes went into spiritual decay. Of them it was true. "He gave them their request but sent leanness into their souls." If we choose deliberately to accept only a part of the divine programme, we are just tying a knot in the artery of our spiritual blood, we are cutting clear across our full development in the will and purpose of God, holding up all God means for us, we become spiritually lean, we do not become effective, our life does not tell with a mighty sledge hammer blow.

Such people with their self-centred life will not commit themselves beyond a certain point. "No," they say, "we will not go further with you. We won't become singular. We object to the emergency element. Let us be sane, well-balanced, have nothing out of the ordinary in our Christianity." How this talk deceives the people who use it. It really means, "We won't have the whole purpose of God, we won't go all the way."

"He gave them their request." These are the lean souls, not growing fat with the good things of the Kingdom. There is no victory element in their life, there is no executive authority in their Christianity, no standing in the sovereign power of God and dominating the situation.

What about the ultimate issue? Deborah has no praise, but only scorn and reproach for them in her song. They missed the best. They were the first to go into captivity to Assyria. In the day when the storm came, they first went into exile, first came under the full blow of the enemy. It is always like that. When the stress of adversity comes, when circumstances or situations arise which are calculated to upset your Christian experience, it is the borderland people who go under, the people who faint because of the way, who are submerged, crushed, not the people who stand in the glory and power of His transcendent victory.

What will you do in the swellings of Jordan if you do not know the glories of His victory, the wonderful confidence of reigning in life by Him ?

This compromise was the result of their insistence. God is very often forced to give us less than His best because we will not have His best. Israel again and again refused. God said, "I will give you my second best. You will lose." God said, "All right have what you want, but you are losing. The day will come and declare it when you will find that you made a great mistake, a terrible mistake, and lost infinitely more than you could have lost by taking all the risks involved by the full consecration." Some demand, some fear of loss, some sacrifice which seemed to be required of us. We say, "Bring us not over this Jordan. Let us stay here. Do not present that challenge. Do not obsess us with these tl ngs, let us stay here."

We find them everywhere. If that is your attitude let me say, as one who has taken that attitude before now, there is more over that Jordan, at any cost, than eye hath ever seen or ear heard or that hath entered into the heart of man.

Let us say, "I am going over Jordan, accepting the full programme of God." "By any road, at any case." Believe me, you will find it has been infinitely worth while, ٠.

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## "THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT"

### (Ephosians iv. 3.)

This unity is that which is resultant from the indwelling and dominating control of the Holy Spirit.

The illustration is that of the head and the hody. Every limb or member, and faculty of the body is controlled by the nervo system and this nervo system works from and to the head where it has its base.

In the Body of Christ tho Holy Spirit is the great nervo system and only as there is an immodiate response to every intimation of the will of the Head, and the life unbrokenly in correspondence with His mind, can there be the unity of which the New Testament speaks.

Three things must be clearly noticed.

1. We cannot "keep" what does not exist. The admonition presupposes our having received the Holy Spirit into our lives in a vital way and having surrendered ourselves entirely to His control and direction.

2. We cannot create this unity. It is essentially spiritual. Creeds, organisations, the social spirit, compromise on matters of interpretation and can never achieve it.

3. There is the paradox of unity. "Peace" in the scriptures means harmony. But while Christ is called "the Prince of peace," and while that harmony has been created in many lives and spheres where He has been enthroned, He clearly said that one result of His coming would not be peace but the sword.

It is clear that whenever His cross has been fully presented, there has been trouble and upheaval. All the things against which His cross stands have at once created a state of war. The world, the flesh in all their forms and expressions make spiritual unity impossible, and in as much as even Christians are influenced in their judgments, their standards of reckoning, their conceptions, as well as their methods and means, and motives by the world-spirit or the Adam, nature make spiritual oness impossible.

The fuller the presentation of the Cross the greater the arousing of the fallen nature elements and therefore on the one hand the greater peril and possibility of discord and on the other hand the call for a more complete capitulation to the life of the Spirit as against the life in the flesh.

This work of separating will be carried out in ourselves personally, in our homes, in our local churches, and in Christendom at large.

On this basis of flesh and spirit the "house divided against itself" will fall.

True unity has its birth at Calvary where the world, the flesh—with the Devil working through both to maintain his discord in the universe—wore dealt with and for ever ruled out of the new creation.

It is this unity which Calvary creates which is the call for our diligence for its maintenance. Certain things might well be borne in mind:—

1. The Holy Spirit is of one mind, and never leads in two ways which contradict each other in principle.

2. The Holy Spirit is unchanging in truth and with Him there is no variableness from time to time.

3. Differences of degree should never be a ground of division. The different ages and degrees of maturity in our family need never throw the family in schism.

4. Basic contradictions will ever result in arrested fellowship, and be fruitful ground for the satanic sower of seeds of discord.

5. We must never act on a principle of expediency, policy, or projudice, to try and advance the Lord's interests and safeguard the truth. It would be better to have a more limited sphere of usefulness—as men regard it—than keep doors open by compromise. This, at length, brings a breach with the faithful.

6. Spiritual ononess is "in Christ," not in ourselves. The ascendancy of Christ over self is the only way of this oneness.

7. Lot it be over recognised that in the Lord's spiritual house there is His order and appointments. To be out of our place, to assume a position or ministry which is not ours, to interfere with others who are the "Lord's anointed." to mentally ignore, despise, or set aside such, to be negligent of our ministry, or in any other way to disturb the Divine order is to upset "the unity of the Spirit." and to throw the Body into a disturbed and conflicting state. There are many things to be discerned in our "giving diligence to keep the unity," but if the Cross has been truly applied to our own life, and we are really walking after the Spirit we shall know within ourselves what these things are. T. A.-S.

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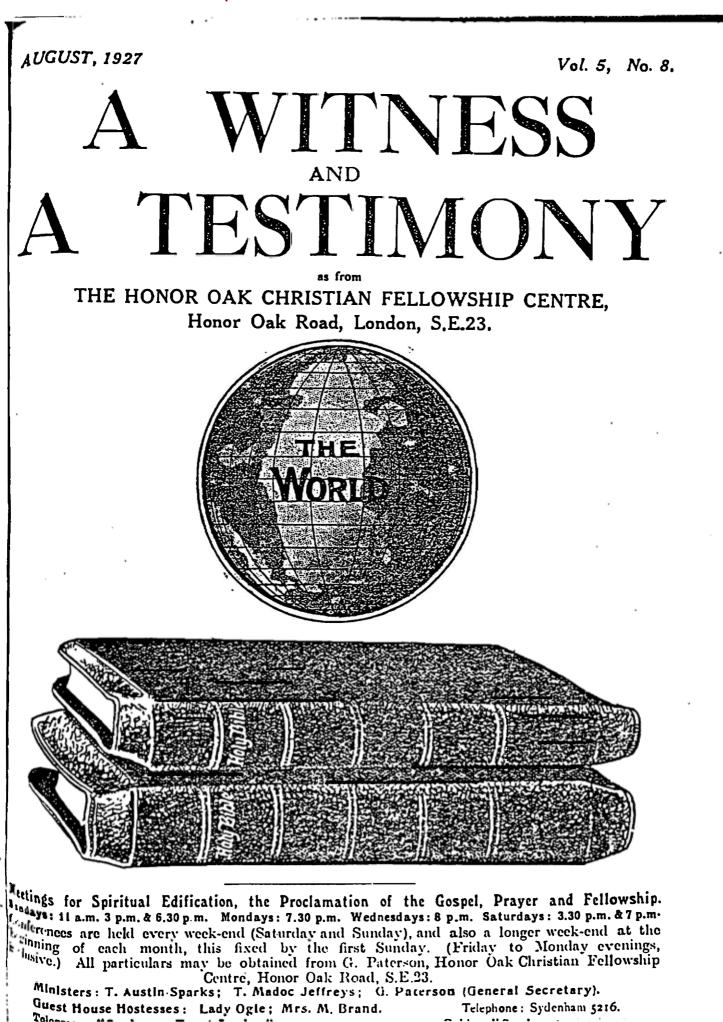
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WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

# MINISTERS' LETTER

(Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre).

August, 1927.

### BELOVED OF OUR LORD,

So we constantly address you. And this is no formal designation. It is the address of the Holy Spirit.

To many this fervent hearted New Testament speech may have become a dead language; but this is the case with all scripture when tho letter has supplanted the vital experience of the spirit. To those who *live* because they hear the voice of the Son of God this "beloved" has the music of God's truth in it.

To love, and to be loved : this is the compass of life in God. "We love Him, because He first loved us." This is the wondrous fruit of Calvary's wooing. "He loved me, and gave Himself for me," declares Paul. Faith dares to interpret and to bring that Infinite Heart down to the personal, individual life. This is also the supreme goal of spiritual knowledge, namely,—in those paradoxical words of grace— "to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ"; for it is beyond all knowledge, yet shall we know it, as we do now in part.

But it's this blessed inner and essential "me" we need to know as the especial object of the Divine Love: "He loved me." For the love of Christ is that foreknowing, elective, eternal, yet discriminating and personal love of the Good Shepherd that has singled me out for His Desire: "He calleth His own sheep by name."

And when our faith can accept this mentally incredible fact we are perfected in love, and all fear is cast out: we have boldness for the day of judgment. The Blood in the Throne is speaking its Covenant Love in our hearts. Every disciple then becomes "that disciple whom Jesus loved," for the Bosom upon which he rested has become Infinite, and we all have place there. "Behold, *what* love!" exclaims this same disciple, "the Father hath bestowed upon us." And what provokes this further astonishment of faith ? It is that we share the Life of the Only-Begotten in the "new birth." We are His very own whom He has purchased with His blood for a "peculiar possession." And we are the Father's gift to the Son.—the gift of Love Universal to Love Particular. Let him that readeth understand.

For while we may never forget that wide embracing love of God that includes "a world of sinners lost and ruined hy the Fall," there  $i_8$ for those who have believed that Jesus  $cam_{\theta}$ forth out from God, who havo through their deep repentance and sorrow of grace come unto Him Who calls them from His Cross, yea, they who are no longer of this world, but as Ho is so are they in it,—there is for them, so witnesses the Holy Ghost, a love in God as between the Father and the Son. "The Father Himself loveth you." And, again, "That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them and I in them."

So "Beloved of God" is no exaggeration of religious ecstasy, but the sober speech of believing hearts. "Herein is love."

The devil would have us doubt this or pass it by as something unreal and ecstatic, some cloud of deluded dreaming, or else something it is not now lawful for us to gaze upon. But the truth is scaled in ransoming blood. He loves me. Take it to your heart.

One would press the balm home to bruised and torn souls. Some maybe who arc seeking rest at this time, and finding none, because there is no rest within. Are you in danger of forgetting or disbelieving God's personal love for you? Have service, obligation, or even truth, as impersonal and doctrinal truth, so crowded in upon your mind, that you are cumbered in heart, jaded and lean as to this vital treasure of grace,—God's love? Have you forgotten that He loves you, and wants you to rest in that, and to give Him love in return that shall be the unfailing spring of all service ?

Will you not therefore sit in His Presence this holiday-time and with great delight realise His Banner, His very Protection over you, is love ?

Beloved, let us think of His love once again. This is a month of rest for many a Christian worker. The tired and the weary are seeking quiet places. Oh, is there not a place of the deepest and quietest rest, rest of heart, where the fury of the oppressor cannot touch the warrior of the Cross? It is to allow Him, Who, alas, is so often the Divine Stranger even to His own, to pour in His Oil and His Wine, even the Love of God poured forth in our hearts by His Spirit. We have ministered to Him throughout the year, it may have been feebly and very imperfectly. He would also minister to us.

Yours in the Love of the Paraclete,

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS. T. MADOC JEFFREYS.

### THE FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

### "THE HUNGRY SHEEP"

At Jarrow and at Newcastle, July 13th to 15th, there was abundant further evidence of the real hunger of the Lord's people for tho living word of God.

Although the holiday season had commenced and little announcement of tho meetings hadbeen given the numbers were representative of many denominations, and many were the expressions of gratitude for light and help received.

It is intended to face the question of our responsibility to make the ministry more continuous and practical in these directions, and a Conference at which the issues of ministry and fellowship in the Newcastle district will probably arise and be met, is being arranged at the Connaught Rooms, Newcastle, for September 9th, when our brother, Mr. Austin-Sparks, will, if God so appoint, be His messenger.

#### **OUR HOLIDAY CONFERENCE**

We have reason for wondering praise at all the manifest tokens of the Lord's approval during this prolonged season of intensive meditation in His truth.

The ministry of the word was carried through by His Spirit in a constant stream of utterance. The main theme, "The Centrality and Universality of the Cross," was illustrated by a large chart, the facsimile of which is to be found on the back page of this issue. The vision and the word had come to our brother, Mr. Sparks, during his recent season of confinement, and thus once again the wisdom of the Lord's dealings with His servants was vindicated. Mr. Jeffreys took the parallel theme of 'The Spirit of Sonship,' related as it is to the revelation of the Son of God in the Cross, and it was revealed that the operation of the Cross in the life of the believer wrought-out the manifestation of that same Spirit of Sonship to the praise of the glory of God's grace. It was a very happy and fruitful fellowship in joint-ministry.

The characteristic feature of the Conference was the remarkable and daily occurrence of applications for testimony bearing. Every day witnessed these practical fruits of the ministry's impact upon hearts, and this spirit of obedience to the Lord's commandments goes on up to the time of writing.

We cannot but accept these ovidences of tho working of God's Spirit as a gracious encourage-"ment from Him to pursue unswervingly our

"Witness and Testimony" both to the vital centrality of the Cross and also to our necessary personal and experimental discerning of and identifying with the Body of the Christ born out from the Cross. The acceptance of the Cross in its fulness means the emergence of a LIFE from it which is found to be none other than that of the living glorified Lord, enthroned in Gon, shared by all members of His Body in tho fellowship of One Spirit. These witnesses to the truth of IDENTIFICATION in all its rango from Calvary to the Throne, came from 'far sundered localities, and they have taken back a definite testimony in their hearts which must be lived and preached where they are, and which we believingly expect will result in strategic work for the gathering together into ONE of the Lord's elect.

#### EXTENSION OF MINISTRY

Our young brethren who have been in training with us had very definite ministry in the North. Two of them are now in Lowestoft where the Lord seems to be opening for them a path of ministry for this month. It might be helpful for prayer to notify that in September there will be the following outgoings—Mr. Sparks to Newcastle, 9th ; Dieulefit (D.V.), 19th to 22nd ; Mr. Madoc Jeffreys, Ebbw Vale, 11th ; Aberdare, 14th and 15th ; Sutton, 29th. There are likely to occur many developments in work and ministry during the coming weeks, and prayers are solicited for the Lord's constraining and restraining hand.

#### MRS. PENN-LEWIS

The news of the Home-summons of our sister has just come to hand. Thus a great teacher and a champion for the Truth of the Cross rests from her labours, and has entered into the Presence of our Lord.

The church of God owes an incalculable debt to this valiant and unfaltering pioneer of a truth that has been but slowly grasped by the children of God, but which is nevertheless the basis of all victorious life and service. We refer, of course, to tho truth of the Identification of the believer with Christ, through His Cross, both in His (leath to sin and His Life unto God.

Our sister's testimony in speech and written word has been industriously poured forth for many years without cessation; that testimony has gone out into all the world; and it is not too much to say that her ministry must have had a radical and far-reaching effect upon the whole Body of Christ as found in every land.

We thank God with sincere hearts for His great gift to His church in her faithful ministry.

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#### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

As is well known now the Lord has led us in this "Fellowship" to emphasise not only the personal identification of the believer with our Lord in death and life as a matter of personal salvation, but to the fact that this identification brings the believer into a LIFE that is corporate in nature and functioning, namely, into the Body of Christ. We have been obliged to go forward with the Lord in all that this revelation means to us by way of definite testimony. But we have never ceased to appreciate the foundational character of our sister's great ministry, the testimony to Jesus as the Christ, and *Him* crucified as *the* message of the gospel.

The Lord has taken her to Himself, and when the Crowning Day comes, as we believe soon it will, when this tenser conflict that still awaits the church of God shall have issued in gathering the members of Christ's Body here on earth into a full revelation of their Oneness in the glorified Lord, we shall hail our sister in His Presence as one who helped to lay the foundations of a work of the Spirit that shall have issued in the completion of the Temple not made with hands; and she also will by this time have recognised that we could have done no other than obey the Lord.

The Lord stir up our hearts at every remembrance of her to a like zeal in all the truth. T. M. J.

#### A FURTHER WORD

As we go to press the news reaches us that our sister, Mrs. Penn-Lewis, has passed from the battle to join the great cloud of witnesses. We have had very blessed fellowship with our sister both personally, privately, and in ministry, and learned to know her on a side which is not discerned by a great many who did not touch her so intimately.

We deliberately chose to share with her tho prejudice from which she suffered for the sake of her message, which message—' The Message of the Cross '—was and is that in which we stand.

We deeply regret that for other reasons this personal fellowship was interrupted, but we have not ceased to bear her up before the Lord for succour and protection.

Few needed covering more than she, for few have assailed the enemy more bitterly and relentlessly, and few were more in danger to his fury. The strength and aggressiveness of her nature made it difficult for her to keep under the cover which the Lord sought to give her in His servants, and one feels that she was often the more harassed because of this.

Our sister has fought a good fight, she has

suffered much, but there is a great multitude that will rise up and call her "Blessed." God takes His servants, but carries on His work; and all work that is out from Him is immortal.

Wo should like to write much more, but time docs not permit us now. Wo shall meet our sister again, and tho mists will then have rolled away. T. A.-S.

### THINGS THAT DIFFER HI.—SERVICE.

IF it is difficult to avoid misunderstanding when writing to discriminate in the matter of salvation, it is even more so in the matter of service. There is so much, and there are so many ways which claim to be "God's service" and "mighty works in the Name of Jesus." Thank God, however, that we have not to judge and decide what is and what is not true service to God. It is, nevertheless, given to us to recoznise and emphasise basic principles by which all who claim to serve Him must judge them. selves in this matter. It must be observed at the outset that, while the Lord makes even antagonistic elements and persons—even the wrath of man-adversity of circumstances, and while there is even such a thing as irreligious solicitude for God, His direct and elect means and method is by chosen and consecrated members of His spiritual household. Now, of this service there must never be a judging after the seeing of the eyes or the hearing of the ear ! This is a matter into which the senses cannot come without the peril of deceiving and misleading the whole life. The service of God like every other thing in relation to Him is essentially an unmixedly spiritual thing. There are two things at least which are basically wrong and inevitably disastrous from the standpoint of true spiritual value: one is the regarding of the work of God as a set system, just as any other commercial, industrial, or professional system is a vocation or calling. So much is heard about "entering the ministry," "taking up Christian work," "becoming a missionary," &c., and this as static, organised, systematised. The other is going into service on the basis of an external appeal to the senses; the intellect, the emotions, the volition, by or reason of a presentation to the ears of the cycs. Wo do not say that these means have never been overruled by God to something more, but in themselves as such they aro both inadequate and perilous. Both of these things

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are not according to the principles of the Divine order, and the Word of God-read with spiritual insight-proves it up to the hilt. Moreover, every man and woman who has come up against spiritual realities in the service of God knows that it requires something stronger than hot air, electric atmosphere, vivid pictures, romantic conceptions, idealistic visions, mental impressions, and occasional stimulants for the will, to make them able to continue indefinitely and be spiritually effective. No, in every way, the senses are an insufficient basis and a dangerous criterion.

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The service of God being spiritual will always have an element of mystery about it, and this mystery is thus; the greater the degree of real spiritual effectiveness and value, and the more spiritually accountable a thing becomes, the less is it a thing that can be seen and handled by the senses and by the flesh, the less the elements and forms of human demonstration and natural appreciation. Again and again we have marked the grievous tragedy of ministries — personal and otherwise — which were mighty in spiritual significance at length taking on human significance and assuming forms of natural impressiveness at the expense of that essential value to God. Yes ! It has grown, big, expansive, famous. Yes! He, or she has a name, a reputation, a following, a fame, and a position, but so often, O so often at a cost of accountability amongst " principalities and powers" (this is where spiritual values are judged) which makes it all poor gain, and makes God's heart bleed.

Without seeming to judge of this ourselves let us state a further principle or two-or reemphasise in definite form :---All inclusively, only what God does Himself is God's service! This is basic to the entire revelation of the purposes of God in the whole scriptures. The Lord Jesus is most insistent upon this Himself. "The Son can do nothing of Himself."

"The Father doeth the works." "The Father speaketh the words." "My Father worketh until now." " It is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father Who speaketh in you," &c.

This principle was well recognised by the Apostles. In fact it is the primary object of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Chost said." "The Spirit suffered them not." Only as all service is brought within the limits of this Divine ordering by a positive witness within the sanctified and quickened spirit of the "chosen vessel" can there be "The works

of God ", which alone count. This, on the other hand, rules out all our works.

Motive, good intent, laboriousness, enthusiasm, "in the name of Jesus," "for the Kingdom," " in the interests of mankind," &c., these do not count in the realm of " the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus," if they are our own activities with our own natural resources. It must be "God who works within."

We have yet to know the nature and immensity of the works of God, and how His ends call for His infinite energy, and when we have a little light on this matter we shall see that all our works are "dead works" indeed.

The flesh cannot enter into the works of God; hence the measure of spiritual effectiveness is the measure in which the Cross of Christ has slain our flesh experimentally. Not what appears to be successful Christian work, but what is done—not by men—but by God through crucified men. We must be content to have our fruitfulness and spiritual value registered in the unseen, and not be dominated by the scales of values as set up by men on the earth.

One sign of counting beyond mere flesh and blood is the malice and fury of the oppressor and his persistent efforts to get one out of the fight. Finally: we can only get into the true service of God as we are put into it by the Holy Spirit. This is not as from the earth but as from above.

Men cannot make these appointments or ordinations! To press into this service of oneself is to meet the fire of God breaking forth. To touch this "ark of testimony" with our hands is to die.

Even after Moses had been chosen, received the revelation, and been commissioned, "God met him and sought to kill him." Why? Because the circumcision of the flesh had been neglected, and no flesh can serve the Lord.

**T.** A.-S.

### BOOKLETS

#### (WITNESS AND TESTIMONY.)

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST (Continued.)

"Not holding fast the Head, from which .....the increase of God."—Col. ii. 19.

WE are pressed in our hearts to continue this theme with especial reference to *ministry*, a ministry given to every mcmhcr of the Body of Christ. Beloved, behold and believe your vocation. You are called everyone of you to minister to the Body of Christ.

But how, you may ask. By the *in-working* of His mighty power. This is the nature of all ministry. It is spiritual, that is, it is wrought in your spirit by the Holy Spirit. It is deeply inward, it energises or works within. First, in groanings that cannot be expressed, a pressure in your spirit that drives you to prayer, to intercession, and then issues, as the case may be, in Spirit-directed service, concerning which you need have no anxiety as to its programme or definition; for what you do and what you are in Christ will be made plainly manifest to all, and you do not require name or title.

It is interesting to note that the word, "holding," which we translate as "holdingfast " has the same derivation as the word "power" in Eph. i. 19; vi. 10. It means, literally, "to lay strong hold of." But with what kind of power? What might? Not by any power or might that is natural, but by a spiritual power working within us. It is to lay hold of with a spiritual strength, and is exemplified in that wrestling of Israel (Hosea xii. 3 and 4)—" By his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel and prevailed. He wept and made supplication unto Him." But this is not the strength of that Jacob, the tenacious self-seeker. All that natural strength has been brought to an end at Jabbok, in a knowledge of its failure and futility. Henceforth it must be crippled and kept under the judgment of the Cross. It is the weeping and supplication that indicate the nature of this strength. Even thus our blessed Lord with strong cryings and tears made supplication in the Garden, and was heard for His divine fear. In fearfulness and trembling He worked-out our great salvation; He was crucified through weakness; but through that weakness the power of the Almighty God in Him was manifested, even the Power of the Resurrectiou.

So with us. God has to bring us to an end of ourselves, an end of all our natural resources, before wo can begin to sorve Him. And then, when He has done this, it is not that we may drift inconsequently, waiting for something to happen; but that we may turn toward Him, and in our spirit, "lay strong-hold-of" Him. Are you there? Are you waiting upon God, wrestling with Him in spirit, that the Great Anointing may fill you with a Divine energy and passion in prayer for the Body of Christ? All service springs out of such a laying strong hold of the Head.

The inward pattern of service, that is, its working as through our spirit, is perfectly illustrated by four words which Paul uses in Col. i. 29: Labour, striving, working, worketh in me. This order as stated is from the outward to the inward.

1. The labour of Paul was manifest: it was hard labour, incessant, crushing. It was insupportable to any natural determination, enthusiasm, or resource. Read 2 Cor. iv. 8; vi. 3-10; xi. 23-29 consecutively, and ask yourself whether any mortal man could have sustained such burdens or performed a tithe of the prodigious labours of the apostle. The quest tion only needs to be asked to make it plain that here is a miraculous and unaccountable spiritual energy.

2. The next phase of his service, and this, also would be apparent to any one who was in contact with him, was a "striving." This word is translated "conflict" in the very next verse, Col. ii. 1, literally, an "agonizing." The apostle was in tho grip of an inward concern; a contraction of the heart, so to speak; a travail for tho church of God. He was under a spiritual constraint. Ho could not help him, self. He was a bond-servant of the Lord Jesus in his spirit, and was subject to this inward striving, a prisoner of the Lord continually in this sense, as he was outwardly at times in Roman chains and fetters. This was the spring of his labours : they issued from this inward constraint.

3. But this was due to what he calls "His working," literally, "His energising." This is the whole secret of Christian service. It is a ministry in and by the Holy Ghost within us; it is the release within us of the mighty power of the Christ's resurrection. It is the manifestation of that resurrection in the Body of Christ. It is God Himself breaking through in us in that victorious Life that met and vanquished the powers of darkness at Calvary. See what a "striving" Paul has in Ephesians i. 17-23, and again in iii. 14-19. It is his constant con-

### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

corn that the members of the Body may have the revelation: that they may see "what is the fellowship of the mystery" (Eph. iii. 9), namely, that it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. ii. 13).

This "working" or "energising" is the secret, beloved. It is the "New Creation," (Compare Gal. v. 6 with vi. 15.) How tho apostle yearns then that believers might know "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward—according to tho working of His mighty power," that is, "the power of His Resurrection."

4. For himself he declares that this "energy" works in him mightily. And this is always the explanation of his service. See Eph. iii. 7.

But the apostle speaks of himself as a pattern and type of believers (1 Tim. i. 16), and that wc are to be "imitators" of him as he was of Christ (1 Cor. xi. 1). The "working" that wrought in him can also work in us; but the degree of it is measured by the degree of our death. This is the law of its operation, plainly stated in 2 Cor. iv. 10-12. Our Lord Himself, in the days of His flesh worked by no other principle. The mighty works of God, words and deeds of power, signs and wonders, were wrought by an energising of the Spirit as He lay down, deliberately negated, His own life (soul). He bare about in His body a deadness, or putting-to-death, of every self-activity, in order that the Father, thus having place in Him, might do the works. Calvary was the consummation of this obedience unto death. This is the principle He enunciates in John xii. 24-26, and note it is with regard to service. "If any man desire to serve, minister to, Me, let him follow ME." It is the way of the Cross, daily, continually. And so in all the Gospels, Matt. xvi. 24, 25; Mark viii. 34, 35; Luke ix. 23, 24.

We have taken the order from the outward to the inward. The secret of the mighty labour is the "in-working," something operating in the spirit of the apostle; and this operative power is nothing other than the Life of the Risen Lord by His Spirit in the "inner man" of His bond-servant. It is the very same "energy of the strength of His might" that wrought the Resurrection of the sacrificed MAN into the Throne of God. Thus Calvary is manifested and vindicated in the operation of the Spirit of the Risen Christ in the members of His Body. This is how God is glorified in us.

But remember the process of ministry is from the inward to the outward. We do not com-

mence with the mighty works; we commence with the "in-working." Cease from yourself, your dead works. Lay strong hold of God inwardly. Take your identification with Christ practically, actually. It is not a theory. If you aro "crucificd-together-with" Him, then cease from self, and let the Christ by His Spirit arise within your renewed spirit. This is easy to say; but it needs gripping, wrestling with, taking hold of; for all the powers of Hades and all the inertia and stubborn reluctance and enmity of the "old man," all the disobedience of unbelief in us, are against this simple step. . It needs the power of His Resurrection, the mighty power of God, to enable you to step over the threshold into that "inner man continually, and there abide. Even when you have learned the secret, how the enemy lures you out. How much the Master stressed abiding " (John xv.).

Scrutinise carefully the language of Eph. iii. 16. All the riches of the glory of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ are invoked to this end, namely, that through His Spirit you might be strengthened to an inward *life*, that within you there might arise the mighty power of God, and that you might discover how to live out from that very Life of God Who dwells within you. We are speaking not of *salvation* but of *service*. Thank God, He takes hold of us for salvation; but we turn, and take hold of Him for service. So Paul, again, breathing out that "striving" and "in-working" of the Spirit aspires that he may *apprehend* (lay hold of) that for which he was *apprehended* by Christ Jesus (Phil. iii. 12).

As for salvation that mighty Hand of God has laid hold of us, and none can : luck us thence (John x. 27-30). But as to service we are to enter into that Lifo that has taken hold of us, and using its power by a faith that is energised by love, we are to work the works of Him that sends us into the world even as Ho was sent into the world. Thus are we to be resurrectionmembers of the glorified Incarnate Lord.

This much as to the *nature* of the ministry. It is entirely spiritual, resulting from heart conflict by an in-working of the Holy Ghost, and there are no exceptions to the scope of its operations in the Body of Christ. *Every* member should be subject to this working of the One Spirit, not passively, but by an active inward co-operation as a temple of the Holy Ghost. Failure in spiritual service may be due to a lack of knowledge. It may also be due to a lack of "laying-strong-hold-of"—holding-fast the Head. But we are called to be *God's fellow*-

labourers, workers together with Him (2 Cor. vi. 1). Wonderful designation ! God's fellowlabourers. Let us ponder it well, understanding that it is by the grace of God this is so, and at last come to the conclusion, "I am strong for all things in the Christ Who in-strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13).

One is led to believe that if the nature of this service is once comprehended surely its scope and unity would be likewise discerned. This strong laying hold of Christ must certainly bring us into the secret of the Love of the Spirit which embraces the whole Body of Christ. What does the apostle mean by "being-rooted and grounded in love," and thus being "able to fully comprehend with all saints," &c.? And what is the comprehensive and allinclusive yet intensive Love that can perseveringly supplicate for all saints?

Does it not happen that as I enter into that oneness of Christ's Life and mine in me that the Holy Spirit takes me within the Veil, and in a sense reverses the order, and I discover the oneness of my life with Christ in God? And then, what takes place? Does not the personal, the individual concern cease, and the Divine Love, the concern of God, take its place ? Do I not then enjoy the Mind of Christ, and all self-interest in my heart discerned and then cleansed by the Blood in that Light, the Mind of the Spirit has place in me? Oh, will I not discern the Body with the Mind and Love of God as I enter into the Place of the Everlasting Burnings? Will not the Fire of that Altar enter my heart? Shall I not see the Lamb in the midst of the Throne and cease from this wretched self that would lust for Divine things for its own satisfaction ?

I am persuaded, beloved fellow-members of the Body of Christ, that to lay strong hold of our Glorious Head means that we shall pass out of all death into all life, and love the whole brotherhood of the Christ.

And this is not ecstatic : it is practical. For it is the Body of Christ on earth that has to be brought into a unity of life, and not those who are absent from the body, present with the Lord. A great many hold what has been called "The Body truth," but it is obvious that they hold it mentally, that is, theoretically, and not in the Love of the Spirit since there is no demonstration of that ministry in and to the Body that is founded in "striving" prayer.

Others again who would be deemed strongly evangelical do not seem to know that there is such a thing as the "Body of Christ." One has 🎕 been appalled at the ignorance that appears to prevail among such as would be considered stalwarts of "the faith," who seem to regard any reference to such a theme as "The Body of Christ" to indicate a tendency to unsafe teaching. We suffer much from such detraction. Yet there is no other purpose in the gift of the Holy Spirit to the " church " than that the body of Christ should be completed and perfected. If there be conversions, what are they con-versions to? Are there "new births"; out from Whom and into Whom and What are they born and baptized by One Spirit? Is it to add to the number of adherents of denominations, churches, and "isms," or are they "added" to the Christ? Unto what were ye baptized, asks Paul.

Does not the conclusion of all ministry reveal the essential scope and unity of it ?-"THE INCREASE OF GOD?" It is a Divine Life received and communicated by One Spirit. It has a myriad channels and instruments as men, but all these derive their service, as their # Life, from One Source. Their life is spirit, their ministry is spirit; but all out of One Spirit. Therefore all inter-related, co-ordinated, nay, organically ONE. The very fact of a spiritual strong-laying-hold-of the Head of this Body Who is Christ will mean that they discern the Oneness of the ministry of building-up that Body; and they dare not work evangelically for themselves. They dare not build-up closed communities called "churches" with their vested interests and their increasing selfimposed liabilitics. This is not New Testament 🐲 Christianity, and we are persuaded it is not the thing that the Lord is going to take hold of and  $\frac{3}{2}$ receive into His Glory.

No, the ministry is first to beget children unto God by the "word of God " spoken in the power of the Holy Ghost. Then to instruct them by the same Spirit into a discerning of the Body of the Christ. Next to bring them into the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, which is that of the Father with the Son, and we in Him. Thus to introduce them to their ministry which is to form uniting bands and joints of supply by intensive fellowship in that One Fellowship, \* that they may pray in the Holy Ghost. All this 😤 is "of God." It is Divine Life. And out of this Divine Life, proceeding from the Head, will come the closer knittings together, the fitly framing together, the building-up into the Christ. But always "increase of God," more of God. There will follow the direct impact

of God upon the principalities and powers, the breakings-forth of the Lord, the breaches made upon the kingdom of Satan, the testimony to the *nations*—every nation where such a testimony is made to the Sovereignty of the Head will be awakened to the fact that a Power that " turns the world upside down " has broken out among them. This thing cannot be hid. It is the Holy Spirit manifesting the Sovereign Christ as in His Body. The kingdoms of this world will be aroused, stirred, disturbed. They will be obliged to confess that a stronger than the "strong man" is spoiling his goods. Thus will there come those last invitations to the " marriage feasts " when the compulsions of the Spirit are brought to bear upon the hearts of men ; and the devil and his hosts are compelled to release their prey. But all this pre-supposes corporate prayer. Intercession for ONE THING.

A Great Eternal Purpose! The travail of the Spirit! But for this we must be free, free from the petty, the personal, the parochial, the systems, the elements of this world. How can this be except there be an entering into the fellowship of His sufferings, and a filling-up of that which yet remains of the afflictions of the Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church ? It is when the Head is thus laid hold of in the energy of the Holy Spirit that it will be realised that the Anointing that flows from Him is One Anointing, and that no ministries are really personal, they belong to a corporate purpose and LIFE. None can live or serve to himself. There can be no closed compartments in that which is one organic Life. We shall find oursclves strangely and sensitively ONE with all the members of Christ in all the earth. The Holy Ghost in Paul saw and spake before the time. But the time is coming, is it not now close at hand, when the members of Christ will only survive those things that come upon the earth as they come into that intense inward Lifo of the Spirit, and find that they are all bound together in bonds of His creating, and that they must live for the Body, and not for themselves. Then will it be literally true that if one member of the Body suffer all suffer together with that one; and otherwise, if one be glorified all members shall be glorified together with that one. Ah! That is the consummation. Then shall death be swallowed up in victory! The last enemy shall be destroyed in the Church first, before he be destroyed in the age to come.

Looking out upon the visible church of God (as far as such a thing may be visible, for they that are spiritual are spiritually discerned)one might well despair; for chaos, division, abounding self interests and complacencies seem to prevail. And upon the part of those earnest souls who would seem to have been a vanguard of pioneers with regard to the truth of "The Body" there have been many deceptions and delusions—vea, many false prophets arc gone forth into the world. The spirit of antichrist is manifest in many subtle forms, and he plots against the realisation of Christ corporate even as he did against Christ personal. By this is he known. But Jesus the Christ is come, and is coming in the flesh, and there shall be the manifestation of the sons of God together with the Son of God. None can stay Him. And the Holy Ghost is in-working, for there is a strong-laying-hold-of the Head. God has His hidden ones, and they are more than we know and think. As some of them read these pages we would exhort them to be of good courage, for the day of our redemption draws nigh. But there is a grim fight on. Satan with all his hosts is seeking to veil, to hinder, to deter, to deflect the children of God from a realisation of this Unity of the Christ in His Body. To such, we say, stir up the gift that is within thee. Lay hold of that One Eternal Life. Take your place in the Christ as one with all the children of God. Pray for the Body. Live for the Body. The Lord will thus bring you into His secret ways and workings in the Body at this time. You will see what He is doing, and you will enter into that working of the Holy Ghost in the earth which even now is in process of gathering-togetherinto-one the children of God that are scattered abroad. Mighty things are stirring. Watch, be sleepless in the Spirit. Awake, as those who arc awakened from the dead. For at the last only the wise shall understand. T. M. J.

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## THE SPIRIT OF SONSHIP

### (Introduction to an Address given at the August Conference, 1927.)

THERE is a word in the New Testament, which contains the measure of our salvation together with the significance of its character. It is the word "adoption." You find it in four suggestive passages. The first is in Romans viii. 15, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear" (and this, at any time). "But ye received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

The word "adoption" as in each of the following instances should be translated "Sonship,"-" Ye received the Spirit of Sonship whereby we cry Abba, Father." Thus are we able to say "Our Father" with the Son of God. In the 23rd verse of this same chapter you have the word again, but this time referring to the finality of the work of this Spirit of Sonship in us as it shall have brought us at last to the consummation of God's purpose in the church, the Sonship being completed at the translation of the Body of Christ. "And not only they (that is, the creation) but ourselves also, which have the 'First-fruit' of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the ' Sonship,' to wit, the redemption of the body." Here we see that the all-inclusive thought is that of Sonship, perfected Sonship.

It is not so much the redemption of our individual bodies that is the concern of the Spirit within us (this is included, of course, in this so great salvation); but we are groaning within ourselves, we who have received the 'first-fruit' of the Spirit, waiting for the consummation of this "Sonship." The creation groans dumbly, inarticulately; but in the church that groaning becomes more or less articulate in intercessory prayer (verses 26, 27).

The word is also used again in the epistle to the Romans, but in a connection which we need not consider here, referring as it does to the Hebrew people as the vehicle through revelation by which the "Sonship" came, and to their future place in its glories.

We pass on to Gal. iv. 3: "Even so we, when we were infants were in bondage, under the rudiments of the world; but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, come of a woman, como under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the 'adoption-of-sons' (literally, 'the Sonship'). And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an *heir of God* through the Christ."

And then in Eph. i. 3 to 5, the apostle utters that benediction of God inspired by the rovelation of His eternal purpose in this "Sonship." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him; (here introducing the pause)—in love having predestinated us unto 'Sonship' through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."

### T.M.J.

### (To be continued.)

### THE CENTRALITY AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE CROSS (Notes of an Address given by Mr. Austin-Sparks at the August Conference, 1927.)

Now beloved, the reason we are gathered in this place this morning is because we believe that the Lord has called us to bear witness and testimony to a revelation which He has given us upon the basis of His dealings with us and in us, which is of very vital account and import for these days. This is not said in any religious conceit, or spiritual pride, for it represents a great cost and a considerable conflict and travail and anguish not to be coveted for an instant by the flesh, but rather ever and always to be shunned from that side, but accepted as a stewardship, so that we find ourselves in this, in the presence of the Lord, unable, though the flesh shrink, to be or do otherwise.

Now that revelation, which is not, let me emphasize, a mental apprehension of truth, but that which has sprung out from deep and drastic handling of us, and is basic to this testimony, is summed up, I think, almost entirely in its outlines in this diagram that is before you (see back page). I think I need not say how the Lord brought that to one, other than this that it was in the hour of the deepest anguish of spirit, and the hour of deepest death to all but Himself; but it came, and it made all the other well worth while. How far we shall be able to deal with the content of this in these days I do not know. It will be entirely in the Lord's hands, and by His leading, but if you should be able in your spirit to apprehend,

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the main outlines of this thing, you will no longer be in the dark as to what this Centre and Testimony represents—as wo believe—in the will and purpose of God. This morning we shall only seek to deal with the broad outlines leaving details for other times. The theme, as you recognise is

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and tho thing that wants to be ro-cmphasiscd (May I say hero in parenthesis that most of this is old ground to many of you, but it is a statement purely of the whole thing with which we are more or less familiar) is this, that, inasmuch as the phraseology or terminology of the Cross is so common to our testimony, many have come to think that we are stressing one exclusive line of teaching, and they regard this word of the Cross, this message of the Cross as some narrow theme, some phase, some department of truth; that we are very much restricted in our outlook, and they say we are always talking about the Cross as though there was nothing else to talk about. They say, you are always on that line, why don't you get on to some other lines of revelation ? Why are you so unbalanced, uncqual, uneven, emphasising one thing all the time? Now, beloved, should there be any such conception, or misconception here this morning, I would that the Lord would dispel such; and to state the thing accurately, let us once and for all say that according, not to our revelation, but according to the revelation of the entire word of God, both in the Old and New Testaments. the Cross is the hub of everything, and this diagram really represents a wheel with all its spokes and its rim, and its wheels within a wheel—but the hub of everything is the Cross of the Lord Jesus. It is not one of the spokes; it is not ono of the lines of teaching; but it gathers up in itself everything, and it makes possible everything; and if you fail to recognise God's place and God's meaning for and in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is then that you become unbalanced; it is then that you become departmental; it is then that your perspective is thrown out, and your vision is distorted. For the right adjustment and regulation and balancing of all truth you must place the Cross right at the centre and see the relationship of everything else to the Cross and of the cross to everything else.

Now here is a sweeping word, but quite considered: I venture to say that there is

not a theme in all the word of God relativo to the eternal purpose of God which is not rooted in the Cross of the Lord Jesus, and that works out to minutiæ. Your tongue, your lips, your speech, your conversation, the most common-place thing has-according to the word of God-to be bound up with the Cross of the Lord Jesus, and the Cross of the Lord Jesus to bo bound up with it, and from that most common-place thing ever out in widening circles and a growing number of directions the cross has the central place. Of course, you know, that, so fer as we are concerned, and the word of God is concerned, the Cross does not represent just (and hero I do not minimise that) the death of the Lord Jesus; but the all-inclusive and full sweep of the eternal work of God from ages to ages, from eternity past to eternity fiture, which was centred in the Cross of the Lord Jesus; and that through the death, burial, resurrection and ascension to the throme, and sovereign relationship vested now in Christ for us, as in the word, that also is the Cross and we never see the throne apart from " the Lamb in the midst thereof as it had just been slain." That is as much the message of the Cross as that pertaining to what was done on the green hill far away outside the city wall. Now that, of course, is all too common-place and simple to say, but perhaps necessary marder to put the Cross into its right realm, its adequate realm. So then, let us recognise once and for all that the Cross is not a specific line of teaching, not a department of teaching, not an isolated message in an unbalanced emphasis, but the all-comprehending and all-including and all-explaining centre of the universe. That is the Centrality of the Cross, and you must put it so. It is the hub of the wheel. To it and from it all the spokes move through charly defined circles of divine instrumentality and activity into the farthest bound of the universe, in the super-heavenlies, the heavenlies " far above all:" there the cross is still. You never get outside the range of the cross. Let us put it there-give it its right place. For some of us this revelation of the centrality of the Cross has settled everything and made the word of God a living thing in a new way.

Now having said that, not a line, not a spoke, but the hub, everything to and everything from, and everything in the light of it, we want, before we take some of these inner spokes, to note the next circle, for this is important if the Cross of the Lord Jesus B at

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the centre, the first circumference, the first circle to which it moves, and which moves back to it is "the Church which is His Body." The Body of Christ. You will notice in the diagram that everything moves to that, and then there is an unbroken line round that which suggests that everything is, in the first movement of God, shut up to and within the Church the Body of Christ. We shall see how that is so perhaps presently, but we want to recognise this fact, that the first inclusive movement of God through the Cross is to and in the church which is the Body of Christ. That is the horizon of the Cross in the first instance. The Cross in this part of the age stands to secure that, to realise that, to gain that. The end of God for this part of the age is the church, the Body of Christ, and the whole revelation which comes through, and on the ground of the Cross is bound up within the church, and all the other ranges depend upon the church for their knowledge of the meaning of the Cross, and all that is included therein. Let that be perfectly clear. The nations of the world, the encircling principalities and powers and world rulers of this darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness, and then upward to the uttermost bounds of the heaven of heavens, all depend for their knowledge and instruction, whether it be unto jubilation, as in the heavens, or as to confounding and judgment, as amongst principalities and powers, they all depend for their knowledge of the full wisdom and power of God upon the Church in which that is revealed and manifested. He has-in other words-eternally elected to display unto the increasing bounds of the universe His wisdomin and by the Church, and that through the Cross as wrought out and revealed within the Church, the Body of Christ. The instrumentality of God for the manifestation of all the infinite meaning of Calvary is the Church, the Body of Christ. We have often said it is like the city to the kingdom, the metropolis to the world, in the light of which the nations shall walk, but the central thing by the Cross is the church which is His Body, and revelation is there and only through there-the revelation of this work of God in the ages and in the universe. When we come to speak more about the church we shall have to re-emphasise this with further points: But we want to notice that the first realisations of Calvary's work are unto the securing of this cternally elect body, the church, as the instrument for the divine revelation and manifestation beyond. Now is

that perfectly clear ? One good man a little while ago said that the sublime factor of this age was the dethronement of the Bible from its place of infallibility, but what a contrast between that and this, that the sublime and supreme factor of this part of the age is the securing of the church, the Body of Christ, out from the nations to be an instrument and vehicle of the everlasting, the eternal revelation of the power and glory of God. That is what He is bent upon now. We can do no less, and God save us from the depair which will come by our trying to do any more than that—the realisation of His purpose for now, the gathering out and together by the Holy Ghost of the Body of Christ unto completion, unto the coming of the Lord. Now that defines the limits, but that becomes a large enough outlook for anyone, and you will find if that is revealed to you by the Holy Ghost, it will occupy all your momenta for the rest of your days, be they few or many, to give heed to the discerning of the Body unto its completion and its building up and perfecting in preparation for the Lord.

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Now having seen this innermost centrality of the cross, and then the first range of its intention, we are prepared to just note some of the major truths that are wrapped up with the Cross in the Body of Christ. Of course much, as your recognise, bears beyond that for other purposes, but which is the treasure, or the deposit within the body of Christ, and you notice that the first of the four major spokes of this wheel within a wheel is the Person of the Lord Jesus. Now, beloved, you require the Person of the Lord Jesus, a. revelation of Who Jesus is in order to explain the language of the Cross. This is no common Cross upon which any man may die in a kind of vicariousness in human devotion to the interests of his fellows. This is something more than that. There is only one Cross in the mind of God to effect this purpose. It is unique, but you must recognise who Jesus is before you can discern the true values of Calvary; but Calvary in its out-working, and this is the experimental wonder of the cross, Calvary in its out-working makes you know who Jesus is. You by faith come to accept all that Calvary means, not knowing what it means, but by faith apprehending and accepting and yielding and challenging God in reverence and fear to make Calvary real in your experience, and as the Holy Spirit begins to do it you will discover that this is no common Cross, you will discover that you have come up against the

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infinitude of the Christ of Calvary. The Jews and the Greeks despised the Cross and laughed it to scorn and waved it aside as the uttermost absurdity, foolishness, and scorned it as a scandal, an offence. They were destined to discover that there was something there in that Cross, as manifested in and through the church, the Body of Christ, in its nucleus of those days, which was capable of tearing their empires limb from limb and pulling down all their vaunted pride of empire, and of wisdom. You notice what we have read this morning concerning the wisdom of this world. The princes of this world who crucified the Lord of Glory, and their wisdom ! How they vaunted their wisdom, their academic achievements, their scholarship, their philosophies ! How they boasted in these things, and Paul goes into one of the centres-prime centres-of this world's wisdom and tells them. "Brethren, when I came to you, I had deliberately made up my mind that it was not going to be in words of man's wisdom, not in excellency of speech, and was among you in much weakness and trembling, not knowing anything. I might have known all about these things. I have a knowledge of these things in which you boast, but I had deliberately made up my mind that I was going to be ignorant in these matters, and know only one thing and that "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." You notice how he goes on, "we speak God's wisdom !" He is putting this over against the wisdom of this world in its highest development. "God's wisdom, but in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God fore-ordained before the worlds unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knoweth." Now what is this wisdom? Well, go back to the previous chapter. (It is a pity the chapters are divided.) "For the word of the Cross is foolishness, and that word there "the word of the Cross." as you know is the logos of the Cross, and the central meaning of that very far-reaching and icnlusive term the "Logos" is the wisdom, or reason of God. The wisdom, or the reason back of the universe by which, on the ground of which, His creative activities came into operation. He made the worlds with a reason : He had wisdom directing all His operations bringing into being the universe. Now God's wisdom, and the Apostle says all that wisdom, that infinite wisdom of God is gathered up in the cross of the Lord Jesus .- "The logos of the cross," the divine reason, wisdom of the cross, and he puts that over against all the

wisdom of this world. "We preach Christ crucified," and, mark you, the world was destined to discover that there was something infinite in that Cross as proclaimed and administered in and through the Body of Christ. They may try to wipe this thing out, to destroy it from the face of the earth, they may exhaust all their resources of might and power in the physical realm of force, and in the intellectual realm of reason and academic genius, and Nero (that devil incarnate) will massacro thousands of these who stand for the testimony of Jesus in one full-blooded effort to destroy that testimony from the earth, but he discovers that it cannot be done. It cannot be done, and the more the shedding of blood, the more this thing spreads and grows, and every bit of Satanic invective launched against this testimony from the first scattering of the church from Jerusalem, on through all the persecutions and martyrdoms only recoils upon the Devil to destroy his own works, and to further this testimony and cause it to take deeper root. There is something in this Cross, beloved, that is infinite in its power and in its possibilities; and it is interesting to note that tiny bit of irony appended in salutations to one of the apostolic letters. "The saints in Cæsar's household salute you." Upstairs the schemings, plannings to wipe out this Name, this Testimony, downstairs, these people cooking his very dinner, these people-saints in his house-doing his work for him. Why they are in the fortress ! God is very ingenious, but you see there is something here that you cannot cope with. It is the Logos of the Cross as represented in the Person of Christ, who is made unto us wisdom, the wisdom of God.

Now you require the cross in experience to make known to you who Jesus Christ is because His power is vested in the Cross, and as the cross is planted in your life you find that you have not accepted a creed or a symbol. You have accepted nothing less than the inclusive, infinite power of God to do things. You require the Cross to be interpreted by the Christ, and you cannot separate your teaching of the Person of Jesus, the Person of Christ, or any of your Christologies from the central reality of the Cross. You will never know Jesus Christ really unless you know Him crucified in this sense.

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Now much more, as you see, is bound up with that, the Logos, the Eternal Logos. "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God and the Logos was God, and

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We come to the second major spoke of this wheel-the Holy Spirit. Now we know that there are those who have nothing else to talk about but the Holy Spirit. All their teaching, their title and everything else is the Holy Spirit. You may become unbalanced on the Holy Spirit if you take the teaching as separate, but you require the Cross to get the balance; it is relative, it is not isolated. All the advent and activity and revelation of the Holy Spirit is related at centre to the Cross, and in the first circumference to the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit is to, and for, and in, and by the Church. Have you got that? In the first instance the Holy Spirit is to the church. Not the Church as experiencing its salvation at the moment, but the Church perhaps in its unregenerate state, for He knows the eternal counsels of God, the election according to the foreknowledge, not the especial election of God unto salvation and damnation, but according to foreknowledge. God knew from eternity how His supreme gift of freewill would be exercised in relation to the revelation of Jesus He cannot help but know the Christ. way that free volition would be exercised toward the Christ. Whom He foreknew, them He predestinated, He marked out, but it is only according to the foreknowledge, and not according to any favouritism. Now it is to the church. There may be a member of the Body of Christ in this tent this morning still unsaved, unregenerate. To you and to the sum of the whole Body cf Christ in its members unborn, unborn naturally, literally, unborn spiritually, the Spirit has come, in the first instance, to secure the complete number of the elect, but by the Criss. He will do nothing apart from the Cross, and He will bring every such member to the Cross, and He will keep every such member at the Cross, and will never never let them for an instant escape the Cress. He will in other words work out the Cross to

the uttermost realms of its meaning in them. He is to the church, for the church as its supreme gift, Comforter, the other One alongside. It is in the church that the Holy Spirit resides, and it is by the church that the Holy. Spirit operates. That is His instrument, and all this because the church has been secured on the ground of Calvary's work, and you get the many sided activity of the Holy Spirit, with which we cannot stay at this time, as He acts, as we have seen, before conversion, in relation to those who are the heirs of salvation vet unborn, those who shall be. And after conversion, new activities, ANOINTING. We arc not going to stay now to specifically define these different terms, but each one is not synonymous with the other. No two of them are exactly alike in their meaning. They all have their own specific meaning. The An-OINTING and the INSPIRATION are not the same. The Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Inspiration, Revelation—these two are not alike. Between REVELATION and ILLUMINA-TION you might find difficulty in discriminating. **REVELATION** is that which is presented to you. ILLUMINATION is that in your spirit which can take hold of the revelation, when you are enlightened at the presentation of Truth. There may be revelation here this morning, hut you need illumination in order to get it. You need "the eyes of your understanding enlightened," illumined, "in order that you may be able to apprehend with all saints what is the height, &c." and here is the revelation of the Spirit, but illumination is needed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And we know the difference between ILLUMINATION and INTERPRETATION, as we have already men-tioned this morning—" As the Spirit gave them utterance," and Paul be sought fellow-believers to pray for him that he might be given utterance. O, it is one thing to possess revelation and to have illumination in your spirit, beloved, it is quite another thing to utter these infinite truths; they may stay there, they may become an inward burden and anguish to you, until there is the enablement to utter them. You know something of the groaning under a revelation and feel it is of such far-reaching account to the Body of Christ, and not be able to say it, the time has not yet come for the working of this thing—until the Spirit gives you utterance. O, that all our speaking, our preaching, and our teaching, were by the utterance which the Holy Ghost gives ! The Lord will bring us there. And of courso

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within the Body of Christ the Holy Spirit is for ADMINISTRATION. He is there to administer. He calls upon us to put aside our programmes, even in the conduct of meetings, not to arrange our speakers and our order of service and to tie Him down as to how we think tho thing ought to go, but to leavo Him free, and you will notice that wherever the Holy Spirit has freedom to direct and administer in such a matter (and it is only one fragmentary point of the whole administration) there is a wonderful co-ordination, He is of one mind and Ho is working to one end. We have ideas as to what we would like done and achieved. and we try to manipulate and move the picces on the board to secure and accomplish some end, but, O, let the Holy Spirit administer. It is not for us to say who is to speak, and when soand-so is to speak; it must come out of the divine order and appointment, by the leading of the Spirit, otherwise we shall not get there. But in numerous other ways the Spirit is in the Church, the Body, to administer, and, beloved, the final word is this, you can never hope to have the judicial ministry or administration of the Holy Ghost to deal with preponderances and disorders, to judge and to rectify, unless you have given the Holy Spirit full course on all matters. It is no use getting yourself into a mess and then asking the Holy Spirit to judge the wrong for which you are responsible. It may be you will be the judged one; but if, mark you, the Holy Spirit is in possession, having full sway, administering in the Body of Christ, woe betide the person who, like Ananias and Sapphira tries to deceive the Holy Spirit, or like any other who may touch the Body of Christ with fleshly hands! The Holy Spirit will meet that. But the blessed restfulness of the whole business when it is a testimony of the Lord Jesus according to the Holy Ghost is that you need not worry, if you are moving and walking in and after the Spirit, and He has brought the thing into being, and He is carrying it on, and you are but co-operating with Him. You need not worry, let anybody get up against you and touch the Lord's anointed, you will discover you need not say anything, they will come up against the thing, or it will come up against them, and fire will break out from the altar. That is Christ in His corporate expression-His Body. If you want to be safeguarded, if you want to be protected, you want to be vindicated for the sake of Jesus and the Testimony vindicated do

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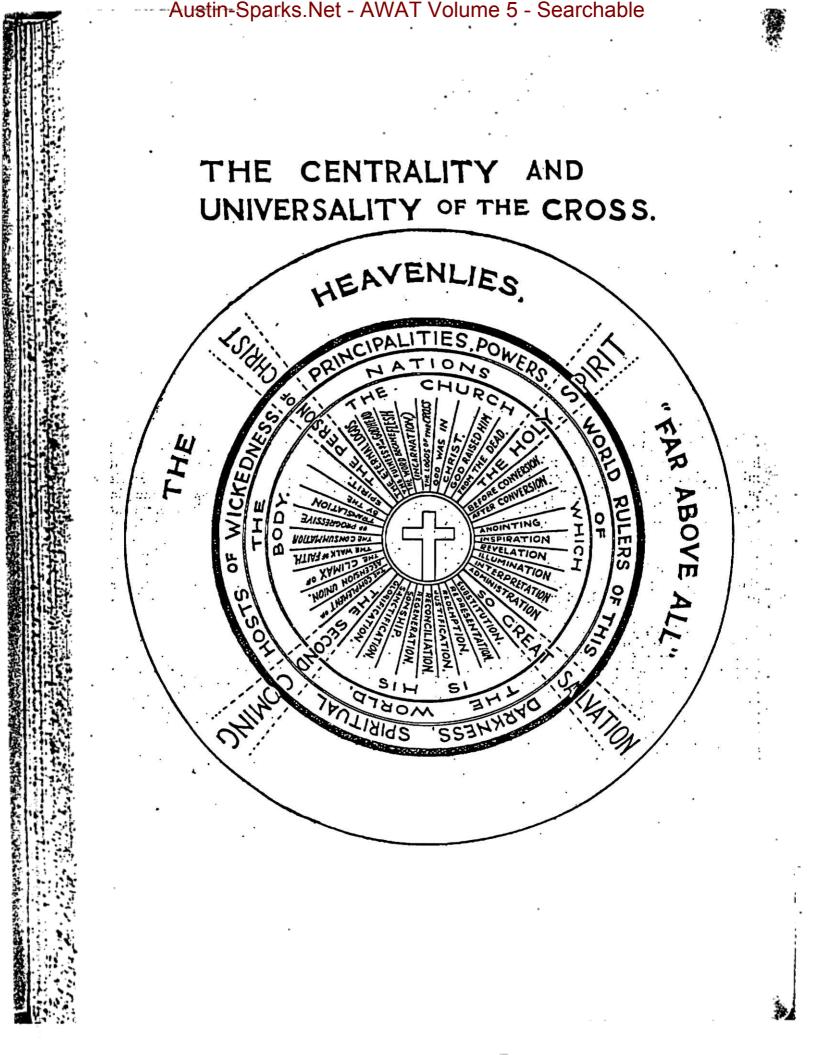
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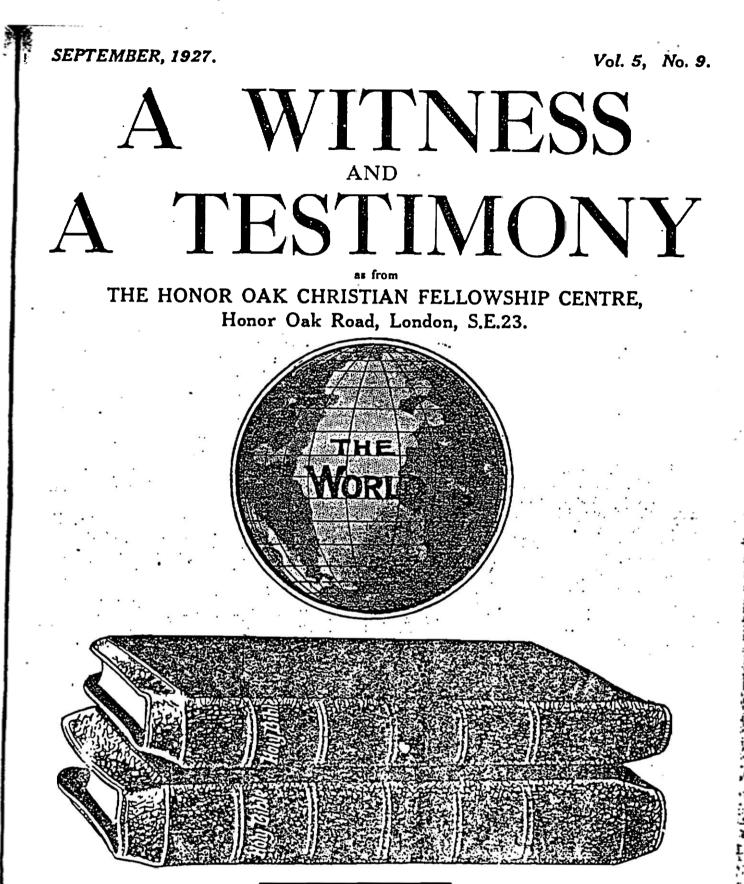
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not take it in hand yourself. Be sure that tho whole thing is according to the Holy Spirit, and that He is administering. that your plans and programmes are not in it, and you are moving as led by the Spirit. then the thing will be safe-guarded by the Lord because it is His. And inversely, as we go into it apart from Him and touch it with natural hands of wisdom, or desire. or motive, we limit the Holy Spirit, and make it impossible for the thing to be maintained for the Lord's needs by His own protection. And what is true of that side -the judicial—is true of every other side of the administration of the Body of Christ. How familiar we are with the words—" The Holy Ghost said-Separate me Barnabas and Paul unto the work whereto I have called them." The eternal purpose of God concerns every member, of the Body of Christ and He says in the church to those who are "ministering to the Lord," "now I have put My hand upon so-and-so, you put your hands on them for me," " and when they had laid their hands upon them they sent them forth." That is the order of spiritual effectiveness. And then in the goings and directions and the ministries, "the Spirit suffered them not," or they went "bound in the Spirit," and it is one hundred per cent effectiveness whenever the Holy Ghost is in the ascendency in the administration of the Body of Christ. But you see how the administration requires the Cross, the searching of our motives by the Cross, the crucifying of our flesh in the church (and there seems sometimes to be a great deal more flesh in the church than out of it) the bringing to death of our personal interests in the Kingdom of God. O, the Cross must be planted there, ruling us out to rule Him in. so that "it is no longer I." At every point the Holy Spirit works by the Cross and the Cross works out to the Holy Spirit. This is all poorly said, and one is overwhelmed with the enormous amount that is gathered up in this, but our time is gone, and we will not stay further. We mill consider the other things later, as to salvation and the second coming, and then it to ther circles ; the nations of the World, the realm of spiritual Lierarcies, of the super-heavenlies-the celestials. The Lord hold us to this fragment of His revelation and open the T. A-S. eves of our underst. using.

THE SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE

This will be led as from Friday evening, September 2nd to Minday evening, the 5th. The Theme that has sofir come to us is "The Cross and the Overcoming Life."





Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Proclamation of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship. Sundays: 11 a.m. 3 p.m. & 6.30 p.m. Mondays: 7.30 p.m. Wednesdays: 8 p.m. Saturdays: 3.30 p.m. & 7 p.m. Conferences are held every week-end (Saturday and Sunday), and also a longer week-end at the beginning of each month, this fixed by the first Sunday. (Friday to Monday evenings, inclusive.) All particulars may be obtained from G. Paterson, Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

Ministers : T. Austin Sparks; T. Madoc Jeffreys; G. Paterson (General Secretary). Guest House Hostesses : Lady Ogle; Mrs. M. Brand. Telegranis : "Syndesmos, Forest, London."

Telephone : Sydenham 5216. Cables "Syndesmos, London."

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## A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## MINISTERS' LETTER

(Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre.)

Scptember, 1927.

BELOVED OF OUR LORD, Two New Covenant words, sealed in His Blood to you,—"grace" and "peace"; but

always His grace, and His peace. This was the common salutation of our first brethren. It is suggested that these two words formed the "symbolum." or password of the early Christians. And if so, what more fitting, because what more true ! But whether so or not, this was the manner of Paul's greeting in every church letter-" Grace be unto you, and peace....." He wrote, of course, as a minister of Christ, and these words contain the essential message of that ministry. The good news from heaven is of the kindness and "philanthropy" of God our Saviour toward man (Titus iii. 4). This is grace : and with it comes the inevitable peace. But these words are now celestial in their meaning, and neither tongues of men nor of angels can convey their message unless the Holy Spirit speak them in our heart. It is from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ they come, and He, the Spirit, Who comes from them must speak them. "Grace be unto you, and peace ! "

Yet they were derived from the common every-day language of that time, for it is the Holy Spirit's way thus to take the commonplace and to glorify it, to take the clay and fashion it for His habitation.

"Grace" from the every-day greeting of the Greek, a word signifying joy. Matthew tells how the Lord when He met the women hurrying with their news of resurrection hailed them, "Rejoice!" (Matt. xxviii. 9). But "grace" covers the whole range of greeting, Giver and gift; message, Messenger, and mediation. The "All hail!" of God includes all the Divine Favour.

"Peace" from the every-day greeting of the Jew. John gives us the first word of the Risen Lord to His disciples, His assembled church, as then gathered to His Name,—"Peace be unto vou !" (John xx. 19). It is the salaam of the East.

The Holy Spirit has taken these two salutations and transfigured them into the Christian greeting. It is the greeting of the Risen Christ to His church. He brings with Him, out of the triumph of His Cross, all grace : grace of forgiveness, grace of acceptance, grace of faith and righteousness, and of love : grace of God, infinite in Himself. And with the grace there comes peace that surpasseth all understanding.

Notice that the salutation is not complete in itself: with it are always linked the Divine source and emphasis,—"from God the Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord." As the blessing is a unity so also is the Source. The Father and the Son come in One Spirit. It is the grace of God, the peace of God, but both as Father and Son in One Spirit. Of this "Fulness" are we invited to receive.

It was a morning and an evening greeting. Joy came to men and women who had spent nights of weeping for a vanished and seemingly vanquished Lord. He was in the tomb, and their faith seemed vain. But early that morning He came with the word of heavenly salutation, and their night of doubt and despair was for ever past. Then in the evening He stood *into* the midst, and there was "Peace."

This seems to be significant for this whole day of grace in which His church is waiting for the full manifestation of His Glory to them and in them.

Our full day of Glory has not yet come. The Day Star has not yet arisen within our hearts. But the Morning Star, herald of that Daybreak has already come. Christ, risen and ascended, has come by His Spirit, into our hearts with all the resources of God's grace. And then as shadows of evening gather, the evil hour of anti-Christ thickens around us in the confusion and fear of this prolonged waiting time, He breathes His wonderful "Peace" into our spirit, and despite the denials of Satan we know that our Redeemer *livcth* ! Thus shall He find us awaiting His "parousia"—His "Coming."

And so *Hc* says the words. If He hails us with "Grace!" and bids us "Peace!" what more can heart desire? Let us enter His Jerusalem, the City of His Peace, and of the Living God.

Yours through grace, and in peace.

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS. T. MADOC JEFFREYS.

## OCTOBER CONFERENCE

• The usual Monthly Conference is due as from Friday, September 30, to Monday, October, 3. Theme :- "The Cross and the Hidden Life."

## THE FELLOWSHIP. AND MINISTRY

AMID many calls we are not able to give details of the Lord's dealings with us during the past month. "The river of God is full of water," and we have much matter for testimony and praise wero there space and time to relate it.

The gatherings at the "Centre" are strong in numbers, and what is much better, are strong in spirit also. There is a continued stream of testimony to the Mighty Victor of Calvary. Praise *Him* !

Those who had journeyed to many places both for rest and service, have now returned, and the September Conference was a time of real re-union and praise. The Lord led us mainly into the epistle of John, and the "Logos of the Life" (I. John i. 2) as related to I. Cor. i. 18 was the main emphasis.

But now, as we send in these notes our hearts are much occupied with a new phase in the illness of our beloved brother, Mr. Sparks, who has again been taken to hospital with renewed internal trouble. He was especially strong in ministry at this Conference; and at the final meeting was carried through in a remarkable utterance concerning "The Testimony of Jesus."

We are holding him before Him Who loves him, and Whom he so loves to serve, that His will shall be revealed in these manifold afflictions.

Meanwhile there await many ministries for the coming month at Dieulefit, Dublin, Jersey, Edinburgh, Newcastle, &c. We rejoice that the September Conference at Newcastle, on the 9th, was marvellously carried through by the Lord in the ministries of our brothers, Mr. Paterson and Mr. Alexander. We are having indications that the Lord is raising up others to carry the message out. The testimony of the Lord will suffer no lack and we feel convinced He will thrust forth labourers into His harvest.

The last week at Lowestoft in which our younger brethren were engaged was one of great liberty and blessing.

## BOOKLETS

(WITNESS AND TESTIMONY.) THE following are now available : By T. Austin-Sparks :---

• :	Incorporation	into	Christ.'	No.	1.	Price 2d.
	Incorporation					
13	Incorporation	into	Christ.'	No.	3.	Prico 2d.

## NOTES FROM A MESSAGE GIVEN ON JULY 2, 1927

In the seventh chapter of Hebrews there is a verse of definition which gathers into itself an unspeakable word of vision,

" KINO OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ! "

It is one of the descriptions given to Mclchizedek, who in his person, is King of Righteousness; and in the realm of His jurisdiction, as in Salem, is King of Peace.

You do not need to be told he is a type of the Lord Jesus. *He* is the King of Righteousness; Who, in virtue of being in His own person King of Righteousness, has also become King of a universal peace. A peace which you and I, if we be the children of God, are already experiencing in our hearts. If He is sovereign Lord in our hearts we know the blessed power of that sovereignty in peace,—

The peace of God which surpasseth our understanding, and keeps our hearts in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

And out of *that* peace we are able to give Him the true ascription of "Lord." When we give back to Him that ascription of Lord, we are truly saying—King of Righteousness. We are giving to Him the acclamation that is His due from our hearts. I wonder if that is our happy experience this evening! One felt it was the experience of many as we sang the hymn—

## " O, Thou Exalted Son of God "

Did we have that in our spirit ? Did we have that direct revelation of Jesus Christ in the throne of God—King of Righteousness ! Were we filled with that profound obeisance and praise of spirit which belongs to the children of God, so that there was this coronation song in our hearts—

#### "O, King, live for ever."

Now you know whether that is so, or not. But it is impossible apart from the peace of God reigning in your heart. If the realm of His sovereignty in peace has extended to you and now includes you, in and out of that God-given peace you arc able to praise Him as you should, for none of us can say that Jesus is Lord, but in and by the Holy Ghost, for you recognize that that is not a lip homage, but heart homage. It is out of His peace we are able to acclaim Him King of Righteousness. That is the experience, of course, of a Holy Spirit indwelt heart, and there is no other kind of Christian heart, but the Holy Spirit indwelt heart. I

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think we are in danger of becoming too technical in our thoughts about Christian experience. We have all kinds of gradations with regard to acceptance of doctrine and measures of faith, not perceiving that the foundation of God standeth sure, and that there is only one basis of salvation, and that is a full acceptance of all that the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ means in the effective work which only He, in His Person, could bring about in His cross. That is the Rock upon which the ecclesia of God is being built, and there is no other foundation. I think it is well we make that very clear, lest there be some terrible delusions, and we find at the end of our life here that we are met with the answer-"I never knew you," Though we may say "Lord, Lord" with the lip, it is out of a heart confession, out of a fervent heart, not an effervescing of soul, but out of a heart that has within it the fires of the Holy Spirit are we able to give this acclamation of praise:

KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!

In Psalm 45 there is this confession: "My heart is inditing a good matter,"—the word in the margin is "bubbling up." "My heart is bubbling up with a good matter." That is not a superficial feeling merely, but it comes from a musing of the spirit upon the things of God. In Psalm 39 is a similar experience.

" I said I will take heed unto my ways,

That I sin not with my tongue,

I will keep my tongue with a bridle

While the lawless one (the Devil) is before me."

And you know where the Devil does stand. He stands athwart the path of the saint, the child of God, and we do well to pay heed to the words of our mouth, and as to what may be upon our lips.

" I will keep my lips with a bridle while the lawless one is before me

I was dumb with silence,

I held my peace even from good;

And my sorrow was stirred.

My heart was hot within me,

While I was musing the fire burned :

Then spake I with my tongue."

Now that is the explanation of Psalm 45, where the Psalmist is bubbling up in his heart with a goodly matter. There is a revelation. A thing too deep for words. A thing too wonderful for utterance, and he is musing. He is in the presence of God, in the presence of the great facts of God and He is not going to be light and superficial; He is not going to

make a hasty utterance; but his heart is fervent and it cannot be contained, and out of the abundance of the heart, as by the Holy Spirit, he speaks, and thus says :--- Ξ.

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"I speak of the things which I have made touching the king:

My tongue is the pen of a ready writer." Then you find in the following verse the three phases of the Person of the Lord Jesus which he sees by the Holy Spirit. We recognize from the interpretations given to us of this and other passages of the Old Testament, as in the New, what are the meanings of the Holy Spirit in such words as these; and the Lord Jesus, if we ask Him, would spiritually open our understanding that we might understand the scriptures, that as we read such passages as this we, too, might have the fire burning in our hearts as we read the word of God. First of all he surveys the loveliness of the Person of Jesus as in the days of His flesh (second verse).

"Thou art fairer than the sons of men;

(That is a glory upon Thee in character that surpasses the sons of men)

Grace is poured into Thy lips.

Therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever." There in brief sentences you have the portrait of the loveliness of the Lord Jesus as He is revealed walking among the sons of men, as He is seen by the Holy Spirit. Though by us, as men—there is no comcliness about Him that we should desire Him, and He is hiding, as it were, His face from us, and we despised Him and esteemed Him not." Yet here is the revelation of the Holy Spirit made centuries before as He walks among the sons of men. That is how heaven regards Him. This is the language of the Father—" This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased."

"Thou art fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured into Thy lips.

Therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever." Now very often the gospel is not preached by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. There is a great deal to-day of what seems to be a lovely evangelism that has the regard of many, is listened to by thousands, good sermon tasters who appreciate all the beauty of phrasing and glory of description that can be paid to the person of Jesus of Nazareth. I think we may say there are hundreds of thousands of people gathered around a Bible that only goes as far as this. It can never of course come up to the standard of the Holy Ghost's description of the Lord Jesus, but even if it A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

could, it would not save : even if the revelation of the Person of the Lord Jesus as given, by the Holy Spirit could be put within our lips, it would not save. It is not the glory of His Person as He is seen walking in the days of His flesh beheld by all heaven that saves. The devils see and tremble at the glory of His Person, but they have not, and are not able to accept the effectual work of His cross. And so there is no salvation in a revelation only of the Person of Jesus ante-calvary. You find the next passage indicates that this One must go through a warfare. In some of our Bibles the paragraph is described as "Warfare": "Gird thy sword upon Thy thigh, O mighty

one, with Thy glory and Thy majesty,

And in Thy majesty prosper Thou,

Ride Thou on behalf of truth and meekness and

righteousness : And Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things.

Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies.

The peoples fall under Thee."

You have there something other than merely a revelation of the Lord Jesus as in the flesh. manifest to those who were with Him, and who were appointed to be with Him, those that were chosen that they might at last know Him, that the revelation might break in upon their spirit. Who said such things as these-"We beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth " "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God": or "Thou hast the words of Eternal Life, to whom else shall wc go?" Such revelations could not save; for they still left them where they were, and you find the very one who was most prominent in the confession, denying Him with oaths and curses. There is no salvation in the revelation of the Person of the Lord Jesus as before His cross. It is that further revelation of why He came, and what was the work He had to do, and the manner of His doing it. that saves. And so you have in the next passage the revelation of the warfare that lies behind the earthly vision of the Lord Jesus; You get then the true significance of many of those episodes in His experience. Jesus, for instance, troubled in Spirit-groaning with indignation in His spirit—as at the sepulchre of Lazareth with a burden incalculable coming upon his heart, and then the awful wrestling in Gethermane with the pressure and darkness that gathers around Calvary, something that you and I can only dimly discern and estimate, but it is the warfare, the battle, the energies of the Eternal Spirit expressed through the passion of His heart, His groanings, His cries, His tears, His supplications, what do they mean? There you get the veil lifted, and the Bible becomes a new book to you with its unveiling of what is behind the mystery of our human degradation and misery, and the confusion that continually rests upon the works of men and the race of man, and you get the knowledge that He came to battle.

(To be continued.)

## ADOPTION

## The Spirit of Sonship

#### (Continued.)

Notes of addresses given at the August Conference. Scriptures: Romans viii. 15, 23; Gal. iv. 3; Eph. i. 3 to 5.

WE discern from a careful reading of these passages that it is required in the heart of the child of God that he should have a revelation of the Spirit in him as the Spirit of Sonship: "it pleased God to reveal His Son *in* me."

Without this essential revelation both as to the nature and scope of our salvation there will be an ever-recurring declension in life and ministry, a falling back of one kind or another to lesser things, or an entrapping in some further subtlety of bondage-all this arising from our failure to enter into that supreme Purpose for which God has saved us in His Son. Even at best we shall pursue an individual line of personal experience and service, " minding our own things, instead of the things of the Christ," and so becoming narrowed down, and in reality self-centred, we shall cease to function as cosmic factors. We shall not be engaged about our Father's business, though we call it His. And let no one be afraid of this word cosmic, it simply means "world "; and it is time we were not children in understanding. God has a world purpose in His Church, and if His Spirit be in us, and we live by Him, we cannot escape nor wish to escape that "world" purpose.

One does not need to make plain the identity of the "Sonship" and "the Body of Christ," that they are one and the same corporate Life of His Spirit. The "sons of God" and the

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#### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

Son of God, Jesus, share One Life. This is the three-fold testimony of God through the Spirit, the Word, and the Blood, concerning His eternally Only Begotten Son in His Ascension,—in *that* day He said, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." But He is addressing Him as Head of the Body and First-born of the New Creation.

God has obtained a Son for Himself in a New Form, Man Form. The eternally Only-Begotten, has become through His Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection, the First-begotten of the New Creation, the New Man in the Throne, and Head to His Body, the church, the "sons of God." But He became such for our sakes that we might be begotten by the Holy Ghost as out from Himself, and share with Him the inheritance of Sonship. And so the testimony of God concerning His Son has become this-" that God gave unto us eternal life, and this Life is in His Son" (1 John v. 11). The Eternal Life that was manifested in the Resurrected Christ, (I John i. 1-3) the Life of God in the Man, is now being corporately shared by the members of Christ's Body in the begetting and the baptising of the Spirit of God, Who now proceeds from the Father through the Ascended Son as Man in the Throne.

But how far short of this glorious revelation of the liberty of "the sons of God" had the Galatian Christians fallen! They had been entrapped into an attempt to secure for themselves a better salvation than that already so gloriously secured in their identification with the crucified Christ. They had tried to improve upon the gospel of free grace.

Absurd, we say. Nevertheless, the same subtlety of Satan besets us in other forms. What we need to see as well as they is (a) the clear basis (b) the nature of our salvation.

The Christ, out from God, has condemned and swept out of the Divine programme an old creation. It is judged and finished with in His Cross.

What awaits now is a New Creation. This He has inaugurated as in Himself, risen into the Throne of God. We are invited to share it in His Life. Nothing can be done to earn the inheritance, nor having entered in can anything be done to improve one's condition in it. The Cross has completely and finally dealt with the old life. The new life is the Life of God's Son. We receive it by faith in His finished work; and we live it by an inwrought faith of His Spirit. But it is His Life all the way through, begotten and continually renewed in us by One Spirit. We cannot im-

prove upon the plan of salvation, nor upon the quality of this salvation, since all things are " of God."

This is very simple, but the facts and range are tremendous. We are identified with the Christ as the corporate Son of Man in the Throne. "We are all One Man in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28).

The apostle asks the pertinent question, "Who hath *bewitched* you?" So graphically had the Christ been presented crucified in their midst that their change of mind seems sinister. They must be bewitched, mazed, *hypnotised* !

We know well what Spirit bewitches God's people. The basilisk's eye that diverts the vision from Jesus ! Here are these who having tasted the Life of Christ by the Spirit are now seeking to go on by means of their own fleshly activity and merit. It is the devil, the god of this age, who not only blinds the minds of those who believe not, but seeks to devour that which is begotten of the Spirit. Beloved, his veils and poisonous mists will be thickly poured out upon us at the end of the age. We do well to pay heed lest we fail to enter into that Rest of God through unbelief in the absolute sweep of Calvary's Victory.

The urgency of the Holy Ghost is behind these words, and for our comprehension of "the Truth." He strives in the heart of the apostle. "My little children," he cries, "of whom I am again in travail until the Christ be formed in you....I am perplexed about you!"

We can repeat these words to the Church of to-day—not only with respect to the individual experience of the believer—that is often unsatisfactory enough—but with respect to the failure to recognise the Body, the One Sonship of God in the Church. The emphasis, even where healthy in doctrine, is all personal; personal salvation, personal sanctification, personal translation; whereas the Spirit of Sonship would cause all to live for the Church, the Body, and contribute spiritual ministry to its completion: this is *the* Will of God.

For until there takes place in us that Divine revelation as to what is the nature of this Christian life we are at a standstill. Do we not see it is none other than the Christ Life in us? If any man have not the Spirit of the Christ, he is none of His.

The apostle has laid down the elementary experience in Gal. ii. 20. This is not advanced teaching. It is the most simple, elementary, but essential foundation for Christian experience that can possibly be stated.

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A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

Substitution may avail for an age to come: but it is identification that brings you into the Body of Christ, and is the only basis upon which the Holy Ghost is given (Acts xix, 2, Eph. i. 13). For having been crucified together with Christ how are we going to live any more except by a Divine energising and indwelling ? This Life can only be lived by its own activity, and that must come from Him Who is Risen. It therefore takes the form of the faith of the Son of God energised by the love of the Son of God : both the faith and the love are Divine activities within us by the Holy Ghost. In other words, it is only the Christ Life in us that can live the Life of Christ. And this is the confession of the Apostle.

In this Life of Sonship we have been translated (Col. i. 13) out of world bounds, from all limits that are carnal, into the Christ as in God. And it is fatal to our communion with God to return at any time to the rudiments of this world, as had the Galatians. No worldly religious virtue can convey any virtue of Christ, but is rather a denial of that virtue. *His* virtue comes only by the Spirit.

By that mighty act of God, represented in the full range of Calvary (death, burial, and resurrection) we have been raised together with Christ to share with Him in His Throne a Life of absolute freedom in the Spirit. This is the Life that conquered death, that has in its essence a Sovereignty over all the powers of darkness; and which will make us by reason of its indwelling contributory to the ends that God has in this dispensation. But always, it is the Life of the Son, and this statement in itself reveals that Life as now corporately shared, One Sonship shared in the fellowship of the Spirit.

Beloved, God has called us into the fellowship of His Son! Do we understand this? Do we recognise our calling?

If not, we are moving in but a tiny circle, the centre of which is still self, though now known as "spiritual experience," or even Christian works: but those works have yet to be tried by fire. It is life with a blind end, so to speak. It really achieves nothing and gets nowhere as far as the Divine Purpose in the Christ is concerned. Surely this is all that counts! And what a tragedy if at the end of our life we find it has been our programme and not God's, that it has been misspent, and our only satisfaction be that we have escaped ourselves from cternal destruction : but our works are burned. What a meagre salvation ! And how dishonouring to God !

On the contrary the nature of the Christ life in us is one of an ever increasing freedom and expansion of ministry and service that reaches unto the ends of the earth, though this be at present hidden and unscen by men. It is by no means a Life that ends in confusion, in entanglements, in discussions and contradictions, as was the case with these Galatians. What havoc "the flesh " can bring into a life commenced in the Spirit? The standard of the Christ life is one of absolute freedom in the Holy Ghost. What else can the words of the Lord Himself mean, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free " (John viii. 32). But you remember this met with an immediate uprising in the flesh of those who had seemed to be disciples : they who were yet in bondage repudiated the idea of bondage. Then the Lord adds the significant words, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed " (v. 36). The Son abides in the House for ever. What is this but to say that salvation is a Life given by the Son of God? "He that hath the Son hath the life: and he that hath not the Son hath not the life."

It is to have the Son then as an indwelling life, residing by the power of the Spirit in one's heart. This is the so-great salvation. Joined to Him in the corporate Life of One Spirit we are energised to make increase of the Body unto the Divine Consummation.

Later in this Galatian epistle he introduces Isaac as a type of this Spirit of Sonship-" Now, we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise " (iv. 28). This is a most interesting exposition of the Holy Ghost. Here is faith as represented by Abraham, having descended to the energies of the flesh and having produced Ishmael; a child of the flesh, albeit circumcised and brought up in the household of faith. This works confusion, and brings forth no prospect of the "SEED" which is Christ. Then when very energy of the flesh is exhausted Isaac is born by the power of the Spirit. We are asked to look at this type of the Christ Life. His name means " Laughter." This Life is one of rejoicing in the possession of the inheritance.

Passing over the carlier history of Isaac, we come to this significant passage (Genesis xxv. 11) "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed Isaac his son : and Isaac dwelt by the well Beer-Ia-hai-roi."

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That is to say, when justifying faith had come to its completed end, bringing fulness of assurance, then that life which represents Sonship dwelt by "the well of vision."

This well is mentioned, interestingly enough, in the 16th chapter where God finds Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, that other son of Abraham (spirit of faith) born in bondage and unto bondage, who gets but partial glimpses of truth and measures of salvation. It is probable that from this very well his life was saved in after years, eh. xxi., and his bottle was filled. She had called the well after the Name of God, "The God of Seeing." It was the well of Him Who liveth and seeth; or the order may be reversed, "of him who seeth and liveth." Either way, it is the Well of Vision, of Revelation. Here Isaac lived and prospered.

Which is to say, beloved friends, that here you and I must live also if we are sons of God, for vision brings life, and then life brings further vision. Have you noticed how in every epistle Paul wrote to the church of God, he prays that they may dwell by this very "well of Vision ? " Revelation, understanding, wisdom, knowledge of God and His Purposes are the constituents of the Divine Life he entreats for them, that "the eyes of their heart" might be enlightened—the heart, observe. It is the affections toward God that must be kindled. for out of these true wisdom grows. It is not head knowledge we require, but heart knowledge. But is not this that very Spirit of Sonship that loves to live close to the Source of all revelation, God Himself ?

And of all knowledge it is the knowledge of His Will that is supremely filial. The essential characteristic of the Spirit of Sonship is a revelation of the Will of God. It is the declaration of the Son, "I come to do Thy Will, O God."

Must we repeat in these columns that by the Will of God we mean that all-inclusive, universal WILL revealed through Calvary, the End He has in view, and to which He is determined to bring the whole universe, through the Cross ? That Will ! Do you see it ? Do you know it ? Do you feel it as within your heart by the passion of the Spirit ? For that Will has first of all to complete the Church, not as a determinate force working upon it from without, but as an energy of the Spirit within every member. Do you know anything of this inworking, this striving of the Holy Ghost within you unto the Divine End ? This is the Spirit of Sonship. See how that Will of God in-wrought our Lord Jesus and kept Him in an unswerving path from Bethlehem to Calvary. He never deviated a hair's breadth, held by that inworking Will. It was the constraint of the Divine Love in His heart as the Son in Whom the Father was well pleased, the Son of God as Son of Man for our sakes. But that Spirit of Sonship is now in you because you also are sons born of His Spirit: "God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Father !"

So this Spirit of Sonship is revealed in us as we possess a heart-knowledge of the WILL of God, the determination of God, the urge of God; the fruit of the Passion of God. Do we live by this deep well? Or are we content to merely fill a bottle now and again from it, and take our own journeyings, pursue our own will. Saved but selfish !

No, the Spirit of Sonship dwells there, hard by, close to the Heart of the Eternal Purpose, and has there unfolded the increasing Vision of God. Now one is constrained to ask oneself the question, and would have you also interrogate yourselves, beloved friends, "Do I dwell there?" Am I a loyal loving son of God? This is what matters. Are we there?

These are days when we indulge in much speculation about the coming of the Lord, but the coming of the Lord is not a mere objective truth to delight in; it is a truth which has its subjective side in the Body of Christ, and in us therefore as contributory members of that Body. And the urge of the Holy Ghost, as ever, is a travail unto the consummation of the Divine Purpose.

If we are sons, then are we heirs, joint-heirs with Christ, and this will mean that we shall have a jealousy of God for the Inheritance, and an inward-striving by the One Spirit in Him and in us towards the Divine Purpose. And so you see this life of ours is essentially a life on the one hand of ever increasing devotion and love and worship of God, but on the other side it is a life of increasing conflict, of increasing pressure, of increasing burden because of the Spirit of Sonship. Yet is this burden easy and this yoke light, for this Spirit says "I delight to do Thy WILL, O My God !"

And so the Christ must he formed within us. Then it is we have come to maturity, to the revelation of that good and perfect WILL of God. We shall no longer be passengers in the thing that God is after in His Church, but be contributory factors, those who count, those

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whose names aro written in heaven, those who are known among principalities and powers, those whom Satan knows because he has to reckon with them. They count because the love of God works in their hearts, a passion for the Divine Ends, and they know the travail of prayer. Now all of us can enter into that ministry, the travail of prayer, the ministry of intercession, by reason of the Spirit working in us. This is the mark of the Spirit of Sonship. Once you are so indwelt and so exercised you are rid of your questions, your discussions, your schools of thought and interpretation, your eclectic inner circles of selective spirituality-"in that day you ask no more questions" (John xvi. 33). You are swept into the mighty current of that dynamic Will of the Eternal Love.

There never was a time so much as now when God is seeking "sons," those *in* whom He can reveal Himself, and through whom He can contribute to that End which has been sealed in the Christ, and which He is determined to consummate whether you and I help in it or not.

One wonders whether the Lord Jesus did not see something at the end of this age when He spoke of a compulsion being brought to bear at last upon those on the highways that they might come into the Banquet of God. You remember how he warned those who had something of revelation, who had been versed in the word of God and who were very fond of it " in the letter," and had had much talk and discussion of the Messiah, that they would not enter in because their *hearts* knew not the truth, but harlots and the victims of vice and passion would because they would accept Him as One Who came a Saviour to their hearts.

And it is in one's heart to say this, for we too are living at the end of an age, and in the Coming of the Lord God is after something urgent, insistent, the Divine Passion is seeking to break through in the Church, in your heart and mine. God must have the channels through whom His Will shall be expressed in their heart's desire. And if we do not respond then He must get others. If we do not come into that personal fellowship with Him,, hearkening to His spoken word, and giving His Spirit place; then God will get those from outside yet, those who have had no privileges such as we enjoy, but whose hearts are broken and empty of self, who will yield utterly to the Cross, and shall receive the effectual in-working of His Spirit; who will know the power of His Resurrection because they embrace the fellowship of His sufferings. Beloved, it is not sufficient to talk about these things: we must be in them, and they in us. We can know it all intellectually, and be right out of this thing spiritually.

Forgive mc for lingering upon this note. One is speaking to oneself as much as to any, for there is a real danger of saying these things upon a platform, and being out of the actual fight. One knows the pressure and subtlety of the devil, the weakness and the workings of the flesh, and apart from the in-working of the Spirit this Life of Sonship is quite impossible. But this is an hour of God if ever there were one. This is God's day. You and I are privileged to live at the end of the Dis, pensation of Grace when God is seeking sons, those who shall come into the Oneness in Himself in the Christ, who shall thus have in them the urge of the Divine Will that shall cause them by prayer in the Holy Ghost to contribute unto that End of God. Shall we put away all lesser things, the systems, theories, thoughts, speculations, discussions even about the Body of Christ as scriptural truth, and get into the Mighty Thing itself that God is after. Let that Cross have its fruit in us. Then shall He see of the travail of His soul in us and be satisfied. When ? When He sees the travail of the Spirit exercising our hearts. The travail of His great soul is wrought out in the travail of our spirit as we share the fellowship of His Sufferings, and prove by grace to be "the sons of God," sharing with Him the T. M. J. passion of One Will !

## CONCERNING "NOUS," THAT IS, "MIND" OR "UNDERSTANDING"

THIS word occurs 24 times in the New Testament, in 17 of which it is translated "Mind"; in the remaining 7 "understanding." "Nous" is the soul's *spiritual* sense, and is an activity of the spirit of man, constituting with the "conscience" what is known as the "heart." The heart is the organic centre of life in man, and here his spirit emerges in the form of soul. It will be seen therefore that the "mind" with the "conscience" are the twin activities that determine our moral life as a life of good or evil. We have intimated that the heart is that organ for the spirit whereby it may emerge in the form of soul; that is, human life. We are not disembodied spirits, and as long as we live in

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bodies, the spirit has to find its expression in our bodies, and this it does in the form of soul. Thus the heart as an expression of consciousness is very closely related to the spirit, and is often confused with it : but it should be clearly recognised as the organ for the spirit, and therefore though closely related should be distinguished from it. This Scripture is always careful to do. (Note, Psalm li. 10; Ezekiel xxxvi. 26). The heart may be described as the place of "exchange" where spirit and soul re-act upon one another in outflow and inflow of life. It is also by reason of this mutual activity of soul and spirit a factory and a storehouse of life. Here our life is produced and discovered as to its nature and quality, and here it is stored. Take the following scriptures : " Commune with your own heart....and be still"; "Guard thine heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life "; " Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh "; " Out of the heart proceedeth," &c. These and many other references shew that the heart is the place of emergence where the essential life of us comes forth, and they indicate also that here there is a storing of the deeds done in the body either of good or evil. Some day the heart will be obliged to give out its hidden stores, "the secrets of men" (Romans II. 16), and even now the living word of God is able to light up to our consciousness the "thoughts and intents of the heart," hidden motives, secret or undiscovered sins. Jeremiah, by the Holy Spirit says, "The heart is deceitful above all things" -a hidden deep- and "incurable." "Who can know it ? " The answer is, " I the Lord search the heart."

We are at pains to make these distinctions clear so that it may be seen that the "mind" or "understanding" we are dealing with is not the intellectual mind, the mere functioning of the brain, but that moral sense of the heart of man, a deeper consciousness that arises as the spirit is stirred within us, by the impact of moral law, &c.

So far we are speaking of the natural man as of the spiritual man that is, merely of the *faculty* of this "mind." The faculty is there. But in the natural man since the spirit has fallen under the domination of soud, which in turn is now fleshly and ruled by the outward senses and appetites, not to speak of its satanic thraldom, this "nous" or miud of the heart has also fallen into a darkness and a disability to function as it ought. It is only as the Spirit of God comes in grace from without to quicken

such a faculty that man can now know or understand anything aright in relation to God or to himself. Thus Elihu says "There is a spirit in man" (this is the unregenerate spirit), and the breath of the Almighty giveth him understanding." Observe it is the breath or inspiration of the Almighty that gives him understanding. The fallen spirit has not the power to exercise this faculty of the heart as from itself. The grace of God must come to quicken it. In this sense also it is said, "The spirit in man is the candle of the Lord." Yes, but the Lord must use the candle. The man cannot do this aright. Even in relation to himself the spirit in man is unable to discern his true nature and condition. Thus the Psalmist asks: "Who can understand his errors ? Cleanse thou me from secret faults," that is, faults hidden from myself. And when the apostle enquires "who knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?" (1 Cor. ii. 11) he does not imply that any man has a perfect knowledge of himself, but that he possesses the faculty whereby alone he can know the secrets of his own heart. Thus as to the depravity of his nature, the conviction concerning sin he needs the convincement of the Holy Spirit.

Nevertheless, the faculty of the "nous" is there. And by means of "conscience" and this "moral reasoning" God is able to register Himself upon the consciousness of all men, leaving them not without witness either as to Himself or to their moral obligations, and thus judgment has its basis in the human heart (Romans ii. 14-16).

Where this consciousness of the heart has been neglected, and its knowledge deliberately and continuously refused, we learn that God hands over such to a "reprobate mind" (Romans i. 28), and that it becomes " corrupt " (Titus i. 15); and a fearful picture of such a condition is given in Eph. iv. 17, 18, where the "mind" being now vain, its thoughts are darkened, and such are alienated altogether from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, and the callousness (hardness) of their hearts. The twin faculties of the heart, conscience and nous have become atrophied. incapable of response to the Divine Light and Love. Such is the negative side of the question. As to what happens in the New Creation we shall see further, for such arc able to sny "We have the Mind of Christ." T. M. J.

(To be continued.)

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## THE CENTRALITY AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE CROSS (Continued.)

WITHOUT going over the ground again, may I just pause one moment for a re-emphasis upon the centrality of the cross. I think we were able to see in some small way how central the cross is in the eternal determination of God in all matters, and how it has been made the hub of all revelation and of all experience; and it is just that last word which one feels must be stressed. With the cross as central, its centrality has got to be so by experience. It would be quite interesting and informing to go through the Bible and see stage by stage of the historic unfolding how the cross is at the centre; and as the result of such an investigation and such a search, we might easily launch out upon a spoken ministry, teaching the centrality of the cross. It might both grip us with its fascination and grip our hearers in the same way, and yet the impact of it might be utterly lacking. You will pardon this reflex upon one's own experience in which that has been exactly true. One is not saying a very great deal more, or differently, from what one did say in the first decade and more of one's ministry, but one is saying that same thing with an altogether new realisation, and, one trusts, with a new impact. One came to see the place of the cross, and much of the meaning of the cross as in the Bible and in theology, and one spoke about it continuously. The language of Calvary was there in speech, in preaching and teaching, and Calvary's centrality to all the other doctrines of the Bible ; but, beloved, the difference is enormous between that and this in one's own knowledge and experience. The day came when all that rose up like an enormous pole-axe and smote one between the cyes in its cumulative effect, and one was as good as dead. One was brought to the place where the key was turned upon all the past, and failure was written in a comparative sense with what one saw ought to be, and must be, if all that one had been saying for years was to have any adequate justification and vindication; and in that deepest and darkest and most anguished hour one came to see the beginnings of what the cross means and how the cross is central and all the theology and all the boasted Bible knowledge as such (that is, the mere diagrammatic comprehension, or apprehension of the books of the Bible and the main lives of teaching, and so on) all floored and

smitten with oneself through years of deepening dealings with one on the part of God, and in that day, that day, an end ! But in that day also a beginning ! Now one is not going to dwell upon one's own experience, one simply refers to it for this word of emphasis. I want to ask you, to interrogate you most earnestly as we go on,-for all this teaching would fail, would only again resolve itself into mere mental grasp, unless we face the issue of this-has there been a day or a time in your experience when you were as good as dead? When the cross really brought that issue that it was impossible for you to go on in yourself in the world and realm of spiritual experience, to say nothing of Christian work and activity, both as a person and as a worker, a preacher, a teacher recognised individually in the realm of religious activities, when in every sense the cross registered once and for all in your deepest consciousness that there was nothing possible in you and of you, and that unless God Himself came in in anything short of "the exceeding greatness of His power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead," there could be no Christian ministry? Now I ask you, have you had in a day or a week, or month, or year (for some it extends over a long period) that drive upon you of the divine hammer of the word of the cross breaking the rocks in pieces and piercing to dividing asunder? That is "the centrality of the cross" in reality when it is at the centre of experience, planted at the centre of your being; not in the centre of your intellect, not in the centre of your emotions, not in the centre of your natural volition and will, but in the very centre of your spirit so that when it was planted there it was bewildering and staggering and stunning; and as for intellect, it could not cope with it; as for will, it could not face it; as for emotions, why, you were petrified, the thing was staggering? Has the cross come to you in your spirit in any such way? Remember that is where it has got to be planted—in your spirit first. If you are seeking, beloved, either to attain to spiritual effect, or to reproduce spiritual effect by the knowledge of the cross in your reason and your intellect in the first instance, you are destined to spiritual failure. If you are seeking to have this thing for yourself, and then to be able to minister it to others in the realm of your emotions or feelings, in the first place, you are destined to miss the mark.

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thing. One of the most amazing things to one in these days is the failure to recognise this on the part of strong, pure, earnest evangelical men and women. What I mean is this mystery, the inconsistency of a strong and mighty repudiation of modernism-as it is called-in the matters of biblical interpretation, and at the same time the wholesale swallowing of modernism in the matter of psychology. Where do you get your psychology from-Plato, Aristotle -Pagans? That is the foundation of modern psychology and the Evangelicals have swallowed that as much as the modernists. It is not biblical psychology! It does not take into account the fact that the soul which it claims to expound and interpret, is ruled out by the Bible in the first instance, and the spirit is demanded to be quickened and energised by the Holy Spirit to grasp spiritual realities. You know quite well that modern psychology only recognises the duality of human life-soul and body, mind and matter, and after a good deal of difficulty and struggling to interpret some third element with which it is confronted, it is at length called the "Subconscious mind "what the Bible calls the supreme thing, the innermost and deepest thing-the human spirit in which things are eternally registered and never lost, and which will reproduce them in the Day of Judgment, and we shall find that the basis of condemnation and eternal judgment is in that spirit itself. Hell might well be the divulging in the spirit of man of what is stored up therein as never to be forgotten without the cross of Christ to deal with it. To put it in another way, one lets a psycho-analyst to-day bring up from the past without providing an adequate remedy for ridding you of the past, and you have hell begun, and suicide, or an asylum, or something of that kind follows: you let the real state of your being be brought to light without the presentation of the cross, and you have hell begun. It is a merciful thing that there is a covering over of the human spirit, a door of forgetfulness for a little while. until we know the cross, and then it is safe for us and it is blessed for the depths to deliver up their content, to have it cast into a greater death, "the depths of the sea." But the cross is central, and the cross has got to be placed at the very centre of our being-in our spirit. Beloved, we may not understand, we may not be able to grasp it thoroughly in all its meaning ; it may be bewildering and stunning, too great for us, and it may make our very minds rock, and our emotions freeze, and our wills to be

paralysed, and there we are smitten by that cross, as good as dead naturally, but, in the power of His resurrection, it gets our spirit quickened and energised to rise up. You can never follow in the way of the cross naturally in your spirit—never—and until resurrection has taken place in your spirit, you will never be able to go on by Calvary.

Well, now, that is a long way round and opening up many other questions, but one has this emphasis in one's spirit all the time that we must not stay here for mere teaching, though it may be right teaching; we have got to come to the practical issue, and the centrality of the cross is not the centrality of the cross in theology, or in the Bible as a book, or in Christian doctrine, or upon a platform. The centrality of the cross is essentially and indispensably experimentally planted in your spirit, and from that time, out from the very centre of your being the cross radiates upon every activity of your life; for you find that your thinking, your reasoning, your speaking and your going and your staying, your speech and your silence, your handling of all matters in business, in the home, everywhere, everything is governed by the spirit and law of the cross within you. You look at everything in the light of the cross. You do not stay to consider it mentally and intellectually, but it is a spiritual force within you which controls you all the time and challenges you when you have unwisely said something, you are smitten by the power of the cross,—you cught not to have said that, or you ought not to have said that in that way, and you know it. You have no need for anyone to tell you. It is a very blessed thing when people are in the Spirit—no need to rebuke, you can keep quiet-the Spirit is there making the cross central in their spirit life to judge and to slay.

Oh, that we should be brought right there and held there in all ministry. Beloved revelation and the commission are not enough. Are you a Christian worker, a Sunday School teacher, are you in any special sense a servant of the Lord? Yes, you believe that you are that by divine commission : there is no question about it : you held it before the Lord, you prayed over it, and you followed what would take the workl and eternity to shake as your conviction that you are in the will of God in that. The Lord may have appeared unto you from glory to commission you, and he may have given you his revelation as the message for your ministry. That is not enough. Listen, the Lord appeared

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unto Moses, gave him the revelation and said— "Go!" Commissioned on the basis of a revelation of Himself and of His purpose-" And the Lord met him and sought to slay him " -" sought to kill him !" Have you never been met in the way of a divine commission and almost put right out of action ? There is no question about the commission and revelation, but you have been met, and you have not got on, you have stopped there and something of a smiting has taken place. "And the Lord met him and sought to kill him !" Why ? Because he had failed in the covenant sign of circumcision. It is the symbol of the encircling blood by which the whole body of the flesh is cut off and put away (Col. ii. 11). A covenant of Life with the Lord of Life against the lord of Death, as the ground of his right, power, and activity is put away, that is, the flesh. And a revelation and a commission can never be carried out effectively until the cross has been placed right at the centre of things. You can speak of divine revelations in the flesh and do yourself harm, and the revelation harm. You can seek to do the Lord's will in the flesh, and rob the Lord's will of all its dynamic because it is done in the flesh. The cross has got to be central to ministry. Now are you there ? : Have you had your Calvary ? Everything is bound up with that-everything-it changes things entirely, it changes the outlook, the apprehension, the consciousness, and relationships are all changed, utterly changed from that moment, and you never again judge things according to man's standards. You never judge success in Christian work by the following and numbers and the full pews of a church and all those outward signs of prosperity; not to say that outward signs are not sometimes wholesome and good, but you never ludge according to that, you judge altogether according to the spiritual effectiveness and we are going to see what spiritual effectiveness really is by way of the cross before we are through trust; but the whole consciousness is changed at the cross from the natural to the spiritual, and you have a new kind of consciousness a new reveation, and you are perfectly satisfied with it.

Now we have already seen the centrality of the cross as to the Person of Christ, and as to the Holy Spirit. We are not going over that again, other than to say that it takes the cross to make manifest who Jesus Christ is, and lesus Christ is only manifest in the full power of His Person in and through the cross—you cannot know Him in any other way. 1 am

going to stay here for this moment. There is, mark you, an apprehension of the Person of Jesus in a certain sense which is universal, so far as this world is concerned, because of the universal elements in Christ. There are those universal elements which make Him timeless and nationless,—that He is of all nations and of all time, and you can never fit Him finally into any one water-tight compartment of time, or race, or nation. And there is a certain apprehension of Him in all the world as He can be the ideal of all nations, but you have to cut out the cross. Here is the tragedy of a book like Stanley Jones' 'Christ of the Indian Road.' There is the apprehension of the Christ and the evangelical presentation of the Christ, but be careful how you press the matter of the cross or you will upset India,—the same everywhere else. You will have to modify your interpretation and application of the cross when you preach Christ or else you will spoil His chances of acceptance, keep that out and you will have success and prosper and get on,-keep that out in all its deeper meanings. And you know, beloved, that what is true in that sense in the larger ranges is true within the Christian community itself. Yes, preach Christ historic, heroic, idyllic, but don't mention that cross in its substitutionary truth. Or come nearer. still in the evangelical circle. 'Yes, we will accept Christ as our substitute, but when you . ask us to accept this identification with Christ, that is another matter—leave that out. We are prepared to take the objective, but don't press the subjective.' The nearer you get to the cross the more you sift your following. The nearer you get to the very central meaning and heart of the cross the fewer there will be that follow. The real central reality of the Lord Jesus is found there, and you do not know Him most deeply and truly until yon have got to the innermost secret of Calvary.

Then as to the Holy Spirit, we have seen that there is no knowledge of, or manifestation of the Holy Spirit only by way of the cross.

Passing to the next section we quite clearly see how the "So Great Salvation" is in and through and by the cross. One uses that fragment—"So Great Salvation" because of its comprehensiveness, its inclusiveness. We are not going to stay with it because it is so patent. The words put on the diagram represent each one—its own specific significance in the all-inclusive salvation.

We put Substitution first. One died as a substitute, in the place of the many.

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Wc follow with Representation. "If one died for all, then all died in Him." That is representative and inclusive.

And then Redemption. If you want to follow these things in their own particular meaning you have only to ask one question relative to each word. What state docs this word suggest man to be in to make it necessary? When you speak of Redemption, then you ask, what is the state that makes that necessary. He is "sold under sin," and there is to be " a redemption of the purchased possession." "Ye were bought with a price."

Next Justification. By this we are given a place in a plane and in a position as though we had never sinned at all. The marvel of Justification! We must remember that that can only be made possible by death. "He that hath died is justified from sin." Someone inclusively of ourselves must have died to make it possible for us to occupy a position in the presence of God as though we had never sinned at all. What a wonderful standing.

Reconciliation. It suggests enmity, antagonism, alienation, conflict. These all dealt with at the root and spring.

Regeneration. You may not have defined in your minds, or had defined for you the difference between Regeneration and New Birth. They are not synonymous terms. Although they are the same thing, they are not synonymous in their significance. Regeneration relates to the new race. It is a racial term. New Birth relates to sonship. The gift of Sonship, the Spirit of Sonship, born out of God, sons of God. As you are a new creation, regenerated, you come to receive the gift of sonship in that new race of sons.

And then Sanctification and Glorification. We are familiar with these things, but all this, beloved, centres in and issues from the cross; but wha: I want you to notice with this, like all that of which we have spoken and shall speak—in its first meaning in this age and dispensation. is for and in the church. It is for the elset Body. Now, of course, it would be easy to see that that means that there are many excluded from the possibility of salvation, but only by their own exclusion, not God's, but God foreknew, and He gathers up all this "So Great Salvation" into and for and in those whom He foreknew in Christ. Now perhaps you are asking, what is the special and subtle value of that ? Well, this, that God must have a specific instrument through which to mediate

the "So Great Salvation," and the mediation of the "So Great Salvation" cannot be less than experimental. Anybody could preach the gospel as a doctrine, as a teaching, as a system, but only those in whom the gospel has been wrough<sub>1</sub> out, and who have been wrought out in the gospel can preach the gospel with any effective. ness. In other words, if this "So Great Salva. tion" is bound up with the cross, then it requires a Body in whom the cross has been planted experimentally to preach the gospel That Body must be an elect Body, secured in foreknowledge beyond the possibility of being lost or of failure. It is mdispensable to Christ and therefore as secure as Himself. Only according to the measure in which Calvary has become experimentally real in us, to that degree, and to that degree alone, is there eternal effectiveness in our preaching of the gospel. In another way, we have got to be the gospel, and the gospel has got to be us before there can be any transmission of it with spiritual effectiveness; so God must have a sphere and a centre in which He makes the gospel not merely a revelation, but an experience. You can put it in this other way. Christ, Himself, had to have the cross wrought in Him to the deepest depths representatively in order to make the gospel effective in the universe. It is not coming along and taking up your Bible and saying that the Bible teaches that, and so prepare an address on what the Bible teaches and get it off on the congregation. That is. the tragedy of the modern pulpit. God has nothing to do with that, and is not interested in that. He will call out a people, drawing them by the cross, and then begin to plant the cross at the centre of their being, and make all its meaning actual, experimental, and then through them, mediate the forces of Calvary out to the widening circles of the universe until principalities and powers feel the impact thereof. This is in the Church: the gospel demands the Church. The cross with all its gospel requires the Church, and the Church in the fulfilment of the universal purpose of God is the Church in which the cross is central in experience. Is that clear ? The "Church " is Christ's Body, and what is true of the Head has to be made true of the Body, so that salvation is in Christ. corporately as well as personally.

We come to the fourth and final main section of the inner circle; that is, the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ. Just as each of the others have been detached, separated, and made a specific line of teaching by some, and taken

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out of their relative position and significance, so, to-day, there is a dangerous tendency to make the Second Advent a separate thing. We thank God for every clarion voice that tells of His coming, but we must not fail to recognise the relative place of the teaching of the Second Coming, otherwise we become investigators of prophecy and experts on the ages and the dates, and the geographical and historical movements, and while we may fascinate the minds of people with the romance of it all, we are not making different people of them, and we are not putting into them the commensurate dynamic of a spiritual effectiveness. We must see, beloved, the two major things in each of these connections. Firstly, the root in the cross, and secondly, the expression in the Body; and as for the Second Coming it must be the consummation of progressive translation by the Spirit. And if you are looking forward to some isolated event in history for translation from earth to heaven, and have failed to recognise that the Holy Spirit is here, like Eliezer of old, piloting you progressively back by way of the cross, and that by it you ought to be translated from things of earth to the things of heaven as you are becoming every day less of this earth, and less of this world, and more of the heavens, that everything in your life and make-up is being changed according to the pattern in the heavenlies, I fear that you may have a shock, even a disappointment, in the day of His appearing. In order that we like Enoch might at least take the cne step into the presence of God, we must walk in the presence of God every day, until as it were, almost unconsciously—leaving the things of earth—there will be no shock, catacylsm, no startling element about the Lord's appearing, we shall find ourselves with Him-no terrific upheaval-we shall walk in-for we have been walking that way all the time. We have often put it in this way, as Peter puts it,—" Pilgrims confessed and strangers" so that the things of earth are becoming more and more strange, and the things of heaven arc becoming more and more familiar, and we are feeling more at home in those spiritual things and less at home in earthly things—progressive translation. When Eliczer goes for Abraham to find a bride for his <sup>80</sup>n Isaac he brings her back over the long road, and the last meeting, with Isaac, is only an alighting from the camel which has been moving in that direction all the time. It was not the sudden bumping down from one country into another. That is what some people seem to be

looking for in the Second Coming!

Now the test is, are we of the earth, or are we in the heavens. There are two blue lines there. Blue, the heavenly glory is the church as it is of the heavenlies, far above all, and there has got to be that relationship, The Church is a heavenly body. The fact is it is by the approximation to what we arc. Wc arc a heavenly body, and we have got to approximate to that every day. That is the church's progress and pilgrimage—becoming what we are in the mind and thought of God. The consummation of progressive translation by the Spirit! That, beloved, is the end of walking after the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit. The dropping off of all that is of the flesh and of the earth, then the climax of the walk of faith. For the walk of faith 1s the walk of faith ! in accordance with this law so that the progress of spiritual experience is the progressive confounding of all that upon which the senses rest and to which the senses cling. Oh, I assure you that if you are going on in the Spirit the intellectual as such is going to become far, far less, and you are going to recognise that this thing to you, and everybody else, is the biggest enigma in creation, in the universe, the biggest. mystery. There is no doubt about that from the intellectual side, the rational side. God is simply confounding you with what He is doing with you, getting you into realms where you cannot follow in any other way but in your spirit. You know in your spirit that the thing is right; you know that you cannot be elsewhere; or otherwise; you know that your life eternally depends upon it, and yet for the life of you you cannot explain what the Lord is after, and what the Lord is doing and why He does it in this way. He is defying every attempt of yours to follow Him in the flesh. And as for emotions, as for comfortable, nice, warm feelings in the way that the Lord leads you, well some of you have got to the end of all this long ago. Yes, the walk of faith is the walk of faith, ever increasing, with an ever crushing intensification until at last the climax of the walk of faith will be going in with the Lord and the full unfolding of the meaning and all the mystery of His dealings with us now. "Now we see in a glass darkly (and it does seem that the film and the smoke on the glass deepens and intensifies as we go on with the Lord as to any explanation), but then face to face. Now I know in part (but Oh, what a little part it is as we get into the realm of His greater mysteries), but then I shall know, even as I have been

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known "-by Him, not by other people. The climax of the walk of faith—the complement of an ascension union. That is only saying in another way what we have just said. The approximation to what we are through our being identified with and incorporated into Christ. We were made to sit in the heavenlies in Christ and become a heavenly body in Him. The complement of that spiritual reality is the appearing of our Lord, and so it is the Body of Christ moving, according to its own spiritual laws, by reason of the cross—which is a deepening mystery in its out-workings and methods, and demands,—that brings the Lord at last. The Coming of the Lord is relative, not an historic event in solitary isolation, but the consummation of a spiritual process and progress in and of the Body of Christ.

Now having gone round, or taken the first round, merely skimming the surface, we must leave it there and speak a little more of the Body of Christ another time—as to its nature and function. Then move out to the nations of the world, then still further out to the principalities and powers, and then out to far above all heavenlies. May the Lord continue to give us utterance, revelation and light. T. A.-S.

## THE RELIGION OF MAN

#### (From a reported sermon of Dr. Tauler.)

THE work of the Holy Ghost in the souls of men is hindered in various ways....one hindrance is, that even good men look at divine and spiritual things in a carnal way—they have natural and fleshly thoughts about the Lord Jesus, and think much of visions, and represent to themselves the Lord Jesus, or the angels, in some bodily shape of their own imaginings, and work themselves up to think they are especially favoured by God because of these workings of their imagination, and a love for Christ which is the excitement of natural feeling. Therefore the Lord said to His disciples, It is good for you that I go away, for they knew Him after the flesh, and thus even the presence of His blessed manhood had become a hindrance to them.

People arc, notwithstanding, satisfied and proud when they have let their natural hearts occupy themselves with the things of God.

Dear children, whoever you may be who are thus taken up with your natural feelings, remember that He of Whom you speak is not a man only, but the great and mighty God, who created all things, and upholds them with the word of His power; and that He became  $a_8$  nothing for our sins, and therefore let  $th_6$  thought of His sufferings lay you low in  $th_6$  dust before Him with shame and sorrow.

Oh, how little fruit has the blessed and glorious suffering of the Lord brought forth in men | Even the remembrance of it can fill the heart with pride and with self ! You hear people talk of these deep things of God, just as if they had flown up into the highest heaven, and have never yet taken one single step out of their wretched selves !

They talk of 'the dear Lord Jesus,' and His birth and death, and are filled with an enjoyment which they think is of God; or they weep tears over the sufferings and the cross of Christ, but all these things pass smoothly through their souls, as a ship through the waters, and leave no trace behind. For their love is a love of the enjoyment of their own feelings, and not a love of God. Outside things have touched their hearts, and the inner truth has never reached them.

But natural love, and Divine love, look often so much alike, it is more than easy to mistake the one for the other.

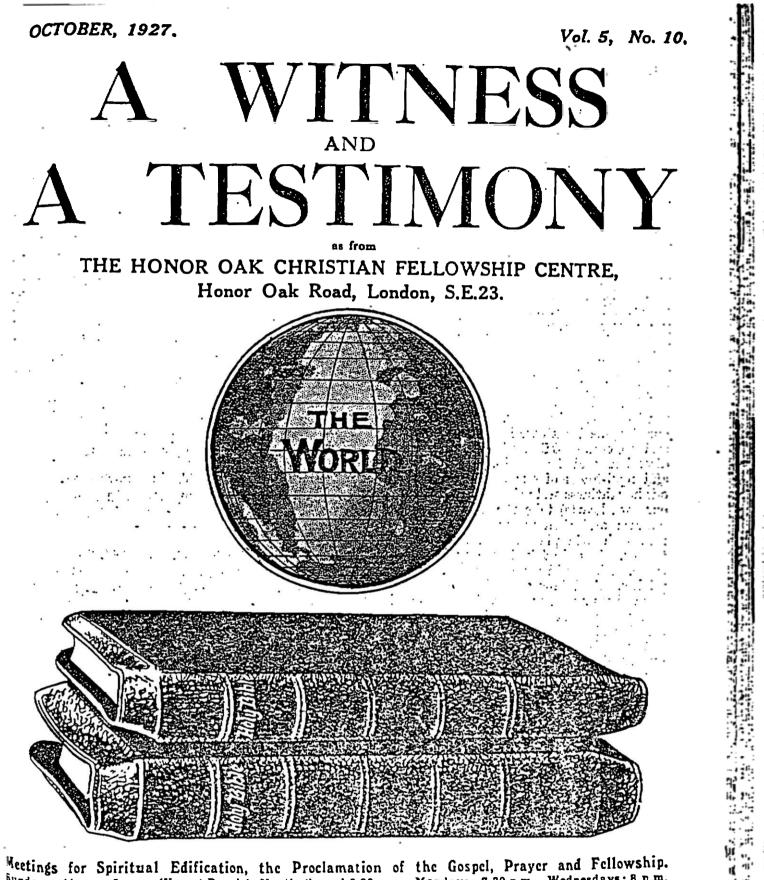
Yes, but how can we know the one from the other? Master Tauler tells us this also.

If it is natural love and enjoyment, such a man will drag himself away with a great effort from the things of the world. But if it is Divine love, the things of the world will drop off, and he will despise them, and they will become nauseous and loathsome. It will be as though he can see no longer, for the glory of the Light that has shone down upon him, for the natural eye is darkened by the radiance of that Glory. And when this has happened to a man it does not exalt him, but casts him down, and he fades away as it were into his own nothingness. Thus can we know it was the light of God.

And therefore, dear children, it is exactly contrary to the spirituality of the natural heart, for that hoists people up to a wondrous height in their own self-satisfaction and selfconceit, and makes them look down on others from this giddy height, and they say they are above this one, and that one—this thing or that. A godly man never talks of being above any person or thing, however small or mean : but when it is God who has raised him up above, he sees himself less than the least, and above none.

[Truly wise and simple words, revealing <sup>a</sup> knowledge of the Cross, and of that living word which discerns between soul and spirit.—Ep.].

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Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Proclamation of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship. <sup>Sundays</sup>: 11 a.m., 3 p.m. (Young People's Meeting), and 6.30 p.m. Mondays: 7.30 p.m. Wednesdays: 8 p.m. Saturdays: 7.30 p.m.

<sup>Conferences</sup> are held every week-end (Saturday and Sunday), and also a longer week-end at the <sup>be</sup>ginning of each month, this fixed by the first Sunday. (Friday to Monday evenings, <sup>inclusive.</sup>) All particulars may be obtained from G. Paterson, Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

Ministers: T. Austin-Sparks; T. Madoc Jeffreys; G. Paterson (General Secretary). Guest House Hostesses: Lady Ogle; Mrs. M. Brand. Telegrams: "Byndeamos, Forest, London." Cables "Syndeamos, London."

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## MINISTERS' LETTER

(Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre.)

October, 1927.

#### BELOVED OUF OR LORD,

It is His great desire to lead us beside the waters of quietness, if He can only get us to be still.

This is His great difficulty with us, for we have to confess that our nature is yet that of somewhat stupid sheep, prone to go our own way, and thus missing so much that He would *lead* us into. But then He must lead! And are we not so restless, speculative, adventurous, yes, clever in an uncharted region, where none can travel without the Pillar going ahead ?

The confession at the head of this so familiar psalm is a revelation of God in a new character and relationship,---" Jehovah, my Shepherd !" It is an exclamation of faith the works of which must immediately follow. He does not become our Shepherd until we have seen Him as such, and so confess Him, yielding up to Him all direction and leadership. The stubbornness and foolishness of our flesh, so self-confident, our haughtiness and pride (often concealed from our own hearts) take the direction out of His Hands; and then we wonder why our souls find such arid places, such tumults and distresses. Yes, but it is we who have found these. He would never have led us into such plights. And how tenderly He extricates us from them when we have learned our lesson, and understand that it is HE Who is the Shepherd !

We are speaking of our inward life. In the outer realm of circumstance and happening there must perforce be storm. Did He not say, "In the world ye shall have tribulation ?" But He had prefaced the prophecy of this conflict with many words of comfort that "in Me ye might have peace." This is the order,—peace first, battle afterwards, and out of that peace.

So He would lead our inner man, our spirit, into still places where the River of the Water of Life flows deeply and tranquilly, until in communion with God in Father and in Son by One Spirit our restlessness and fever are all abated, and we are content to be with Him where He is in the Bosom of the Father. Worship, fellowship : these God seeks first, and not our service.

Thus He causes all self-activity to cease, making us to lie down (for like silly sheep we would never lie down of ourselves) amid pastures of tender grass. True inward rest in God ! The waters follow, they are waters of Life, not of passivity; and so our souls are restored to vigour and to health. The places of rest are the places of recovery.

And then there follow those true and fruitful activities of spiritual progress and service,— He leads in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake. No Name but His is now glorified. His Name is Jesus; but as we now say, "Jesus!" are we not truly saying, "Jehovah, my Shepherd!"

Yours in the following of His steps,

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS. T. MADOC-JEFFREYS.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE following list represents the gifts of two months, August and September, and reflects the result of a statement made to the fellowship as it meets locally, that the increased cost of publication and distribution now amounting to about £15 per month, required a closer co-operation in prayerful interest, so that the financial obligation should be met as each issue is due. We have always had the Lord's seal of money in hand, and the position now is that we face the publication of the October number with a small balance to the good, £1 15s.

Local, £12 13s. 2d.; Cardiff, £5; Derby, £1; N. Berwick, £1; Reading, 10s.; Syria, 10s.; New York, 10s.; Clapton, 10s.; Kircubbin, 10s.; Plymouth, 10s.; Wimbledon, 10s.; Leigh-on-Sea, 10s.; Liverpool, 10s.; Coulsdon, 5s.; Lowestoft, 5s.; Swansea, 5s.; Co. Wicklow, 5s.; Egypt, 4s. 6d.; Sandown, 3s. 8d.; Glasgow, 2s. 10d.; Palmer's Green, 3s.; Dundee, 3s.; Belfast, 2s. 6d.; Swindon, 2s. 6d.; Northampton, 2s. 6d.; Crouch End, 2s. 6d.; Northampton, 2s. 6d.; Crouch End, 2s. 6d.; Weymouth, 2s. 6d.; Clehester, 2s. 6d.; Dennistoun, 2s. 6d.; Wimbledon, 2s. 6d.; Manchester 2s. 6d.; Fairlight, 2s. 6d.; Brewer Street, 2s. 2d.; Elgin, 2s.; Heaton, 2s.; Kennington Road, 2s.; Highbury New Park, 1s.; Newington Green, 1s.; Shirley, 8d.; Liverpool 4]d.; Gateshead, 4d. Total, £27 6s. 8]d.

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## THE FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

#### RESTORATIONS.

Our readers are awaiting news of our beloved brother, Mr. Sparks, whose serious condition was reported in our last issue. The situation then had been somewhat suddenly precipitated, and we were not able to give any particulars. There is good news! A further operation became manifestly necessary. This has not only been successfully accomplished, for there appears to have been a Divine direction for a clean and very skilful dealing with the physical trouble, but the recovery to strength has been very rapid and steady, and we have every cause for grateful praise.

At the time of writing our brother is out of hospital, and has now been able to leave home again for change of scene and rest. It will be necessary that the period of convalescence this time should be adequate, and the rest complete. It will help matters considerably if all concerned recognise that no demands for any kind of service should be laid upon our brother for many months to come. An undue haste to re-enter ministry will only involve another breakdown: and we cannot afford further risks. Our brother needs a long and well-deserved holiday.

At the same time we are glad to realise there is another potent ministry available for him, namely, that of *writing* his messages. That ministry can, without break, go on through these pages, for there has been accumulating material of what has been uttered during recent Conferences, and these messages will be published during the forthcoming months, and, as in this issue, will serve a fruitful purpose even before our brother has recovered sufficient strength to take up his pen again.

A restoration of another character, but equally pleasing, has been the return of Lady Ogle for a temporary resumption of her ministry at the Hostel. During the past months Mrs. Brand has had to shoulder the whole burden of the House ministry. She has been wonderfully sustained. The strain has been very great. We are rejoiced therefore that Lady Ogle is able to make her contribution to a true spiritual ministry during these weeks, and will be with us over the November, and possibly the December Conference.

We can say of these things, "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."

THE HOUSE.

These and other recent events have served to bring out very definitely what we believe is the more specific ministry of the Guest House, and we would ask all interested to read carefully and to pray earnestly over these observations. First, all throught of a "training centre" along the lines of a Bible seminary has been ruled out by these happenings. We are seeking that those of our young people who have had a specific call to ministry, and who need therefore to cultivate habits of regular study and self-discipline by submitting themselves to authority, may be led to such centres as are true to the Word of God, where such academic training is provided.

At the same time we are the more confirmed in our conviction that a ministry of *spiritual training* is committed to us, but that it is for those of the Lord's servants who, already equipped in the manner indicated above, may need an intensive teaching by the Spirit in the full message of the Cross, and who thus in fellowship of prayer with us, may be given revelation and equipment of the Holy Ghost for victorious life and service. Problay periods of a month to six weeks should be sufficient in most cases, but it is obvious there can be laid down no hard and fast rule in such a matter as the Lord's preparation of our hearts.

In His goodness the Lord appears to have provided a very clear pattern of such training in the experience of our young brethren, Gresham Speedy and Victor Thomas, who having come to us with a sufficient academic training, have to the joy of us all swiftly matured under the Anointing of the Spirit, so that they are now going forward in manifest fruitfulness and power. The news of their labours, which we mention lower down, in these notes, should be illustrative of what we suggest.

In addition to this ministry of the House there is, of course, the regular hospitality afforded to those who come to our week-end and monthly Conferences. In some cases these brief periods are prolonged. When the story of what has already been accomplished in recent months will be unfolded it will be a triumph to His Name. Much blessing has spread to many a place in this and other lands through these brief contacts and times of fellowship, and thus the two-fold revelation of the Cross and of the Bcdy is spreading. We should like to make it very clear that workers either from home or foreign spheres of service who are on

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vacation arc particularly welcome to spend such time with us as they desire. And to save all confusion may it also be noted that all arrangements should he made through the one whom the Lord has appointed to this ministry, our brother Mr. Paterson

But, Prayer. Prayer, Prayer |

This one word, spoken by the Holy Spirit to our hearts, epitomises the ministry of this House—a ministry calling for true holiness and spiritual devotion, one that demands and entails a ceaseless labour of love, and requiring such energy, unremitting practical labour and intelligence, as are only possible to those who are consecrated to this priesthood by "the filling of the hand" by the Great Priest over the House of God.

The Lord is leading us to see a "Prayer Room "where unceasingly there may be opportunity for God-called intercessors to wait upon the Lord. Our meetings for prayer, general and more particular, do not meet the need. There must be liberty for that most costly yet mightiest ministry-the intercessions of the saints by the Spirit, Who is God Himself resident in the Church, the Body of the Christ. MUCH AND MANY MINISTRIES. South strates in h It will be probably recognised that the past six weeks have been full of strenuous and unexpected ministry due to the sickness of our brother, and the delay in bringing out the paper will be readily forgiven. But in addition to the stress of work occasioned by the home situation there has been the most extraordinary opening-up of ministry as from this centre in many places. How grateful we are for the raising up of those who have been divinely enabled to meet these demands.

It will be remembered that the September Conference was particularly related in our hearts with "service and ministry." The Spirit was preparing us for the needs of this present time.

At home the Lord has been markedly anointing our brothers, Mr. Paterson and Mr. Alexander, for utterance, and both have been towers of strength to the home fellowship. Sister Florence has also been brought into a very vital ministry for our young people.

Afield, in every instance, the Lord has recorded His own Victory, so that there now open up many avenues of future ministry. DIEULEFIT.

We had to take our brother's appointment here, and all we can say about it is, The Lord

took us there. Despite peculiar difficulties with regard to interpretation His word got through, and there have been several testimonies to *revelation*. The themes given were "The Cross and the will of God ' and 'The Preciousness of the Blood '—we were led to stay on an extra day to give the latter message.

There is no space here to give anything like an adequate description of the spiritual move. ment that has its annual home at Dieulefit.

Some seven pastors of the Reformed Church in the province of the Drome, Southern France, have come under the conviction and illumina. tion of the Holy Spirit concerning the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus during the past five years, and have formed themselves into what is known as "The Brigade," preaching the Cross in its fulness, and declaring the need of "Revival." This preaching has been so in the power of the Spirit that the movement is spreading like a living flame throughout France in the Protestant circles.

The Conference this year was unprecedented in numbers and power. If one were asked what was the especial characteristic of the gatherings, one would say, "Life." A feature of the Con. ference is the preponderance of young peoplethe pastors are mostly quite young men. Like the Revival in Wales of some twenty-five years ago expression for spiritual life is found in much singing. About five hundred people had gathered into this interesting little town, sheltered among the foot hills of the French Alps, and the Convention between the fixed meetings, seemed to be one continuous happy festival of praise, even the meal times being liberally punctuated with hymn and chorus singing. Yet all was healthy and clean, a clear spiritual happiness untainted by the hectic and hysterical strain which, alas, sometimes characterises movements that borrow the term "revival."

Such sound and solid teaching was there also, and it was interesting at the morning sessions to watch the keen attention with which the large companies of young people listened to the lengthy theses of the pastors upon the various themes, all these, even when they touched upon such practical matters as "finance" springing out of the central theme, "The Cross."

On every hand one had abundant evidence of the far-reaching results of our brother's (Mr. Sparks) ministry in the two preceding years. The circulation of his booklets in the French language has met an immediate response and need. This movement of the Spirit will need the protection and cherishing of our prayers, for as it assumes dimensions that promise popularity there will be the usual readiness of the "flesh" to take hold of and to enter into anything that has "prospects"; Satan also will attempt to make it an organised institution rather than an expression of the Body of Christ as in France, and thus open and related to that Body in its need of *Cosmic* emancipation at this time of our Lord's nigh Return.

#### ABERDARE.

Prior to Dieulefit we had gone to Aberdare for September 14th and 15th. Here is a little piece of work of the greatest significance.

To tell the whole story of it would be to open an autobiographical chapter. Suffice it to say that "The Aberdare Christian Fellowship Centre" was commenced in 1924 before the writer knew there was such a place at Honor Oak. It represents the transformation of the Aberdare Free Church Girls' Club, a religiosocial institution one was responsible for founding during the War years, but which the Lord gave back into one's hands when at Cardiff-this in accordance with His personal promise made during a time of chastening, "I will restore to you the years the locust hath eaten.". One's loyal friend and prayer-partner in this, who also bore the local and financial responsibility, was Miss Giles, who had become responsible for the leased premises of the "Club." These were renewed as to lease, the furniture brought in, a small hall in addition was rented, and the present purely spiritual work was commenced.

It comprises members of many communities, but the basis of membership is "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints" and the service is "Intercession for the whole Body of the Christ."

One has been in close and constant touch with this little work during the past three years. It has had to develop naturally. There has been nothing forced. Some of the local ministers, champions of "The Faith," such as the Rev. Cynog Williams of Aberdare, Rev. W. J. Williams of Penrhiweeiher, and the Rev. J. R. Morgan of Treharris, have been interested in the movement from its inception, and have done much to encourage the little band that have stood for a fellowship and service in the Spirit That can embrace the whole Body of Christ. It has been our privilege to come in at the annual gatherings and at times of crisis, and this visit in September marked the time of a very definite step forward.

The meetings were well attended, and there was a freedom not only for the utterance, but for the reception of the Word. It was realised the time had come to trust the Lord completely for the financial support of the work, and therefore to cease from everything in the nature of an appeal and to do away with "collections": this despite the fact that there is still a considerable liability standing against Miss Giles's name, representing the transference of the premises and furnishing.

Then it was realised that the Centre with its nicely furnished rooms should be used altogether for spiritual ends, and used *daily*, for owing to the unfortunate amount of unemployment in the district, there is quite a number of young men who could be received and met in this way. The question then arose as to how this ministry could be provided.

This is where the Lord's preparation of our young brethren Gresham Speedy and Victor Thomas came in. They were manifestly the Lord's choice to meet the present emergency. They have now been in Aberdare for the past six weeks, the Centre is becoming really a "centre" of spiritual ministry and life, and the cry is that their work is only just commenced. Afternoon Bible Classes three times in the week, evening gatherings for prayer and teaching, open air services for Gospel proclamation in the thronged thoroughfares, are providing them with rich opportunities to celebrate the Triumph of the Lord Jesus in Aberdare, and there are manifest tokens of the Lord's working.

The present phase is probably but a passing one. At the time of writing, we cannot say what may be the period or nature of their future service; but we arc quite conscious there can be no discharge from this ministry, and that in one way or another the work must go on.

#### DUBLIN.

The Conference here at the Central Y.M.C.A., convened by Captain Wallis for October 4th to 8th, synchronised with the release of our brothers, Rev. K. Oliphant, of Wimbledon, and Rev. A. S. Crowe, of Ealing, into their call to a free ministry unto the Body of Christ in all the earth. The Lord set an ample seal to their ministry.

The Bible readings of Mr. Oliphant, of Wimbledon, based upon Leviticus v. 14, vi. 7, dealing with the Lord's ministry in His Church,

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as High Priest as meeting with the trespasses of His people, the presenting of them to Himself as the Lord's portion typified in "The Fifth," were rich in unction.

Mr. Crowe brought the Conference to its climax in his closing evening addresses upon the "Baptism in the Holy Spirit and Fire" that thoroughly purges the Lord's threshing floor, a sane and strong interpretation of the true significance of that "One Baptism" of "identification."

At Dublin the tea-table talks are always a vital ministry, and this year these with blackboard illustrations describing the nature and need of man in his tri-partite being of spirit, soul, and body, were taken by the vriter. The keen interest taken by the band of young men who were present at every session was most stimulating. One was literally besieged with questions and enquiries, and there was no respite from this pleasant ministry from the Tuesday to the Friday.

Our brother, Captain Wallis, is the steward of an unique opportunity in Dublin. He organises a Gospel service attended by some 2,000 every Sunday evening. There is constant blessing, and a soul-saving ministry of testimony going on in open-air work as well. He is alive to the need of presenting the full message of the Cross with its consequent bringing of those saved into the One Life of the Spirit as in the Church, the Body of Christ. Obviously there are many difficulties. The devil must hate the lifting up of a clear testimony to the Victory of Calvary in this strategic centre. Let us pray diligently for our brother and the work. JERSEY.

October 12th to 16th. This lovely island has its charm for all, but it is the possibilities for the Lord's Kingdom that draw our hearts to it, and cause us to constantly seek that our brother, Mr. R. G. Voison, may be mightily anointed to make full proof of his ministry to serve the interests of the Body of Christ there.

There is a movement of real spiritual life stirring among the rural population, especially in the north of the island; and our brother, Mr. Paillot of the Independent French Church in St. Heliers has been much used of God in gathering together groups of seeking people. One had the joy of addressing a company of some hundred persons at Trinity Chapel, Bouley Bay, who were manifestly in life. It was good to hear the prayers, mainly in French, and these from quite young people, alive unto God.

At St. Heliers the meetings were held in the

Friends' Meeting House where Mr. Voiain ministers. Despite many counter attractions and no attempt at publicity, the Lord's people gathered and there was much liberty. It was a privilege to meet here Mr. George Fox, of Chelmsford, who is responsible for such blessed work in this country in evangelising our villages.

Mr. Voisin now feels he should go forward to hold regular gatherings upon an absolutely free basis, having definite Bible teaching and fellowship meetings for prayer upon the full message of the Cross. He hopes to make the little Hall a real "Fellowship Centre" in this sense. NEWCASTLE AND JARBOW.

We have just returned from this work. At Jarrow, in the Baptist church, there is a clear spiritual ministry commenced under a new pastorate. Here there is manifest a real hunger for vital truth. Members of all denominations gather, and their great cry is for teaching and fellowship in the "heavenly things of the Christ." At Newcastle the meetings are now being held at the Connaught Hall. They were among the strongest in spiritual power we have held there. All around in this populous district there is the need for teaching and fellowship. There are hundreds who having been born-from-above can only live by the "words of eternal life" and cannot be content with the words of men. The need here is imperative, and requires very earnest, prevailing prayer.

At the moment we are holding meetings at this little mission. There is real life in the ministry shared by the brethren, and we feel that the Lord has a foothold here for a definite gathering of His people for prayer. FUTURE MINISTRY.

Ebbw Vale and Aberdare, November 13th to 18th; Newcastle, 23rd to 25th; and a further visit to Jersey in December are the chief calls for co-operation.

November Conference, Friday, 4th to Monday, 7th. Theme: 'The Cross, and God, the Holy Ghost.'

## GIVEN ON JULY 2, 1927

JESUS, KINO OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

He came to warfare. He came to light. He came to grapple in the darkness. He came to deal with something that is as deep as hell itself. It is warfare, and so there can be no Ascendancy of His Person

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as Son of Man or ascription to Him as King of Righteousness until He has established the righteousness of God in the earth, and in the power of His outpoured soul in the blood He has not only met, the judicial rights of Satan in the carnal nature of man, but He has on the Godward side satisfied the righteousness of the Eternal heart. Then as Son of Man He ascends to be where He was before as the eternally Only-Begotten God the Son, Son of God, having undergone, if one may use the word, a metamorphosis, or a change of form, being seen now not only as Son of God, but Son of Man seated in the throne of the Majesty the Heights-King of Righteousness in acclaimed as such by archangels and angels, led by the saints who owe their redemption through His precious blood. That is what you have in this passage, as quoted in the first chapter of the letter to the Hebrews :--

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." And remember this is said to the Lord Jesus! But this could not be said of the Lord Jesus until He had passed through His passion, until He had undergone His cross, until He had descended into the deeps and met all the weight of our iniquity gathered upon His own head,made sin for us! Not until He had bruised the head of the serpent and extracted the sting, the sting of death, which is sin, could He be so acclaimed. Now He is addressed as Son of Man in these very words, and here is the marvel of the word of God, if we only had our ears cleansed to hear it. Here He is addressed as Son of Man risen into the throne of God. The Holy Spirit says this by the psalmist. No wonder his heart was burning, bubbling up with a goodly matter, for He was seeing a thing infinitely greater than he knew, and he was one of those holy men who spake not out of their own soul, out of their own fancy, but as be was borne along by the Holy Ghost. Oh, was not this one borne along by the Holy Ghost not only past all ages, but into eternity, seeing the Son of Man in the throne of God, and so you find him addressing, by the Holy Spirit, these words to the Lord Jesus :-

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.

The sceptre of Thy kindgom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest lawlessness :

Therefore God, thy God, hath annointed Thee With the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Those who share with Thee that which Thou hast wrought.)

The language in the margin of this passage [

is most extraordinary as we read it, in a version which is perhaps exact and original, and all the while remembering these words are addressed by the Holy Spirit to the Lord Jesus.

"Thy throne is the throne of God for ever and ever."

It is very difficult to speak about things of these dimensions. One feels that we ought to worship and bow down before our Maker.

T. M. J.

## "THE CROSS AND THE OVER-COMING LIFE"

(Notes of an address given at the September Conference.)

Now, beloved, as you are aware, we are being led these days to consider—

THE CROSS AND THE OVERCOMING LIFE and one wants right at the very beginning to tell you something in order to settle you, and this is,—not anyone of you will ever be an overcomer. Yon may take that as the key to the Conference, in the sense in which for many . years many of us have thought of being overcomers. Of course, I know that wants a lot of explaining, but I simply say that because it is necessary to settle it once and for all that we, in ourselves, will never be overcomers, and that opens the way for the whole of this theme and its reality of meaning to come from the Lord to us. There is only one Overcomer in the universe, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and if there are ever any other overcomers, they will not be others at all, they will simply be the extension of His overcoming—the expansion of His victory. It will be by reason of that vital corporate oneness with Him which is not two lives, two distinct experiences, but which is one and the same experience shared. That is the nature of overcoming. It will simply be the impartation on His part of His own triumph, the sharing of His own victory, so that it does not become several victories, or a thousand victories, but it becomes one victory in One Body, not in a host of bodies; and in order to apprehend that truth, and the meaning and nature of that you have to go a long way back. Not to Calvary, but much, much farther back than Calvary; you have to get right back before the world was, and there discover the secret of God's heart. The thing which was wrapped up in His own mind as His secret purpose toward which He would work

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through the ages, and in the fulness of times disclose, so that it no longer would be a hidden mystery, but still a mystery, though a disclosed mystery. Now that may sound complicated for you. Can a thing still be a mystery when it has been revealed in the sense in which we have spoken of the mystery of Christ of late? That no one whose spirit has not been illumined by the Spirit can ever understand or apprehend; that the believer and the company of believers known as the body of Christ still do remain an enigma and a mystery in the realm of the flesh, and even in the realm of their own flesh, not only in the world; that we are a puzzle to ourselves and our deepest experience in relation to the Lord is a thing that we can never understand with our own minds, a thing which utterly defeats and defies all our own efforts to analyse and understand. The thing that is going on in the centre of our being by the operation of the Holy Spirit is beyond us all the time, and all that we know is that we have got to follow something that is going on, this something that is being revealed not to our outer understanding, but to our inner con-: viction, and we have to go on by faith; and only as we go on by faith do we get any revelation as to the nature of what is happening, does. it become clear sometimes; and it docs require a good deal of persistence and continuance and endurance in this mysterious process of the divine operations in our life before we have understood just a little of what the Lord is doing with us, and what the Lord is after. It comes out one day, and we apprehend it clearly; but there it is, a mystery all the time; and although to our spirit it is an unveiled mystery, a disclosed mystery; to our flesh and to the world, and to all flesh around us it is still a thing too deep for natural apprehension, or human understanding, or the manipulation and analysis of our own thinking. We cannot unravel this thing.

Now that thing was in the heart of God before times eternal, disclosed in Christ, only in Christ, in the fulness of times. An eternal truth, not a thing which just comes out and is mentioned for the first time at some period in history, but a thing which has been mentioned all along, all through the ages, but it has its interpretation given in the fulness of times. There is a great deal of difference between the speaking on the part of God continuously of a thing, and the spiritual apprehension of the meaning of that thing. You notice how frequently that was so even in the case of the Lord's disciples. The

Master was saying things to them all tho time, but He had to cover His utterances and His activities by saying-" What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know afterward, and the things that I am saying you do not understand now, but you will understand them later." And you find that afterward, in that near afterward when the Holy Spirit, the Interpreter came, then remembered they His words. Then they remembered that it was spoken; then they remembered that He had said these things, and they had come to pass. He knows; it had been settled all the time, and God is saying His eternal things right down through the ages, but not until the times of God arrive is the interpretation given. That is why I most strongly stand that the truth of the Body of Christ was not mentioned for the first time through the Apostle Paul. It was not a thing that came out in mention and reference at some New Testament time ; it is a thing that is all the way through the scriptures from beginning to end; just as'the Cross is, and others of those great revelations. They are there all the way through, but it is not until a certain time and a certain condition is realised that the interpretation is given. Now we shall see this in this very subject, so we get back to the times eternal that were in the heart and mind of God, and find that a two-fold election is made on His part for the realisation of His purpose. - The election of a Head and the election of a Body, the two, . of course comprising one entity. The election of the Head and of many members to comprise with the Head one Body—a two-fold election made by God. We are back there before there was any fall—" In the foreknowledge of God we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world," and that elect Body was there and then placed beyond the reach of any destructive power, or of any possibility of failure. O, you get hold of that. That the clect Body of Christ was before times eternal placed in the same position as the Head, beyond the possibility of failure, so that although the strong delusions of the last days may lead multitudes away, and deceptions will be of such a nature as to be almost impossible of discerning and avoiding, it will come to this point that the very elect would be deceived, if it were possible. But it is not possible ! God has secured that beyond the possibility of defeat, or failure, or a deception which would wreck it as God's eternally chosen and elect instrument for Christ. Now just get that as basic truth, and you may take up your Word, and

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find that there it is. It is there all the way through, and it is a very blessed thing to remember. Of course it does, I know, make possible to our finite understanding many problems, but these things are not revealed in all their meaning in the word of God, and we are, I take it, not supposed to understand yet. There are those historic, or theological problems which we have not yet been able to fully explain. For instance, the election according to the foreknowledge of God over and against the absolute free will of man. How do you reconcile the two. But there they are, and the working out of the election is on the ground of faith on the part of the elect. Now how. do you put these things together ? There are many others, but we are not staying with that. The basic fact is this. That God has, before times eternal, chosen a Body in Christ with the same kind of choice as He did choose Christ as the Head of the Body; and this Body being one, many members holding the Head, it is one in its ultimate inevitable triumph which cannot be destroyed. Now how is that going to be brought about ? Well, the method of God is next revealed, and that is by incarnation. . We are familiar with certain passages. You might remember such a passage, for instance, as this—Colossians i: 27, "The mystery which hath been hid from all ages and generations, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Ephesians v. 30, "We are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones....This mystery is great." Now passages like that, which are 'eternal in their sweep, take you right back, and right on. We shall add others to them as we go along, but the method of God is by incarnation. Christ as God incarnate. "Whereas the children are partakers of flesh and blood, so He also partook of the same." The whole theme of the incarnation of Christ is so frequently dealt with here that I think I need not stay with it. We accept it, but we must recognise this, that the ultimate purpose of God is not incarnation merely in an individual entity known as Jesus of Nazareth. The ultimate and full intention of God with regard to the incarnation is that He should incarnate Himself in that Body, that elect Body, so that it becomes the shrine of God in which He dwells-the temple of God in which He dwells, and all what was true in type of the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple, and infinitely more, is true of the House of God, the Body of Christ, the sphere, centre and vehicle of His self-manifestation and of His glory.

There God is, as God said—" I will dwell in them and walk in them." Now when you recognise and realise that it is God who has come out of eternity, first incarnating Himself in a separate individual historic body, and accomplishing that immense work of the Cross, who has changed the form of His incarnation after that accomplishment and become, as the factor in Calvary, incarnate in the Body and in all its members. There you have the eternal secret of God's victory, which is Christ's vic-torious resident by the Holy Spirit within the believer-within the House of God. The great difference between the two dispensations of the Bible-the Old and the New-is that the one is always objective, and the other is subjective. The Old, up to Calvary, including the experience, was objective. Everything was objective. You get back in the wilderness, the Cross in the figure of the serpent lifted up—it is objective, and he that looked, lived ! When we sing these hymns about "Look and live !" we must not get an objective materialistic mentality and have this conception of looking at somethinglooking out to something—we have got to look for that spiritual reality to be made real and experimental within our own spirit. The great difference is between the objective in the old dispensation, and all becoming subjective in the New. Calvary is not objective now; Calvary is subjective. God as in the blood is not objective, but subjective. Everything is subjective. It is within, because He is within the centre of all things; and He is the sum total of all things.

Now, beloved, do you get that far ? Have you really had a spiritual quickening to that basic fact. It would make the biggest difference possible in your experience. One spoke of how the Master was always referring to this very thing. You remember how frequently He was speaking of it. Take His parable of the vine and the branches. I think Hudson Taylor's discovery of the reality of corporate life with Christ through that parable is one of the most beautiful expositions of the truth that we could have. I would like just to give it to you : " As I thought of the vine and the branches, of the Lord, the blessed Spirit poured direct into me, how great seemed my mistake in having wished to get the sap, the fulness out of Him. I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. The vine now I see is not the root merely, but all-root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit-and

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Jesus is not only that He is soil, and sunshine and showers and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished, or needed."

O, the joy of seeing that truth, the oneness, that the one Life is in all, in every part to the uttermost leaf or twig or bit! And that Life, beloved, is the Life whereby Jesus conquered death! That is the Life of His resurrection. Now our mistake has just been to try and achieve victory on the outside, to fight, to struggle, to be overcomers and to wage a terrific warfare, without recognising that the only triumph and the only warfare is that which Christ, Himself, wages and achieves. One has found such tremendous help in the recognition of this wonderful reality, and since one has come to appeal to the Lord as within, this is to meet the situation ! O, the difference from appealing to Him as somewhere objectively, outside, to • come in and deal with the situation ! Nothing ever happens along that line, but to recognise that He dwells within-the realisation and fulfilment of that eternal intention in the mystery of God "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith "! - What do you mean by that last clause " by faith "? Do you mean to say that He dwells by faith ? No, that would be as good as saying that faith makes out to be what it is not. "This is the victory that over-cometh, even our faith." But what is the direction, or the nature of that faith that overcometh ? The faith that believes, and believing counts upon " Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." You see this is the victory that overcometh the world. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." Now put that fact in that "Christ may dwell in your heart by faith." That is, faith reckons upon the fact that if you have received the Holy Spirit into your spirit, you have received God into your spirit. You have received the triumphant Christ right into the centre of your being, and in faith, appealing to that, He manifests Himself, and you discover that this is the secret of overcoming. This is the victory that overcometh, the faith which turns to the Lord not as objectively, but as within and says-" Now, Lord, as within me, I appeal to you to rise up and meet this situation." There is a vast deal of difference between that, and our calling upon the Lord and going out ourselves to meet the situation. That is Old Testament, that is not New Testament. The New Testament is the Lord rising up within our spirit to meet the situation, He who already has the victory, who possesses it, and dwells

within us; and that is why one said at the beginning we shall never be overcomers in that detached, or separate sense. He is the only Overcomer, and He will have to do all the overcoming in us, and for us. He will have to work out His overcoming, work out His victory, simply sharing with us that which He has within, and this is how "He prepares a table in the presence of our enamics." He shares with us the fruit of His victory right in the middle, and what is more central to the situa. tion than your own spirit. Your spirit, beloved, and my spirit, they are the very centre of the conflict. This conflict only arises because Christ is in the spirit, because He is This kind of warfare, this conflict is there. the challenge of the enemy, not to us as such, he may well snap his fingers at us! Let us never think that we can meet him! The Lord deliver from any vain confidence of being able to meet the enemy, he would snuff us out very quickly, but it is because the Lord is there, and he is the sworn enemy of Christ and he wants to destroy the manifestation of Christ in us; and so it is in the nature of a battle that cannot be helped. You have seen some people who: can never cross each other's path but what they fight, and like some animals in the streets, they are sworn enemies, they can never see each other without getting their backs up and showing their teeth. Forgive the very low level of the illustration, but it is like that, the enemy cannot come anywhere within the range of the. Lord Jesus Christ, but what he shows his teeth. he snarls, and it is because Christ is in you that the battle rages. Now the Lord has got to meet the enemy, has got to share right in the presence of the enemy the fruits of His victory. But, of course, we are not going to lie down and say-Now, Lord, I simply sit down and you meet the enemy. That is not it. He is in our spirit, and He has given us in the first place a spirit and made us distinct from all other results of His creative activity by giving us a spirit, because He is a Spirit, and only spirit can have fellowship with spirit, or understand spirit, or know spirit. He has given us a spirit in the first place in order that there might be on the level of His own nature and likeness cooperation as well as communion, and by His resurrection, and our apprehension in faith of the meaning of His resurrection for us through Calvary, He has quickened and raised from the dead our spirit which was slain in the fall, and brought it up out of its sepulchre, out of its place of death, quickening it with His own

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Life by His own Spirit and entering into our spirit in order that our spirit, being energised by Him might co-operate with Him intelligently in that. And this is a very vital thing to remember, that the Lord is victorious, and the Lord is in you. Don't conflict this, because one finds that there are so many of the Lord's people who are simply submerged and defeated and broken, and there is so much that is a contradiction of the fact that Christ is in them for the simple reason that their spirit has not stood up in the Name of the Lord and claimed His energising. O, how wonderful are the results of a divinely energised spirit. That is the secret and the key to everything. This is very familiar ground to most of you, but perhaps for the sake of some it is necessary for the Lord to take us back to the beginnings. and in all matters, even in the physical realm where there is no resource, where there is infirmity and weakness, and the very sentence of death -the secret of accomplishing the word of God is not in having our bodies reinvigorated and made whole and robust, it is in having our spirit energised by the Life of God, so that our spirit can lift up our body in the hour of God's will, and carry it to do the Lord's will. That is the marvel and the perpetual miracle of Christ dwelling within-the hope of glory. You take some of the Lord's poor cripples, there is no hope of glory in them physically, or mentally, or in any other way; but they do become a praise and a glory to God, and the glory of God is seen in them. Why ? By reason of the expression of this basic and central truth. "Christ in you, the hope of glory," and they are counting upon Him in a positive way to manifest the fact that He is within. Surely that was the secret of the life of the Apostle Paul in all his infirmity, in all his affliction, in all his weakness, in all that came upon him and arose up within his own natural life, which might well have curtailed, to say the least of it, or swamped him and put him finally out of action. " Nevertheless in labours more abundant I labour, more than all." The marvel of it was this continuous energizing of his spirit, and his spirit cooperating with God in rising up and claiming the energising; and so he did what was physically impossible to him otherwise. Beloved. not only in the physical realm, but in every other way, the need of the Lord's people is to recognise that if they are the Lord's children they have been born again, and if they have received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit-O, may I pause there! That is the point.

The whole point of the emphasis, of tho interrogation upon that question. "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed ? Did ye ? " If not, the eternal intention of God that you should be an incarnation of God in that sense has been thwarted. This far-reaching question in a moment takes you right back to what God intended before the world was that you should be indwelt by Him, the shrine of God therefore. (And the need of many of the Lord's people again is to recognise the relative element in truth. They are all the time making it personal, incidental, fragmentary, a thing which is a bit of truth, an isolated spiritual reality, something for personal experience, instead of seeing that every fragment of this thing is related to the vast intentions and purpose of God. If only you get a revelation of the vastness, of the infinite range of every fragment of divine truth, bow far it takes you back, and how far it takes you on, and all that is wrapped up with it—the smallest fragment you would feel the power of it, and realise that there is a dynamic in it; but when you limit it and make it personal and local it loses all its power, and you go on all the days of your life circling around that thing, and it never becomes anything experimental to you; and at last you give it up. You need, therefore, to know and to recognise the relative element in truth-how. vast it is, and how it is a part of a thing which God pre-determined before the ages and the generations.) Well, that is all in prackets, but we come back now out of the brackets to this, that what the Lord's children want, above all things, to recognise is that if they are utterly His children, born of, and out from Him, having received the Holy Spirit to dwell within, they must in their renewed spirit co-operate with Him, count upon Him, exercise faith in the inward reality of Christ, and that is the only secret of victory. You will find that the Lord has got to do everything for you, that you will have, in spirit, to count upon Him and exercise your spirit in faith. You will have to say-Lord, now I cannot face this, and He energises. I very often have to do that myself, to let you into a secret-the Lord doing everything, but it is the co-operation of faith. O, faith is a tremendously active thing! Faith is not a passive thing; faith is not just flabby, as if to say—I leave it to you, Lord, I believe you arc able; and so leave it there. Now that is not the mighty energising faith of God by which He T. A.-S. created worlds.

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(To be continued.)



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## BOOKLETS

'The Divine Unities.' Price 3d.

Par T. Austin Sparks.

i. 'Incorporation en Christ,' prix reduit, l franc. (Suisse 50 c.)

ii. 'Incorporation en Christ,' 50 c. (Suisse 25 c.) iii. 'Incorporation en Christ,' 50 c. iv. 'L'Homme intérier du cœur. La sphere de la vie du croyant,' l franc. La sphere de '. 'Le Peuple qui fait de grands exploits,' 30 c. (Suisse 20 c.)

# THE CENTRALITY AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE CROSS

(Continued.) (In reading these addresses it will be found profitable to consult the chart of the August Number.)

. WE shall continue where we left this theme. The point at which we broke off was at the conclusion of the four-fold revelation and content of the cross in its centrality. That is, we dealt with all that is within the first circle, which circle represents the Body of Christ. 'As we have been led to say, all that which centres in and issues from the cross in its first and immediate application and significance is in and for and to the Church, which is His Body, as the instrument, sphere, the vehicle of its own revelation and manifestation beyond the Church and through the Church. We shall not go over that ground even a little bit this afternoon, but go on immediately to speak for a little while about the Church, which is His Body ; for we see

how all this is through the Church. One might just make a very inclusive statement in this connection,—The Church, which is the Body of Christ, is the sphere and the vehicle and all the content and issue of Christ crucified, risen, ascended and exalted. To use the word with which the first chapter of the Ephesian letter closes :—

"He is the Head of the Church, which is His Body : the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

The fulness of Him that filleth all in all is the Church which is His Body. Let me repeat that statement because it is so important; basic and inclusive. The Church, the Body of Christ, is the sphere and the vehicle, or channel of the full content of Christ crucified, risen, ascended, exalted. It is His elect instrument from all eternity for His Self-manifestation in final fulness. The Church, the Body, is required and demanded by Christ in order that Christ might fully and finally reveal Himself. He is determined not to be manifest apart from . His Church, but to bind Himself in His ultimate infinite self-manifestation to the instrumentality of His perfected Body. . His fulness is relative fulness. Our fulness is also relative fulness, and we can never know the fulness of Christ only relatively to all the members of His Body, and we shall find our fulness corporately and relatively and progressively toward the final realisation of that perfect instrument.

Now everything we have said has led up to this point. We have seen how in the Person of Christ the cross is basic and essential to make known What and Who He is in Power ; but the Church is the channel through which, by the cross, the real nature of the Person of Christ is revealed in all the universe. What is true concerning the Person of Christ is true concerning the Holy Spirit who binds Himself to the revelation of the Person, or Logos of the cross, and that to and in, and then through the Body, the Church. The Holy Spirit is sent to the Body to make the Christ of the cross real in the Body, in order that the Body of Christ, knowing experimentally the meaning of the cross, may preach an experimental gospel out to the uttermost bounds of the universe; not a theory, not a doctrine, but a thing which in itself has been wrought out to its depths and its fulness. The Holy Spirit is here to do that; He is sent to secure the Body and to secure the Body of Christ as an instrument and sphere in which Christ, crucified—in all the infinite content of those words-becomes a living manifestation by experience unto farther reaches of ministry

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in the So Great Salvation. You have the outworking of that through all the stages and phases and meanings of the So Great Salvation in the Church, the Elect Body ; but it is to be revealed in all its wonder as the infinite wisdom of God, far beyond the ranges of the Church; and so, in that fourth section, the Second Coming of Christ, as we saw it, you will have the consummation of the gospel by the Holy Ghost in the Person of Christ as in the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is the Person of Christ revealed. All that Christ is in His Person and all that He possesses is brought into action and expression in the Body of Christ in the Church. That carries you a tremendously long way—even to take a fragment; and a familiar fragment—as the exceeding greatness of the power of God was manifested and expressed in raising Him, the Head, from the dead, even so, that same exceeding greatness of His power has got to bring the Body into resurrection union with Christ, and there you get the exceeding greatness of the power of Very God wrought in the experience of the Body of Christ, and what is true of that is true 'of everything else in the Person. 'Is He Life so He is Light; and if He is Life and Light; so He is Power; and if He is Power, He is also Glory : and you may expand that unto all the ranges and realms of the content of the Divine Person and find that that content is being mediated by the Holy Ghost to, and through the Church, which is His Body, unto that timeless. day when all that Christ is will be revealed in, and through His Body for ever; so that we may truly say that the Church and Christ, the Body and the Head are One in content and expression. The Person of Christ is bound up with this elect instrument of His manifestation. Wc have often put it in this way, that He has chosen that this new form of His incarnation is the Body, and He, in essence, is at the very centre of that Body, and if you touch the Body you touch Christ—if you touch a member of the Body you touch Christ. "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of Gcd's eye " is an Old Testament word with a New Testament significance of very great importance. We have so often pointed that out. It was here that Paul, the Apostle, got His first glimmer of revelation concerning the Bedy of Christ when the voice said to him-" Why persecutest thou Me," and but for some perception and insight which probably came by that action of the Spirit upon him he might have answered "But I am not persecuting you, I am persecuting

these heretics, these apostates, these followers of the Nazarenc." But he saw that the two were one, and to touch them was to touch Him Whom he there and then called "Lord," to Whom He submitted Himself for instruction and direction from that moment. That was His first inkling of the Body of Christ, the oneness of Christ and His members. From that the thing grows until one day he is caught up in peculiar circumstances and shown this thing in its greater fulness. But there it is, the cross is in that thing, and the Person of Christ is inseparably bound up with the Body of Christ, and the Body of Christ is Christ in that sense.

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Now that is reiterating things which you have often heard, but here we are being led to cover the whole ground of this testimony which we feel has been deposited with us to bear before the world. So then the Body of Christ is Christ in content and expression. There is much to be done, we know, by sanctification, by the continuous working in and working out of the cross in the Body before the full revelation of Christ is possible. There are many yet to be gathered by the cross and added into that ultimate and consummate revelation of Christ, but if it is only the nucleus of that Body, there He is. He is implicate, He is present.

Now having said that, there is another thing which grows out of it, or another thing to be said which is but the defining or explanation of it more fully. It is a very interesting, thing to notice how truly this is revealed right through the word of God—the oneness of the Lord and His temple. In our recent considerings of the Testimony of Jesus, we saw on the last occasion what the word says about the tabernacle of the testimony. We saw first of all the pure testimony as within the ark, and then the ark as containing the testimony (the ark of the testimony), and then we moved out, and saw that beyond the central testimony and the ark of the testimony there is the tabernacle of the testimony. Now if the testimony is that central reality of the Person of Christ, and the ark represents that instrument by which He personally and individually brings that testimony into the world in His own personal incarnation as separate, then the tabernacle of the testimony is the Church which is His Body, and with it all the congregation is gathered together. There is the innermost thing in the type where the people do not come; but they do come into the tabernacle of the testimony and are one with it, and you notice that all that takes

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place there is on the ground of identification with it. Now we are not going to yield to the temptation to show how truly that is so, hut there it is.

Now as to the tabernacle of the testimony. The tabernacle and its counterparts, in the later temples, the temple of Solomon, the temple of Zerubbabel, the temple at Jerusalem, and the temple of Ezekiel are the representations of the full ministry of Christ.—They are the instruments, the vehicles of the revelation of the whole and entire ministry of what Christ is. Will you turn to the Book of the Revelation —here is a remarkable thing (iv. 7) "And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle."—Chap. iv, 7.

"And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst redeem us unto God with Thy blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (v. 8). Now go back from that You know that the

whole congregation, or church of God in the wilderness was gathered under four main standards, or banners. In the Book of Numbers they were divided into four great sections each of which had a banner or a standard. Issachar, Judah, and Zebulon under the standard of Judah, and upon their banner or standard there was the figure of a lion. Manasseh, Ephraim and Benjamin were gathered under the standard of Ephraim upon which was inscribed the figure of an ox. Then Simeon, Reuben and Gad were gathered under the standard of Reuben upon which was inscribed the figure of a man. Asher, Dan and Naphtali under the standard of Dan which bore as its insignia the figure of an eagle. When you come to Ezekiel's visions of the temple you find that this four-fold figure is there—the lion, the ox, the man and the eagle. The tabernacle—the temple. Now the Revelation, and you notice that it is not Christ Himself in any separate way, but under this four-fold similitude, a congregation singing a new song—" Worthy art Thou for Thou wast slain," so that the two are one, here is the church united to Christ. But what is the implication of this four-fold insignia ? Well, this is the implication of the four-fold revelation of

Christ in the church. He is the lion of the tribe of Judah. The lion, of course, is always the symbol of royalty, sovereignty, and it is the sovereignty of Christ in the church that is the revelation here. He is Sovereign Head, says the Apostle. The sovereignty of Christ, the monarchy of Christ, the regality of Christ is over the Church and upon the Church, and it is gathered under His supreme authority-"Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him and giver Him the title of sovereignty above every title of sovereignty both in this age and in that which is to come in every realm, things in heaven and earth, things under the earth, and that sovereignty is to be resident in the church and demonstrated through the Church which is His Body."

Now you note how in the case of Israel this was true by reason of their identification with this central thing of their life-the Testimony of Jesus-Jesus there at the centre of their national life—their oneness with Him: there was not a nation that was able to stand before them all the days of their faithfulness to that central thing. While their faithfulness and allegiance were maintained, while they were true to it, while they were unswerving in their discerning of the Lord in the midst, while all the meaning of the cross as there presented in its manifold expression in the altars and the sacrifice and the priesthood was for ever governing their lives, keeping sin out aud ruling out their own personal interests and ruding in the glory of God, though humanly and naturally they were altogether at a discount (they were not a people who could have stood against the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the East, and against those mighty world forces of Egypt and Babylon), yet while they are true, and it is a poor kind of allegiance that they show, nevertheless, wheresoever there in an expression of faithfulness, the great world forces go down before them. The sovereignty is manifested; the power of their sovereign Head is shown through them to all the nations round about. There it is in foreshadow, in prevision. And these are only types and illustrations, and if that was true in the case of the church in the wilderness with all that it was not which it ought to have been, and all that it was that it should not have been, how much more ought this to be true of that which stands upon the ground of justification in full and final acceptance with Gcd, through the cross, having perfect access, without a question. But, beloved, first of all the cross is the basis of the

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sovereignty of the Lord Jesus, and just as that cross becomes central in the experience, not in the doctrine, not in the theology merely, but in the experience of the church, so the sovereignty of Christ, by the cross, is resident within the Church by the Holy Ghost, and manifest through the Church. There is the Lion.

The ox we know is always a dual symbol of service and sacrifice, and here is Christ in another phase of His ministry and activitythe Servant of Jehovah-the Sacrifice of God. Is it necessary for me to even use time, very precious time, in covering the ground which sets Him forth in that two-fold capacityserving, suffering-" The Son of Man came not to he ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. There you have the two things in one statement, as in many other statements. Beloved, that which is true of the Head (bear with me in my continuous repetition) must be true of all the members. That we are to be baptised into His sufferings and to make up that which is lacking of the sufferings of Christ for the Body's sake. And that is service you see-taking our share in the suffering in order to serve, as that wonderful passage which the Apostle writes to the Corinthians in the second letter " Death worketh in us, but Life in you." "Our sufferings are on your behalf." "Baptised into His sufferings!" "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink? Can ye be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with ? And they said-We can, and He said-You shall." And they knew it, and to this one who had been for a time the blind instrument of Jehovah, and yet in the hands of the Devil, to cause them to drink of that cup, even Saul of Tarsus had, had said concerning him at the time of his claiming as an elect vessel. "I will show Him how great things he must suffer for my Name's sake," and he speaks about that in the fourth and sixth chapters of the second Corinthian letter-Sharing and tasting of the sufferings of Christ. But listen, put the emphasis here, suffering which is service. You suffer in your relationship to the Lord Jesus. Do you turn your eyes in upon yourself? Why am I suffering? Why should I have so much? Why should it always be I who get it? What have I done ? What is wrong with me ? Don't always turn your eyes in like that. Remember that the sufferings of Christ come upon some above measure not because they are sinners more than other sinners, but because

unto a scrivce, and if you arc going to be an instrument of the revelation of the fulness of Christ, you have got to be chosen in the furnace of affliction, a sharer in His sufferings. Take comfort from that. There has never yet been a man, or woman, who truly in the experience of things by the Holy Ghost has been a living revelation and manifestation of the content of Christ, crucified, risen, ascended, exalted, who has not tasted of His cup, tasted deeply of His sufferings. Believe that. We have a little way of saying amongst ourselvcs here, "Yes, the Lord will never be able to use them until they have suffered." There is a great deal more in that than you realise, but if you are (and I expect many of you are) sharing His sufferings, remember it is unto something, and it is unto something which need not be merely related to the short span of your remaining years. This Body of Christ and its members are timeless in their ministry; it only begins here, it is going on in eternity. "And His servants shall serve Him, for they, shall see His face." O, that we knew the true nature of spiritual service. We think to serve the Lord means to be rushing around all the time taking meetings, organising religious movements, and doing a thousand and one things externally and feverishly and excitedly and having a full programme of engagements. The Lord undeceive us! Spiritual service is not that, beloved. You may take it that spiritual service in reality, every ounce of it is an ounce of blood, of passion. It is out of the cross of Christ, and nothing that is not born out from that cross ever achieves the mighty ends of Calvary, and that has got to be born out from Calvary in the Church, at the centre of which the Cross is planted. Service and suffering : that is a ministry of Christ entrusted to the Church and fulfilled through the Church to reach the utmost limits of God's intention and purpose, through Calvary, and the rim of the universe, to reach that. Your service will be through suffering, and therefore, the deeper you arc baptised into His death, the fuller you are raised into the power of His effective service. Have you got that? If you forget a lot else, remember that. So, then, there is the ox, and that is Christ and the Church.

they are elect instruments for the Body's sake

And then the man. You know how often the figure of a man and the word "Son of Man" occurs in the Old Tetsament, and then you come in the New to the all-inclusive Son of Man. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save

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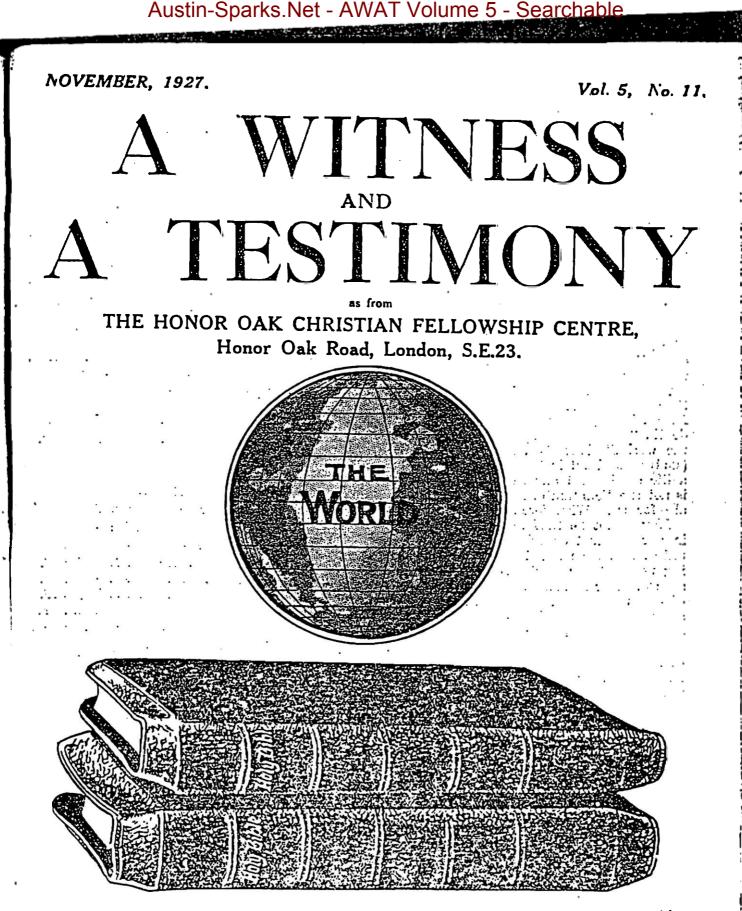
that which was lost." Now the man figure, the man reality in the divine presentation always means representation and speech. The one who stands to represent another and to utter the mind of that other. So it was with the prophets—"Son of man, go, speak." "Son of man, stand, speak !" Representation and speech, that is the man. Well, now, that is so obviously true in the case of the church, that the church is the voice of the enthroned Christ, representing Him. It is His representative to speak for Him. Beloved, you need in all your visions to restrict them to this one thing, for the Lord will only make His voice heard. That is all surely we want, we don't want personality. We do not want a great deal of human power; and wit, and wisdom and genius, all we want to be is a voice, and that the voice of the Lord, representing Him and speaking 'for Him.

Finally, the eagle as over the camp, the head of which was Dan; and the eagle throughout the word of God represents heavenly glory and divme mystery-that is a phase of the expression of the Lord Jesus. He, Himself, is a mystery in that scriptural sense of it." He always was a mystery when He was on the earth. "There standeth one among you whom ye know not." " The world hath not known Me." "Which none of the princes of this world knew." They knew Him not because (as 'He said) " the world seeth me not, but ye see me." There is something veiled, something hidden. He is the mystery, says Peter, which God fore-ordained to be a propitiation for our sins. In reverting to the Tabernacle of the Testimony we see how that tabernacle was a mysterious thing to the nations round about. It had no beauty that they could see, no enchantment for them, nothing they would covet, and yet there was something about it in their consciousness mysteriously mighty; they had no entree to its secret, no share in its meaning; it was only those who were one with it, only those who lived by it and knew it who knew its secrets, the secrets of its glory, the secrets of its power. Now here are the two things-the mystery of God, the mystery which has been hid from ages and generations, what is it—" Christ in you." Not Christ in isolation, but in you and in you corporately, the church, the body. Christ in you, that is the mystery which has been hid from the foundation of the world, and the church in its spiritual nature and reality is a mysterious thing to the world. One has so often pointed it out,

it becomes more and more mysterious even to the religious people of the churches of the day. The true church cannot be appreciated, or understood; the real spiritual people of God who form His Body are beyond the ken of the religious natural man who is always talking about "the church," nevertheless, and making much of "the church !" O, but this thing is a thing which is neither understood, nor appreciated; it is a mystery, and its deepest reality is its deepest mystery. Christ in you! There is the four-fold ministry and presentation and revelation of Christ the heavenly glory. You ask the average religious person to-day to come on a Bank Holiday to a meeting in a tent in a garden like this and see what he will say ! He will see no heavenly glory in that,—and to listen to addresses by the hour ! No heavenly glory in that. We smile because we know the heavenly glory in a mystery. The multitude of holiday makers will go home empty of heart to-night, and we ahall go, I trust, with full hearts and eternal treasures. But that is the heavenly glory in a mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew—" Christ in you" " the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Now you see that leads you right through the Old Testament—the tabernacle—the four-fold symbol on the standards in the revelation of that great temple given to Israel, the same symbols; out then when you come to the higher form of realisation here in the ultimate Revelation in this book the four living creatures they are Christ in the church, and the church worshipping the Lamb because this four-fold thing has been wrought in them, ""Thou hast redeemed unto Thyself, Thy sovereignty through service and sacrifice in Thy church and by Thy church, Thy representative, unto Thy heavenly glory, which is a secret glory and a mystery. Thou hast redeemed unto Thyself." . And all these elements turn to worship the Lamb, all these elements of divine expression and manifestation provoke the Song of Worship-"Worthy art Thou." It is the church triumphant singing "Worthy the Lamb," because the Lamb has become the dearest possession to the church, and all His ministry has been fulfilled in her. At this point, of course, we ought to go right on without a break to show that by the church, out of the church you do reach to the nations, so that out of the nations He is redeeming to Himself a people of every tongue and tribe and nation, but there wc must stop for the present. T. A.-S.

(To be concluded.)

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Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Proclamation of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship. Sundays: 11 a.m., 3 p.m. (Young People's Meeting), and 6.30 p.m. Mondays: 7.30 p.m. Wednesdays: 8 p.m. Saturdays: 7.30 p.m.

Conferences are held every week-end (Saturday and Sunday), and also a longer week-end at the beginning of each month, this fixed by the first Sunday. (Friday to Monday evenings, inclusive.) All particulars may be obtained from G. Paterson, Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

Ministers: T. Austin Sparks; T. Madoc Jeffreys; G. Paterson (General Secretary). Guest House Hostesses: Lady Ogle; Mrs. M. Brand

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### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

# MINISTERS' LETTER

(Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre.)

November, 1927.

### BELOVED OF OUR LORD,

"'Tis *life* of which our nerves are scant," writes one of our own poets, and to this the scriptures well agree. Said not our Lord, the Great Physician, "I came that they may have life, and have abundance"?

How comes it that of this life we remain so scant, and so *dubious* even ? The Prince of Life has still to declare, perhaps to those who call Him "Lord,"—" Ye will not come to Me that ye may have life."

This surely was our attitude as sinners when the lord of death held us in the illusion of that false life, naturally ours, which is spiritual death, "having no hope, and without God in the world." But now, having seen that life (soul) poured out in blood for us on the Cross, a life condemned and sacrificed in our stead, is not the Fountain of His Eternal life opened also for us ? Wherefore is our lack ?

May it not be that we are still self-centred in our spiritual experience ? Are we looking unto Him as the Fountain of that life or seeking to create or to discover one within ourselves ? For this Life is in Him; it is the Life of Jesus Ascended, Glorified in the Godhead, and therefore Holy-Ghost-Life,—not a life selfcentred even as in our renewed spirit, but life God-centred, proceeding out of that actual Vine of Whom we are branches. "Apart from (that is, severed, or cut-off-from) Me ye can do nothing." Oh, there is a deep distinction here which many failing to discern are impoverished both in life and service. For though I be born again it is not out of myself I live henceforth, but out of God, the Father. And how? By abiding in the Son. And this? By the continual renewings of the Holy Spirit which He desires to shed upon me abundantly, that is, upon my spirit, causing me to know the fulness of God. Life, full, unlimited, and pure thus flows out of the Divine Being into my spirit as I acknowledge the Holy Spirit to be Lord, that is to be the Spirit of the Father and the Son, Who thus make an abode in mc.

Beloved, it is the simplicity of that word, "ME." Ye will not come unto Me. We must still and continually come unto Him as by the Spirit. Through Him we have access unto the Father in the fellowship of One Spirit. This is the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, that as the living Father sent Him into the world, born of the Holy Spirit, and He lived in One Spirit because of the Father, even so we who are now also born of the Holy Spirit through and out of Him, should in like manner live in One Spirit because of Him. Or as He said it, "He that eateth (ruminateth, con. stantly eateth) Me shall live because of Me." And so through various homely terms of speech the Lord impresses upon us the reality and the necessity of our partaking of Him.

Let us come unto Him, Jesus, as the Living God, the True God, in Whom and upon Whom by the Eternal Spirit the Invisible Father dwells,—for He says, "Eat, O friends. Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved !"

Yours in this desire for Him,

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS.

T. MADOO JEFFREYS.

#### BOOKLETS

(WITNESS AND TESTIMONY.)

THE following are now available :---

By T. Austin-Sparks :-

'Incorporation into Christ.' No. 1. Price 2d.

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On pent sc les procurer au G. Paterson, Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, London, S.E.23.

## A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## THE FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

### THE NOVEMBER CONFERENCE.

DID not dying Wesley say, "The best of all is, God is with us"? This is the height and depth of Christian satisfaction. It has been the ground of our confidence during these past months, Therefore there could be no more fitting and opportune a theme than the one that engaged our hearts at this Conference,—"The Cross, and God, the Holy Ghost."

There were two emphases. The Cross is always emphatic in our gospel, but the supreme word is "God." The latter emphasis gives the former all its weight. Doctrine becomes mental dogma apart from the Divine Content.

The gospel is summed up in one intensive fact, so aptly put by Paul.—"to wit (I like that 'to wit') that GOD was in Christ." Without that qualifying revelation the fabric of Christian teaching is an empty, even if beautiful, shell.

The Lord is strongly writing the necessity of this essential, personal knowledge of Himself ever more deeply in our hearts. "It came to pass that as they conversed and reasoned, JESUS HIMSELF, having drawn near, went with them." Blessed are such disciples. How hopeless and futile all discipleship without that Companionship. We are humbly hopeful of our progress in grace in that we having an increasing sense of *His* Presence during these past months. God! It must be ever that emphasis. If as Father, God. And if as Son, still God. Much more so if as Spirit He comes, for then it is as the Spirit of both Father and Son He must be present, and Jesus is exalted into the Godhead as Lord, to the glory of the Father. Happy are they to whom these things of the Christ are thus revealed.

This, then, was the strong word of God upon us at this time. The Holy Spirit is none other than God Himself, coming both as Father and as Son, to dwell in and with those who are begotten of Him through Calvary's travail. He is the Spirit of the Christ, and though coming through the Christ Glorified, the Christ glorified does not cease to be the Christ crucified ; and so the Spirit brings the Cross with Him, so to speak. The Life of the Spirit in Christ is the Life that went through Calvary. His Spirit is that Eternal Spirit through Whom He offered Himself. He is therefore a sacrificial Spirit bringing a sacrificial Life. The Oil is mingled with the Blood.

Here is the true sign of the baptism in that Spirit,—the blood is in it. He is the Spirit of Calvary. The Cross and the Spirit go together, for the Cross is the revelation and the FACT of the Eternal Passion, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, yet also the Lamb, newly-slain, standing in the midst of the Throne of God. And while we are not called to bear any burden of sacrifice for sin, as He did, yet the Spirit brings His yoke, and we accordingly bear the burden of that Love still persisting in its travail until the Eternal Purpose in the Christ be accomplished. So we were healthfully lifted beyond the range of surveying our personal experience in relation to the indwelling of God's Spirit, and the emphasis was upon the fact that God Himself, Other and Greater than we, had come in His Spirit to take charge of His Body, and that we must give place to Him, recognise His Presence constantly, His orderings, His appointments, His Voice, for the Spirit is the Truth, and the Word and the Blood will confirm His Testimony, that He is in Christ as Jesus, and also in the Church.

Thus we were made to see that in this last phase of the dispensational conflict into which the church is now emerging, it is not in man, nor in a multitude of men, to lead or to direct, but it is in the Spirit, God Himself, Christ Himself. One felt the force of that lesson which came to Joshua, anointed and appointed though he was to lead the Lord's people into their possessions, yet confronted with "The Captain of the Lord's hosts," he was fain to humble himself and worship in that Presence, realising then that he was but a follower and a servant of a Lord Who was God Himself. Oh, may the Lord give to His people in these days such a humbling and self-revealing recognition of the Sovereign Presence of our Lord Jesus the Christ in His Spirit, as the Spirit of the living God.

For where the Spirit is Lord there is liberty, liberty to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus the Christ.

The "House" was full, and the number present at the fellowship around the Lord's table on the Sunday evening was unprecedented for the Hall. The hush of God's Presence was upon us in that service. The theme of "His flesh, His Body," given as our constant sustenance, to continually "ruminate," is almost too sacred a memory for the printed form of the message which we give elsewhere, but the Lord gave utterance for the spoken word, and we publish these notes praying that the essential truth may come through even in these pages.

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OUR BROTHER, MR. SPARKES.

We are so grateful to be able to report that the good progress already indicated is being maintained. During the past few days our brother has been unobtrusively joining us in public worship; but it is recognised that the next few months must be without any kind of strain to body or nerves such as would be entailed by public ministry, though we are anticipating that soon there will be the message of the written word coming through.

### TRANSPORT.

The happy ministry of conveying such as have had need of transport to and from our gatherings has been one of God's gifts to us in Miss Dimsdale who has freely given herself, her time and resources to this work. Circumstances make it incumbent upon the "Fellowship" to share to the full this obligation in future, and the cost of maintaining this service must devolve upon us. Opportunity for contributing towards these expenses will be found in the car, or gifts can be sent direct to our secretary.

#### AN UNKNOWN-BENEFACTOR.

There are many such, but we wish to express the appreciation felt at certain timely and wellchosen gifts of provisions that have recently been forwarded to the "House" from an anonymous source.

#### Personal.

Our brother Edward Goodwin is now serving in Worcestershire under the auspices of the Evangelical League of Prayer, Society of Friends, of which our brother, Mr. George Fox, is secretary. This is an excellent ministry, and we pray the fulness of the Anointing may rest upon it and upon our young brother who now serves in its fellowship.

#### FURTHER MINISTRIES.

Our brothers, Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Paterson, are at the moment of writing in the Newcastle area conducting a series of meetings. Upon this occasion gatherings are being held at Gates. head and Hexham as well as at Newcastle and Jarrow. We cannot help feeling that the Lord will make some provision for His hungry sheep in this district. At Oakwellgate, Gateshead, the mission under the superintendence of Sister Jessie Button, and of Mr. and Mrs. Reay, is stepping out upon the lines of faith and fellowship that the Lord has shewn to us here, and we earnestly pray that the testimony of the Holy Spirit to Jesus as Lord, both as in the heavens and in His church may be brought into perfect freedom.

Mr. Oliphant goes to Dublin for the December Conference at the Y.M.C.A. Hall.

The work at Aberdare in which our young brethren, Victor Thomas and Gresham Speedy. are engaged goes forward steadily. Mr. Pearson Harrison had a fruitful visit there in October, and we paid another call there during the week at Ebbw Vale, which is not far distant. The friends at Aberdare are feeling the need of a definiteness of vision and purpose in their testimony there. There are so many divided and dividing interests absorbing the attention and energies of the children of God in these days, so many institutions, as such, to be "run" rather than the gathering of the children of God together in life and fellowship for that One Thing" that God, the Holy Spirit," is seeking to bring about in this age. The position at Aberdare will crystallise as prayer is un-Meanwhile our · young ceasingly offered. brethren remain for the while, and we feel that God's purpose in ministry there will soon be made very clear.

At Waunliwyd, Ebbw Vale, there was much to cheer during the week, November 13th to 18th. There was a re-union of many friends of former days who met with us then the first impact of supernaturalism" subsequent to the revival in Wales, 1904-5. We thank God for bringing us through to sure ground, but so many have been shaken and have been driven back in consequence. There can be no doubt that the church of God met the principalities and powers as it emerged in that quickening of Holy Ghost life, and a "supernaturalism" simulating simulating · "Pentecost," swept many of God's sincere children into an enchanted ground. Movements of this character still gather large numbers of the unsuspecting into a like delusion, and sound teaching as to the distinction between soul and spirit might do much to deliver some and to forewarn others. So many confuse psychical experiences, common enough in these days of the enemy's pressing through into the human consciousness preparatory to the advent of the anti-Christ, with that pure and mighty work of the Holy Spirit whereby our spirit, in a life of faith, is brought into direct and vital relationship with our Ascended Lord.

The Lord gave us a series of messages upon "The psychology of salvation," in which the nature of man in his tripartite being of body, soul, spirit in the old creation, spirit, soul, and body in the new creation were defined, and the operation of the Cross as the power of salvation revealed. There were remarkably good atten-

dances, and a most encouraging feature was the large proportion of young men who attended every meeting. Our brother, Gresham Speedy, followed on the Sunday, November 20th, and wc believe the links formed will be strengthened.

Jersey will be visited December 8th to 16th when gatherings will be held at the Friends' Meeting House, St. Heliers, where our brother, Mr. R. G. Voisin, is standing fast in the Lord.

DECEMBER CONFERENCE.—Friday, Dec. 2nd, to Monday, the 5th. Theme: 'The Cross, and its Victory,' or 'The Gospel of the Sovereignty.' Particulars from Mr. Paterson.

CHRISTMASTIDE.—Christmas Day falls on the Lord's day this year, a most fitting coincidence. We have had a number of applications as to whether the Hostel is open for guests at this time. Most surely. We trust to spend that season in true worship and praise of Him Who came into this world to *die*, that He having tasted death for every man, might in the power of His resurrection *live* for us. We shall gather around the Lord's table on Christmas Day and thus keep the feast.

and thus keep the feast. JANUARY CONFERENCE. — We would take advantage here to make a preliminary announcement as to the date of the first NEW YEAR gatherings. We have fixed the dates as from Friday, Dec. 30th to Monday, Jan. 2nd, as these facilities will be given to those whose holiday time will not have ended.

MOTTO CARDS; 1928:—These are being prepared, and can be obtained on application from the Secretary.

#### Motto Card.

## A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY 1928

"WHILE WE LOOK—not at things seen, but AT THE THINGS NOT SEEN."

II. Cor. iv. 18.

"Though now WE SEE HIM NOT yet believing Wc Rejoice." I. Peter i. 8.

"He endures as SEEING HIM who is invisible FAITH is....the CONVICTION of the REALITY of THINGS WE DO NOT SEE."

Hcb. xi. 1.

"LOOKING-OFF UNTO JESUS!" Heh. xii. 2.

DELAY OF ISSUE.—Our friends will have realised the extreme difficulty of preparing this paper month by month in view of the pressure of ministry. We hope to overtake the time during the next weeks, so as to issue it earlier in the month.

## THE CENTRALITY AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE CR0SS (Continued.)

#### No. 5. (Seftember Conference.)

IN our consideration of the main theme of this Conference—The Centrality and Universality of the Cross-those of you who have been present will remember that we concluded, so far as our present consideration is concerned, with that phase which specifically relates to the church which is the body of Christ in itself, as to its nature; and the one all-inclusive statement which we gathered that up into was that the church which is the body of Christ is the sphere and the vehicle of all the content and issues of Christ, crucified, risen, ascended, exalted. In other words, all that Calvary means from its acceptance on the part of Christ through its experience, leading right up to the throne of His transcendent exaltation, that is for, and in, and through, and by the church, which is His body,—unto the knowledge and the revelation and demonstration of all that the church was eternally elected to be for Him, the medium of His expression, or of His fullest expression-that Christ needs, requires, demands, according to the eternal ordering of God, His body for His self-manifestation.

Now we have dealt with that in various and numerous ways, showing the nature of the body of Christ, and many of its privileges and its responsibilities. One is constrained to just pause at this point for one moment to utter one word of solemn warning, and that against the sin of presumption in relation to the body of Christ. The New Testament has much to say about the sin of presumption—presuming upon this great truth. Paul calls it "not discerning the Lord's Body." The oneness of Christ and His members as forming the "Body of Christ" is a basic revelation and declaration to much that took place in the nature of a judicial ministry of the Holy Spirit in New Testament times.

The Master said such things as "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me." "In as much as ye have done it (or done it not) unto the least of mine ye have done it (or done it not) unto me."

The first glimmer of the revelation of the Body of Christ was one which Faul had when the Lord said to him "Why perscentest thou me?" He might have retorted that he was not perscenting the Lord, but these followers of the Nazarene.

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The Lord, however, made it clear that it was one and the same thing on this occasion.

Now the case of Annanias and Saphira, of the Corinthian fornicator, of other Corinthians many of whom were sick and some died, and other cases, are examples of the danger of failing to recognise and discern the Lord's Body. "The loaf which we break is it not a participation in the Lord's body. The cup which we bless, is it not a participation in the Lord's blood, seeing that we who are many are one loaf, one body?" Therefore the Lord's table is a testimony to the oneness and spiritual reality of the Body of Christ. To set this testimony-not merely an ordinance—aside, or to enter into it in a spirit of schism, unforgiveness, dissimulation, partiality, &c., is to be guilty of presumption in a spiritual sense. The Lord's table is not the only form of testimony to incorporation into Christ or of the corporate oneness of Christ and His members, and to neglect or violate any of these is to issue in confusion, strain, loss; sometimes it results in delusion, sometimes in physical suffering, and we have known it to result in the Lord having to take such out of the way. David prayed, as we have it in the 19th Psalm : "Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins, then shall I be kept from the great transgression." In His conception of spiritual and eternal verities, the great transgression was presumption, and the New Testament clearly demies and sets forth the nature of that presumption, and this presumption in relation to the corporate nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our incorporation into that. Now I dare not turn aside from the main line to deal with that further. You recognise that the anointing of the Holy Ghost is through and by the Head upon the body of Christ. We have so often pointed out that it is not upon the individual as an individual, but upon the individual by reason of the individual's relationship to Christ in His body. The anointing is for all members, not in a scattered and detached sense, but in a corporate and united sense, so that in this way the oneness of the Spirit, the unity of the Spirit is realised through the Head in the whole body. Now the sin against the body of Christ is sin against the Holy Ghost, for it is that which violates the anointing of the Head as upon the body. You notice how the appeal, which always brings God into judicial action through the Holy Ghost in the word of God, is " against the Lord and His Anointed." They are one, and the Anointed One is Christ corporate in the body, so that !

touching a member of the body of Christ is as touching "the apple of His eye." Now against the Lord and against His Anointed in this corporate sense, when an appeal is made on that ground then God, through the Holy Ghost, judicially moves. He rebuked kings for their sakes, saying—" Touch not mine anointed—and do my prophets no harm." Take that in New Testament interpretation, and you will find that it relates to the oneness of the Lord with His members under the one anointing. But one is not saying it on this occasion in order to especially emphasise the touching of the members of Christ, but one is saying it now to emphasize this form of presumption, lest we might presume upon the rights, the inheritance, the privileges of our membership of the body of Christ and exclude, or reject those specific discernings of the body. Believe me, beloved, if ever the Lord in any way whatever gives you the slightest degree of spirit uneasiness about any kind of testimony by which the body of Christ is discerned, and you do not come into line with that, accept, obey, fulfil, all your talk about the Body of Christ from that time onward—will fail of its spiritual value to you in the hours of deepest crisis, and although, for the time being, it seems that nothing happens in many cases, something does happen sooner or later. Although it seems that nothing happens, and there is a sense of being able to go on, even a sense of the Lord, and blessing upon a certain level within a certain limited sphere, there is in the path of such an one, sooner or later, such a mighty upheaval as will bring them to a state of arrest and disaster and will fling them right back upon that testimony to the body which they rejected or neglected, and they will say-"I see the cause of all this as being my disobedience to that about which the Lord touched my spirit on such and such an occasion." You cannot get past that. The slightest disobedience to a touch of the Holy Spirit issues in your becoming uncovered and unsheltered in the spiritual house of God-the cover of the Lord's children, the corporate o'ershadowing and encircling of the Body of Christ which is indispensable to the members. They dare not go on alone, uncovered, without spiritual co-operation, and if we fail to recognise the oneness of the Body of Christ, or arc disobedient to any movement of the Spirit in our spirit with regard to such testimonies in the body and to the body, the issue will be, believe me, that at some time we come up against the

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issue of a sin of presumption. We have presumed upon the rights and privileges and resources of the body of Christ and been disobedient to the testimonies thereof. That issues in the Holy Spirit, by reason of His obligations, bringing us up with a start. It is a thing which well-nigh wrecks our whole career, and in the meantime we are on a second line of spiritual service and effectiveness, when we might be on a first.

At an early point we cited the case of Moses and saw that the Lord met him and sought to kill him because of his failure to discern the testimony to the covenant, and Paul distinctly says that baptism is a *testimony* to a corporate union with Christ (Col. ii. 11, 12; Romans vi. 4, &c.).

When the Lord speaks to us about anything and we go on and count on the Lord's cover and protection in and through His body which is His instrument, be sure that cannot be, unless we are absolutely obedient to every means of discernment. Now I speak out of a good deal of experience in this matter. I have seen spiritual lives wrecked on that, not because anybody has said anything of that to them. Whatever has been said by men has been subsequent to something which was said in them by the Holy Spirit, and then they began to equivocate. The Spirit of the Lord led them to a discerning of their identification with Christ and a testimony thereto in the waters of baptism, and they were disobedient. The Lord pressed it, and they discussed it, and argued and debated it, and consulted unsympathetic people about it, and were very glad when they found someone who did not agree with it, and so they let it go. O beloved, the wreckage of such is strewn on the face of the earth. Their spiritual lives have from that time been narrowed in their range of usefulness and serviceableness to the Lord. I could tell you some tragic stories about them, and other forms of testimony—testimony only—to spiritual facts which the Lord requires and a failure to face the issue through disobedience; and yet these, all the time, still claiming the rights and privileges and resources and means of Christ in the Body of Christ. But disobedience! and sooner or later the Holy Ghost has had to come in and judge.

Now we come to say a little, as the Lord enables us, about the church, the Body of Christ in its instrumentality beyond itself. We see its nature, its content, its intent in the mind and purpose of God, and its first sphere

of course, of ministry, is to, and in, and among the nations of this world, as the next circle indicates, which requires one further word to define its nature; and the Holy Spirit, through Pcter, says of the church, "Ye are a holy nation." It is a nation within the nations but super-national; not denominational, or undenominational, or interdenominational but superdenominational, a nation apart from the nations and above the nations, and yet in the nations. Concerning the nucleus of that church the Master prayed, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one," and the man who wrote those words by inspiration later wrote, " The whole world lieth in the evil one." "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one." They are not in the lap of the enemy, although they are in the world. In a sense they are apart from it; though in it, not of it-" translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of His love "-a holy nation. What is a nation? Well, a nation is that which is of common blood with an identity of life; and that is true—in a peculiar sense---of the church as a nation. An identity of life, a life which is unique and. pcculiar, which is the Life of God Himselfa common seed, the seed of God. And a nation is not only one in identity of life, a common sced, but it is one in its identity of purpose and in its unity of effort. These things are specifically true of His holy nation.

Now the church, as a nation, is called to bear a testimony within the nations, the strength of which testimony is found in its separation from the nations, and in its difference of life. And what is its testimony unto ? Its testimony is that which has the effect of the magnet to the steel, and the steel to the magnet-all the fragments in the church with the magnetic force of the cross, in which the drawing power of the love of God is resident to gather out from the nations to itself, to complete itself out of the nations. The church is out of every nation and tribe and kindred and tongue, a great multitude which no man can number. Now, beloved, there are one or two specifically vital matters in this connection I want to hand on. Let us recognise and settle it once and for all that the church, the body of Christ, or members thereof are not here in this world to have anything to do with the systems of this world, as such, and in so far as we become involved in the matters of the kingdoms of this

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world, we lose our magnetic vocation, and wc shall involve ourselves in chaos from which it will take a very great deal to extricate us. That has been the historic tragedy of Christendom, it has in various ways become linked up with the kingdoms and interests of this world, and that is the secret of its spiritual ineffectiveness. The Church which is Christ's Body is a heavenly thing since Christ its Head has ascended, and all that comes down into and through His Body is heavenly in source and nature. This is utterly different from the things of earth, and cannot even be known by "the natural man." Moreover, the church is not here now to establish or extend the Kingdom of God universally in the earth. It is here to testify to the sovereignty of Christ, to establish a testimony to it in the nations, and to gather to itself all the elect members. The universal Kingdom is for a later time. Everyone who has a revelation of the Body of Christ will find themselves being detached from tradition, from organised religion, and that they are being brought to the place where there is no alternative but to come out from a thing which is a system, and an order, though religious, though claiming to be in the name of the Lord, and according to the word of the Lord, but which is a thing of this earth. The Holy Ghost always leads out from that, and of course He has got to do it. Don't you do it until He does it in you, until you can do nothing else. You stay until the thing is so plain to you that your whole spiritual life is in jeopardy unless you do it. Mark you, the Holy Ghost is going to do that in order to give to you, and put within you the magnetic power of the cross of Jesus Christ, in order to gather unto Himself a people from the nations for His Name. You have got to stand clear in order to fulfil that ministry. but stand clear in the Holy Ghost, not by any personal exclusiveness, or detachments, because that can be organised, and that can be prompted by fleshly ambition and subtle motive, desiring recognition, and such things.

This gathering out of the Body of Christ must be the work of the Holy Spirit on the basis of a revelation and an inward withering of our concern for and interest in all that is not heavenly in its concept. We have tried to build up, to organise, and to increase " the Church." Advertisement, policy, attractions, schemes, devices, appeals, to draw and to hold to " the Church." Titles, names, and special items; who can exhaust the resource to realise things which after all is a caricature of the

Divine reality. The Lord's method is firstly to hear "the testimony of Jesus" in every place, and then to gather to that testimony such as He has foreknown and therefore foreordained as those who would respond to His call. The Holy Spirit is strategic. "Pentecost" was a wonderful example of this strategy. "Every nation under heaven" was represented in Jerusalem on that day, and that in itself was another demonstration of the Divine strategy, in using Judaism—now rejected—to head up to the Church by gathering people out of every . nation in one place on this occasion. No flaming posters emblazoned the advertising spaces of Jerusalem announcing that at a certain time in a given place eleven great men would preach, or that the Rev. Dr. Peter would preach a pentecostal sermon. They came together, and everything was carried through from first to last by the Holy Spirit Himself.

You see how wide of the mark organised Christendom is! This is a Holy Ghost business, and you are delivered from all the other load, deadweight of work and organisation, and everything else when the Holy Spirit takes things in hand like that. The testimony of Jesus is to be in the hands of the Holy Spirit, and He shall gather those foreknown. You need not that I stay to define, and to safeguard that last clause. Now on the one side, there is that, that glorious truth of the Spirit gathering out a people for the Name of Jesus, and Himself being Sovereign in the gathering out, and the gathering together. It is perfectly wonderful what the Holy Spirit can do, where the people come from, how they hear of the thing, but it gets out. That is the way we put it—that the Spirit has in hand this business of completing the church of the Lord Jesus.

Well, there are other aspects to that one glorious truth, and this is another-that the Holy Spirit is also strategic in the placing of His church as represented by members. He places them here and there, and makes them the magnet, as it were, to which He may draw elect souls, not elect by favouritism of God, but elect according to the foreknowledge of God, that is all, not because they are elected to Life, as against others who are elected to death, but because the Lord foreknew who would believe "Whom He foreknew, them he predestinated" -their destiny was settled on the ground of His foreknowledge of their faith, and is on the ground of His own grace. Well now, such the Lord knows—" The Lord knoweth them that are His," and He will put His body representa-

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tively down here and there, in order that they may be a magnetic force, that unto them He may bring those who, through their testimony, will find the Holy Spirit giving them a response. It is most remarkable how in a place there are those who find at once that this is the thing for which their whole being has been crying. Now you want to be saved from your hustle and feverish rushing about to try and get people who ought to come. Let the Holy Ghost move you in those matters, because you will be getting a lot of people to come, and they will be so upset with the whole thing that they will be quite disgusted and disappointed, and you will be making a mess all the time. Do we not pray here continuously that the Lord will keep away those who in coming will not come into His purpose, will not see His will, and accept it. It is just as important to pray that as it is to pray the other way—it may be that many of these will come on later. The Lord has His times as well as His purposes.

This aspect of truth seriously touches the question as to whether it was ever the Divine purpose and method that commodious permanent buildings should be erected in numerous places and the success of "the Church" be determined by whether they are full or otherwise, This is surely not the New Testament conception, and may it not be that the present system with all its organisation, machinery, advertisement, expenditure, and burdensomeness, but comparative spiritual ineffectiveness, is the inevitable issue of a false conception. It is a tremendous thing to say, but we do not hesitate to say it, that spiritual emancipation from the present system of organised religion and of what is called "the Church" and, "Church life," with its methods, institutions officials, governments, &c., is the necessary way to the maximum of spiritual effectiveness and fruitfulness. And the Lord would lead many out if only they had the courage and faith to leave their support and vindication to Him. The tragedy of so many, and the paralysis of the real work of God is the carthboundness of vision and the tyranny of a system. Never would we urge anyone to come out until the matter had become to them one of inward revelation, but we do urge upon you that you should earnestly ask the Lord to give you a revelation of the true nature of Iiis Church which is His Body.

Our meditation would lack something very important if we failed to remember that while

the Church in the nations by its testimony is as a magnet to draw, it will also repel and make impossible the access and taking hold on the part of flesh and of carnal men and women. In the wild unenlightened lust for members and increase this has been overlooked with disastrous and ruinous consequences. There must be that in Christ and His Body which is forbidding to all but the consecrated and sanctified. The fire of God to safeguard the glory of God is in the Holy "Tabernacle" or "Temple" or "House," and this must break out upon the intrusion of "flesh." It is no sign of God's acceptance of our presence in any system, local, national, or international, which claims to be the Church, in which, and manipulating, controlling, influencing, and officiating, are unconsecrated men and women. Such would find judgment beginning at the house of God if this were truly His spiritual house in which the Holy Spirit was sovereign.

"For the rest, no man durst join himself unto them."

"The LORD added to the Church."

Can we not be satisfied with this on both sides, and make it our business to see that the testimony is clear and pure. T. A.-S.

(To be continued.)

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE following sums were received towards the cost of this paper during the month of October (approximately) :—

Local, £4 4s.; Clacton, £1; Southgate 10s.; Glasgow, 7s. 6d.; Esher, 5d.; Watford, £1; Willesden Green, 4s. 10d.; Folkestone, 3s.; Wirksworth, 3s.; Cardiff, £3; Southampton, 3s. 6d.; Crawley, 1s.; Birmingham, 7s. 11d.; Denmark Hill, 1s. 6d.; Falmouth, 9d.; Lingwood, 5s.; Harlesden, 10s.; Plumstead, 10s.; Lisburn, 5s.; Goudhurst, 1s.; Kircubbin, 3s.; Williamstown, 1s.; Swansea, 2s.; Hyde Park, 10s.; Standstead Abbots, 2s.; U.S.A., 2s. Total, £13 17s. 5d.

## CONCERNING "NOUS," THAT IS, "MIND" OR "UNDERSTANDING"

#### (Continued from the September issue.)

It is interesting to notice what happens to this "Nous" or moral understanding in the new creation. As we have seen it is a spiritual faculty of the soul that lies practically dormant, buried under the debris of the fleshly soul in the old creation. It is not in man to direct his way, and the glimmers of this deeper consciousness

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arc entirely unreliable apart from the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, as a faculty this "Nous" would be misleading, being purely intuitional, belonging to the realm of what is called by modern psychologists "the subconscious mind," and therefore open to Satanic delusion. Nevertheless the faculty as a faculty is there. It is in its relations, as well as in its inherent vitality, that it is depraved, being fallen under the dominion of sin and Satan.

But when the heart is turned to the Lord this is quickened,—"the vail is completely taken away." We have moral clearness of vision. We were spiritually blind: we now see. God is able to speak to us, and we to understand.

Accordingly we find that one of the first things that happened as the Lord of the New Creation companied with His disciples was that "He opened their *understanding*, that they might *understand* the scriptures."

We see thus it is not an intellectual knowledge that can apprehend the Scriptures, and this even in saved souls; but a new perception, a new faculty, energised by Lord.

Do we sufficiently recognise this ? Are we not perhaps deceiving ourselves that because we are saved therefore we can understand the Scriptures with our *natural* understanding. It is not so. None can understand the Scriptures save by the Spirit Who gave those Scriptures. And we need an entirely different faculty to the natural mind or reasoning powers. There are eyes to the heart, and these must be opened: ears also, and these must be pierced, spiritual senses, lying dead and atrophied, in the natural man; but these have to come under the power of that Mighty Resurrection, and the Lord of Glory must give them new life, His life

Few Christians, however, understand this, the necessity for the quickening of these deeper senses of the heart. So Paul prays for the Ephesians, albeit they are full of faith and love, that "the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened" (some versions use the word "heart" instead of "understanding." The writer to the Hebrews reproaches his readers because they had neglected these spiritual senses, so that they remained "babes" and were unable to assimilate "solid food." Paul again in 1 Corinthians xiv. 20 desires that these Christians might be men in understanding. And although the word "nous" is not used in these passages, the point is with regard to it, that the spiritual faculty of the heart might be quickened and exercised, by reason of use. Once quickened, always quickened, is not the rule of the Life in Christ, otherwise moral obligations would cease, and the life become automatic. No, when He has opened our understanding, it is our task to keep it open, active and increasing in the knowledge of the things of God.

This is an important point. For many Christians stand still. Their greatest revelation was their first; and often they have little more of strong history, but are ever going back to that first experience. This may be well from one aspect, for when we first saw the Lord must ever be the greatest moment of our lives, even to Eternity. How many say wonderingly and praisefully, "We abode with Him that day: it was about the tenth hour." Wondrous day ! Shall we ever forget it ?

But after that first uprush into our soul of the spirit's quickened vision we shall need to feed and nourish the new-born faculty, or it will die away. Is not this the meaning of Peter's adjuration, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"? How many tragic instances of "arrested development" are there in the church of God? Those who had a name once that they were alive? Truly their carcasses still strew the way in this wilderness. Do we not recognise their sad case in this speech, "Where is the blessedness I knew, when *first* I saw the Lord?"

No, this new "mind" must be renewed, and this constantly. Paul says (Romans xii. 2), Be ye transfigured by the renewing of your nous." That spiritual faculty once quickened, by the grace of God, to behold and to recognise JESUS in His Infinite Person, to say "Lord Jesus" directly to Him, as one redeemed by His Blood, must be continually energised in this Satan's territory of thick spiritual darkness that we may continue to behold Him in the increasing Light of His Countenance. Thus we go on to know the Lord. In His Light we see Light. We walk in the Light as He is in the Light. But this is by the enlightened consciousness of the "Nous"—the new mind. And it must be continually renewed. In Ephesians the injunction is more explicit, and the context is very informative. " Be renewed in the spirit of your mind (nous)." But then this is in relation to the putting away of the "old man" and the putting on of the "new ... man" (Eph. iv. 22-24). Is not this " the cir-cumcision of the Christ"? An apprehension of the dynamic of the Cross ? But it is by the

A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

renewed *mind*. The faculties of the spirit to see, to hear, to know, must be continually exercised, encouraged, fed. And how ? An immediate answer would be "By the renewings of the Holy Spirit." Surely ! The Lord Himself, by the Spirit, would thus come to us. "He openeth mine ear morning by morning." He would anoint our eyes with "eye salve." Yet there are means that we ourselves need to employ,—His written word, the spoken word in the assembly of His saints, that fellowship with His people upon which the One Anointing Spirit is pleased to descend as there is the Oneness; also the seeking and exercise of spiritual gifts in His service, commencing with prayer in the Holy Ghost. All these.

But once the "mind" of the spirit becomes ascendant by the energy of the indwelling and anointing Spirit, and is thus maintained in fellowship, it goes on to know the Lord, and the whole range of revelation is open to its apprehension as a form of knowledge. (But note, knowledge in part 1 Cor. xiii.)

Nevertheless, as such, it is the mind of Christ, the mind of the Lord, the mind of the Spirit, in us (1 Cor. ii. 16; Romans xi. 34; viii. 27). This is the "mind" that hath wisdom (Rev. xiii. 18; xvii. 9). It is beyond all the wisdom and knowledge of men, or of Satan, or of angels, since it knows God, and knows Him directly. Eph. iii. 19, indicates that the Nature and Attributes of God may be known directly by the instrengthened spirit of the new man, for he goes on to know at last the love of the Christ, which surpasseth knowledge.

And so the very nature of that Eternal Life which is in Christ, and is now ministered to us by the Holy Spirit, is that it knows God, and knows Him in Jesus the Christ (John xvii. 3). And while it is a knowledge in our spirit it must also become rational and moral, intelligent and righteous, and therefore it is exercised through the "nous." It is not unthinking and foolish, blind ecstacy of psychical experiences which often leave the heart untouched by holiness or grace but a direct consciousness of a Holy God and Father, Whom thus to know is also to love and obey, and to worship in godly fear. So " we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus the Christ. He is the true God, and eternal Life." T. M. J.

# ADDRESS GIVEN ON SUNDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 6, 1927 "<u>A Communion of the Body of Christ.</u>"

I Corinthian; x. 16.—By One Spirit.

ONE is reminded, as this cloth covers the bread, the loaf, of what was said recently in relation to the ministry of the sons of Kohath, one of the families of the tribe of Levi whose task was to bear the burden of the sanctuary. The sanctuary in this instance singularly enough is described as being made up of the vessels of the tabernacle, and the Vail—the ark, the table, the lampstands, the bread, the instruments of the table, the golden altar, and the ashes of the great altar-most significant that-the ashes of the great altar that was out in the court, with the altar itself and the instruments of that altar. .These were first covered with great detail of admonition by the high priestly family; the sons of Kohath did not see these things until they had been altogether covered, which is rather a contradiction in terms; and then they bore them. We saw how their burden of these hidden things represents that ministry in the church of the revelation of the "heavenlies," the hidden things of the Christ of God. There is that evangelism which describes outward things, the things that can be seen and known of all men. There is a ministry of teaching in the word of God which unveils many further truths. And there is a ministry of revelation by the Holy Ghost which is also to be found in the church. And only the Holy Ghost can give the utterance for such ministry. He, Himself, must do it; men cannot do this. Even from the sons of Kohath, who shared the burden of these inner things which constituted the sanctuary, these things were veiled. And so it is the Holy Spirit alone Who can bring out the inner things of the Christ ; and the Lord has so arranged to confound the wisdom of men, and to set that wisdom at naught, that the greatest truths of the Christian, faith, the faith in Christ, are, so to speak, wrought in what might be called a dumb show. You and I gather around the table, and we break the loaf and cat together of it; and we drink the wine, and if we are truly in the Spirit nothing much is said, but the silence of God falls upon our hearts, and we behold Him, or should ; and so the Holy Ghost makes known to us the things of Christ in the breaking of the loaf and the drinking of the cup. So in baptism, and so in other things: the Holy Spirit has to

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reveal the inner nature of these, but most of all here at the Lord's table. It is not without significance that there should be raging at the end of this age a controversy around the Lord's table, a multitude of voices discussing that which no man can discuss—this mystery of God in Christ, of which we partake by faith. Is it not a significant thing that there should be this babel and confusion of tongues at the end of the age with regard to this which only the Holy Ghost can make plain in the heart of the believer ?

We have before now seen that Paul explicitly declares in the passage we have read this evening from I Cor. xi. commencing at the 23rd verse, that he had not received this by the mouth of Peter or of James, or of John, or any of the apostles. And he is very careful to declare in the Galatian epistle that he did not know any of the apostles until three years had passed, and then he only visited Peter and became acquainted with him. And here he is asserting that he received this sacrament of faith directly from the Lord—" I, myself (the pronoun is emphatic) received from the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you." That is to say, sometime early in the experience of the Apostle, the Holy Ghost, God Himself, revealed to him that which had taken place in the upper room that last night of His earthly companionship with His disciples, and the significance of it. He is here unfolding the meaning of it. He declares that this was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, not by hearsay; that it was not in the nature of some sentimental remembrance, of what was a last act of tender intercourse and fellowship of our Lord with His disciples, but that it was a heavenly revelation which the church of God was to enjoy until the Lord should come.

The meaning and significance of the Lord's death should thus be proclaimed until He There is thus a preaching of the word came. of the cross in such a fashion that it should be unmistakable, and if the voices from pulpits and platforms became confused and contradictory, there should, by the Holy Ghost, come in the midst of God's believing people such a testimony as to the nature of Christ's death, that none might be without excuse at the end of the age that they had not seen, had not had presented to them graphically many and many a time, Jesus Christ and Him crucified in the midst of them. You remember how he reproaches the Galatian Christians : "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, before

whose eyes Jesus Christ has been graphically presented crucified in your midst." He may have been referring to his own testimony, but one might think he was referring to this also. For here is a graphic representation of the Lord crucified in their midst. Here is the meaning of the cross in its deepest and simplest and clearest significance. And so we see that the Holy Spirit has arranged that there should be this witness right through to the end of the age as to the nature of the death of our Lord "Ye do proclaim (declare, shew openly), Jesus. the Lord's death till He come." It therefore has something to do with the consummation of the age. We know how careful the Holy Spirit has been in the selection of words in the New Testament, as for example, when the Lord said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," so we read in the Authorised Version; but, as you know, the literal translation is, "Lo, I am with you all the days even unto the consummation of the age," unto the completion of that process which is going on in this dispensation. Here then we have something that is related to that consummation. We believe, as those whom the Lord has awakened out of slumber, and whose hearts are made sensitive to the workings of the Holy Ghost, that we can feel the pulse of God moving at this time in the earth, the throb of eternity. beginning to break into time, the passion of God as He seeks to break in upon this slumbering world of men, and as He seems to make His people realise His Coming draweth nigh. But you see, here is a testimony related to that very thing, the consummation of the age, the climax to the process of the Holy Spirit's working throughout this dispensation that will at last come to that final completion, and there will be the breaking in of God upon the consciousness of His church which is on the earth, and the simultaneous breaking through of that church into the "heavenlies" in conscious experience, with the "Out-resurrection" of all those who slumber through Jesus. We shall see Him as He is. And so that perfected building of God, which the Eternal Son Who was made ficsh is now building by His Spirit as out from heaven, will be manifested. This gathering around the Lord's table has a peculiar significance therefore in relation to the consummation of the age, and every time we gather around it there should be a cry in our hearts for revelation, for a light from the throne of God to shine in upon our hearts in relation to this (His Coming); not a "harking" back in

sentimental remembrance of some tender episode in Palestine. That is not the thing : " I myself received from the Lord that which I delivered unto you." You see, while the apostle is referring to an act, he is referring to a revelation. And herein lies the peculiar danger of this testimony-that you find people on the one hand ever thinking of this simply as a remembrance of the Lord along the line of human sentiment, of tender human memory, as if that were the significance of it; whereas you see here is the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven preaching the gospel. And the "remembrance" into which we are to come is the remembrance of the Holy Ghost Who brings all the things of Christ to our remembrance. It is the memory of God, for, as you will readily see, we who are living in the twentieth century in England cannot remember that in the human. We cannot, as it were, create a memory by means of pictorial imagination and get back to that. That is not the significance. It is that the heavens should break over our hearts, and that we might see the nature of that altar which has wrought out such a triumph in the resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ as God in the throne. So here is revelation, and every time we gather it should not be in order that we might somehow try to visualise a thing - that was on earth merely, but that we should see Him, and know Him and discern Him as the Heavenly One; and while we preach the Lord's death, it is unto His coming.

We now come to that further thing which is mentioned here, and which the apostle makes to be the crucial thing upon which depends the worth of our partaking. You find he suggests that there are those who are remembering the Lord's death in the earth fashion, they are not remembering the Lord's death in the Holy Ghost. They are not seeing that this death of the Lord Jesus and His resurrection was not only for the putting away of sin, but for the creation of a Body, for the bringing out of something as from God that should be to the eternal praise of His grace. They are missing all that. They arc not seeing that here is one loaf, one body; they are not seeing that here is something dispensed by the rioly Ghost as out from heaven, that here is a nature and substance of God as out from Christ of which they partake by the Holy Ghost; and they are not seeing that there is a blood in the throne of God, the blood of the Lamb standing regnant in the midst of the throne, that bleeding Lamb Whom John saw, in Whose Blood is the eternal

covenant between tho Father and the Son, which is a mystery of heaven. "The blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." They are missing the revelation. It is true that they are well-meaning people, and that they have some vision, but somehow the whole import of this tremendous declaration, and their testimony in it, is being missed. For this reason you have the solemn warning of the 27th verse :—

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the Body."

This is, the further discerning. You notice we are reading from the Revised Version which, in this instance, is the true version,—" If ye discern not the Body,"-and so there is a discerning of the Body, a further revelation of what is the import of this testimony in relation to the coming of the Lord, in relation to the consummation of the age, until there shall be the perfection of God's purpose in building-up, completing the Church, which is His Body. Here is the table around which we gather for revelation, "I, myself, received from the Lord that which I delivered unto you," and O, there is need that we should so gather, for we are challenged by the devil's confusion in the religious world to-day. There is need that you and I should more and more gather around the Lord's table crying for the Spirit of revelation that we might discern the body of the Lord, and that body not only as in the Head, the Body in the throne, but that Body as shared and dispensed in the members of His Body-discerning the Body, the nature of the Body, seeing that our fellow-members are members of one Body, eating of One Loaf, and that Loaf, the Christ of God. So we come back to the previous chapter, to those words which in themselves should be to us such a light, if so be the Holy Ghost speak them. May He speak them, for they are His words: I Cor. x. 16.

"The cup of blessing," the Hallel cup, the fourth cup in the original passover, the cup of praise; it was not the cup of any sorrow, it was the cup of praise, ot the consummated passover; and so you and I as we drink this cup drink the cup of praise, the cup of blessing, the cup which represents a consummated

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sacrifice, a sacrifice that has accomplished its purpose. It is "The blood that speaks better things than that of Abel." It is not speaking of sin now, it is speaking of a covenant, it is speaking of a pledge in God on our behalf; it is speaking of the union of the Father and the Son in one Eternal Being in the Man for your sake and for mine. That is the cup. You remember how He said He would not drink it again until in the kingdom with His Father. What a world of meaning was in that prediction, for the Christ is now given-sin dealt with-Satan cast out-the world judged; you and I now drink a cup which is prophetic of the end, prophetic of the praise of God, prophetic of the outbreaking of all the anthems of heaven and earth redeemed when He shall come in His divine glory :—

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a common participation in the blood of Christ?"

Now those words themselves are fraught with the deepest meaning, too deep for words. They stand there. We must pray that God may speak them in our own hearts as we read them; then we shall bless this cup, we shall sing over this cup, we shall rejoice over this cup, for is it not a common participation in the blood of Christ ? " O, what blood is that ? A common participation in the blood of Christ / Listen again, "The loaf which we break (not the bread, but the loaf, for it is one loaf) is it not a common participation in the body of Christ ? " (Sharing one body together with Him, partaking of His flesh, of His nature, sharing His Life, and at last becoming visibly corporate with Him, so that "When He shall be manifest, He Who is our Life, then we shall be manifested with Him in the glory ") seeing that we, who are many, are one loaf, one body : for we all partake of the one loaf. That is the revelation, revelation which even disciples cannot receive because they are disciples but need to ask for revelation. We still need to be before God as worshippers when we gather around the table. We still need to prostrate our hearts before Him and say, O light of God shine in and reveal to me more deeply the Passion and its Purpose. Make me see more clearly the nature of the death and Ascension of the Christ of God. Who He is, and what I am in relation to Him. What I have become-a sinner erstwhile, but saved by grace ! To see what a tremendous step was then taken out of death into Lifeinto His Life, not merely to live again upon the lower plane of human failure and degradation

and sin, but to be born out from God, from above, joined to the Lord, one Spirit, and baptised into that Body! We disciples need revelation continually. There were those who had been following the Lord Jesus for a long while when they heard Him say those wonderful words in John vi. which all came out of the breaking of the bread with which He fed the multitude. You remember how with what seemed to be a limited quantity of this earth material, something that came out of the earth. of the clay, of which we also are all made. He looked into heaven, and blessed and broke it and distributed it so that a multitude was fed. But how? What processes of springtime and summer and harvest gathered themselves all into one that He should make bread for many out of that which was so limited ! Well, you see, He was just preaching a parable of the gospel, and when these gathered around Him and began to ask Him about these things He said :-

"I am the bread that cometh down out of heaven," and adjured them to labour (or strive) earnestly, not for that bread which perisheth, but for that which endureth." Then there is linked up to this that great history of miraculous grace; how that church in the wilderness, a feeble folk, with the great hosts around of Assyria and Egypt, lived for forty years out of bread from heaven. Of course we do not expect modernists to believe that, but we believe it. "The bread that came down out of heaven!" But only a parable or type: a multitude of people living in the midst of an age oblivious of what was happening, a people fed by bread out of heaven, the manna. You know the meaning of the word "manna"? "What is it ?" Mystery ! And here in this Christian dispensation with civilisations passing along and the great world of nations around, we here have been a people from Pentecost to the Rapture gathering around a table, preaching a gospel of the death of God in Christ, of the Passion in the Eternal coming through our way, visiting this world, the Blood of the Eternal by the Incarnation sanctifying this planet to be the footstool of God's eternal sovereignty, and a people out of the inhabitants of this world, out of every nation and tribe and kindred and tongue that shall be incorporated into Him, and live by Him, and feed upon Him, eating of Him and drinking of Him, living upon Him by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven! A hidden Life, a Life sustained by God, and a Life that shall become manifest soon when the

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church is completed. But the Jews made their discussion upon the manna,-the bread that was typical and wholly material. And He answered Moses gave not that bread, but my Father giveth, the true Bread, the actual Bread that cometh down out of heaven; then He goes on to point out that He is the Bread that cometh down out of heaven, but not yet, 'He is limited yet, His glory is veiled, He has imprisoned Himself within the likeness (effigy) of sinful flesh for onr sakes. He is imprisoned within a form like yours and mine. No one can know Him, for "no one knoweth the Son, but the Father," and that is the wonder of the revelation when we see Him; it is the very gift of God to behold Him. But here He is not yet unveiled by the Holy Ghost, but hidden, anointed by the Holy Ghost, God incarnate, but no one seeing His glory, except a few. And what is happening? O, He is taking away the sin of the World, and He is meeting the mystery of iniquity behind the scenes, He is meeting the problem of evil and pain in the universe, He is meeting that thing behind that no man can measure, the veil that wraps itself around us, and prevents us from recognising the nature of the drame that is being fought out in this world, this thing that, while it has its issue imprisoned here,—only down here, because that was the strategy of God that when Lucifer, the son of the morning, the archangel of light, in his lust of pride and power sought to frustrate the purpose of God in that first man Adam, he was fastened down to a single issue on this little planet, otherwise he would have ranged the heavens. You and I are teaching a tremendous gospel. Many people think this is a shallow superficial credulity which some poor benighted people called "Christians" have, who possess no intelligence and no scientific perspective, but when God has anointed your eyes with eye-salve, you see that the drama of the Eternal has been enacted upon this little planet, upon the earth; and the Archangel of Light, the first created being who was the anointed cherub that covered, next to God's throne, with all those principalities and powers that arrayed themselves against the eternal purpose of God, has been nailed down to an issue here on this earth; and that is why God Incarnate came this way to do this thing. He wrought it out in Man form, and the weakness of God triumphed, and stripped off from Himself principalities and powers; but when you and I see Calvary we see a man called "Jesus of Nazareth" being stricken, broken

there, and God moves us to faith upon the single issue of that first vision; but when we get illumination, we see the land of far distances and the length, and breadth and depth and height of the eternal purpose of God which He purposed in Christ Jesus before eternal times, and you and I, little motes upon this planet that seem but to flicker for a moment in the sunlight and are gone, are called into cooperation with God on that issue. Don't you see that Satan has been nailed down to this thing. Oh, but behind the scenes the thing was done, from behind the scenes came the pressure, the agony of Gethsemane and of the cross of Calvary, that which was wrung out of Eternal Love there; and then that shout of triumph, It is finished. And then you see the resurrection is the breaking back through of God Incarnate to His throne. "God is gone up on high with a triumphant noise. The clarions of the skies proclaim the angelic joys! Listen now to the invitation to you and to me in this little room to-night—"Join all on earth." But they do not join because they have not the vision; they have not the revelation :---

Join all on earth, rejoice and sing ;

Glory ascribe to glory's King.

But do you see the Body? Do you see the Incarnation? It is God! And here He is coming through in this sixth chapter of John. He is saying these things about His flesh which He will give for the Life of the world, but not yet. And how, when He is ascended on high, those who should live will live by Him. If you read those words in the quietness of your rooms to-night it may be just out of this broken reference to scripture God may speak to your heart, and you will drink of this wine as you have never drunk before. But now let us ask the Holy Ghost to hear the word of God from the lips of Jesus: "The Bread which I will give is My flesh for the life of the world " (R.V.).

Of course that is going to come true when our Lord appears in advent glery, not as when He appears to us who are looking for Him. When He appears in Advent glory the whole universe will then know that He is the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe, and all will live by Him. All the energies of creation proceed now out from Him as He is ascended into the throne of God,—that new creation, the new heavens and the new earth in that changed form, when the blight of evil has been cast out, and God is all in all. That new universe will be sustained out from Him, and so He is laying down here a universal principle of the truth. "By Him all

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things subsist, or arc held together." It is then that the whole universe will partake of His glory and live by Him in the regeneration of the universe, in the restitution or rectification of all things, for "Even now the whole creation groans and travails in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God because the creation itself shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." So He is speaking of how ultimately out from Him all the powers of creation shall issue in beneficent restoration, when Satan is for ever cast out, and that glory never seen on land or sea shall shine in, and the earth shall be full of the glory of God as the waters cover the deep. This is true, and I am emphasising that because you should know that right down to that 53rd verse there is one Greek word used for "eat"; and then another word is used when He comes to the church. Up to this time he has been using the word phago, but now He uses trogo in the next four verses (54-58) :--- `-

"He (individual) that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood hath Eternal Life (His Life), and I will raise him up at the last day (that one). For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth (same word) and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him. Now notice.—As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth Me, he also shall live because of me. This is the Bread which came down out of heaven, not as the fathers did eat the manna and died (that was only a parable and type), but he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever."

But, as I have said, in these verses you have a different word for "eat." The point is this, that you and I, by faith in the living Christ ascendant in the throne of God in Man-form *pcrtcke of Him* by the Holy Ghost. That is, you have here a spiritual activity, a spiritual action by faith, an assimilation, a taking in, a living by Him, and the process is made plain as Hc says :—

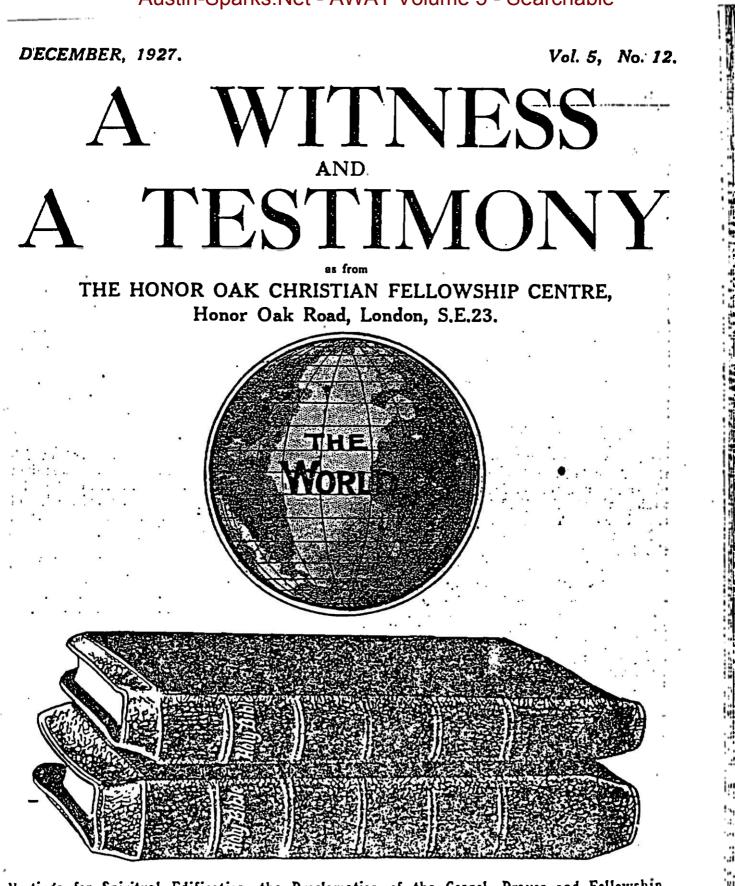
"As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father (He lived by the Holy Ghost—God the Spirit, relating God and Father and God the Son in one Life): so he that eateth Me shall live because of Me."

This is an activity of the Holy Ghost, and it is only by the Holy Ghost you can cat of that Bread, and it is only by the Holy Ghost you can drink of that cup, and so you see wc arc depending upon the Holy Spirit this evening. This conference has rightly been given the theme :-- \*

THE CROSS, AND GOD THE HOLY GHOST. The Holy Ghost (God as Spirit relating Father and Son was in the Christ, for through the <sup>3</sup> Eternal Spirit He offered Himself unto God, and by the same Spirit He was resurrected into an Ascension Life in the Godhead) must now minister to us the nature and substance of Christ. He has become in that resurrected body the eternal instrument of God's purpose. so that God Triune resides in and upon Him, and now to the glory and praise of God's grace, and the complete discomfiture of the devil. there are found men and women out of every nation and tribe and kindred and tongue, a people who dare to believe this. Dare to believe that they can eat the flesh of that ascended Son of God, Son of Man. Through the Vail, that is to say, His flesh, they come as "Members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones," and so by eating of that flesh, participating by the Holy Ghost in that body, you and I are one, living as out from Him, and unto Him. This is the mystery of the church. The oneness in the church is the oneness of that ascension life of Jesus, the Father and the Son, living in a Holy Spirit relationship, and you and I are invited to partake of Him. O, then, what a revelation was this, and how we understand why the apostle said : " I myself received from the Lord that which also I delivered unto you."

This is not that kind of thing around which the present controversy rages, it is something deep, it is something infinite and marvellous. This is something related to a hidden process of God which you and I discern as we see the body of God, in Christ, upon the throne, and as we see the body of Christ shared also in the members; and you and I can only live for one end then. Where can pettinesses and disagreements come in after such a vision ? Where come in jealousies and other things of that character when we see the holiness of God, the holiness of the sacrifice, and the holiness of the thing into which we are invited; and Paul explains why many things happened to the children of God. He says, " For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep, ' because they did not live in and by that Life. May He bless us as we wait, and as we pray, and as we praise, for His Name's sake.

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Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Proclamation of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship. Sundays: 11 a.m., 3 p.m. (Young People's Meeting), and 6.30 p.m. Mondays: 7.30 p.m. Wednesdays: 8 p.m. Saturdays: 7.30 p.m.

Conferences are held every week-end (Saturday and Sunday), and also a longer week-end at the beginning of each month, this fixed by the first Sunday. (Friday to Monday evenings, inclusive.) All particulars may be obtained from G. Paterson, Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, Honor Oak Road, S.E.23.

Ministers: T. Austin-Sparks; T. Madoc Jeffreys; G. Paterson (General Secretary). Quest House Hostesses: Lady Ogle; Mrs. M. Brand. Telegrams: "Byndesmos, Forost. London." Cables "Syndesmos, London."

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## MINISTERS' LETTER

(Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre.)

BELOVED OF OUR LORD, December, 1927. He hath limited a certain day, saying, "To-day" Behold, now—the well-accepted time! Behold now—the day of salvation!

How blessed, as we feel the swift and sinister current of time, the course of this age fast hurrying the world of nations toward their hour of great tribulation, to know that by our acceptance of Almighty God's great personal Act of Calvary, you and we have been lifted right out of this present evil age, and are now living a Life that is hid with Christ in God. What steadiness of heart we thus possess as we see things coming to pass on the earth ! Not the fainting heart of fear is ours, but the fixed anchored heart of faith entering into *that* which is within the Vail.

How few, however, recognise that God has stopped the clock, so to say, and has cut out of the ages this single "Day" of receiving Grace, this "Now" of His time of gracious acceptance of us as a Family of God *in* His well-beloved Son, to share that Son's Life, His Inheritance and to enter into His Glory, when the House is complete.

In some senses it is a dread thought to behold the long-suffering and patience of God, His suspended judgments during this "Day" of grace that has now lasted well-nigh 1900 years. Noah preached righteousness for 120 years during what time the Ark was a preparing. The Holy Spirit has preached "Wondrous Grace" for a much longer period until the House of God, the living Temple, the Body of the Christ, shall have been completed. Thus the hours are full of imminence, the kingdom of the heavens hath drawn nigh. God's Purpose already accomplished in Fact at Calvary awaits "Fulfilment" in the completion of the Body. The Lord's death is being shewn forth till He come! The Holy Ghost is in the world to bring about the consummation of this age !

What a privilege to live in the closing hours of this dispensation. As Simeon, Anna, and many another of a comparatively small and obscure company of believers waited for the consolation of Israel, the Jesus of Bethlehem and Nazareth, so we, upon whom the ends of the ages have all this while arrived, wait for the Lord out of Heaven unto Whom we shall be enraptured as we are found joined to Him in spirit. The Vision comes ! Though it tarry, wait for it. Swift will be His coming when it comes. "Now ! To-day !"

And as He has cut a "Day" out of the ages in which His Purpose, despite all hell's counsels, is being victoriously and irresistibly accomplished, so He has cut us off by His Cross from all those hellish counsels, enmities, and cruelties, oppressions, imprisonments and chains. Beloved, you are free in this Day of Grace ! Enter into this Heavenly "Now" of God. Yield to the power of His Resurrection, that is, His Life within you, to lift you up in spirit, out of this present evil age, to abide in Him in heavenly places. God would lift your spirit out of time into His Eternity, into His Now. Wc which believe do enter into the "Sabbath Rest," for the works are finished. And out of that heavenly position of "Rest," triumphs faith energised by love, Yea, out from God in Christ, you must live, coming down upon events, circumstances, temporal things, in that Victorious Life that is timeless, that Eternal Life into which you are already begotten, and which by the Holy Ghost would be manifested in you.

Jesus came down to the poverty of His creatures in Bethlehem, that you and we might now inherit and dwell in the Throne of Glory !

May your Christmastide be spiritual, not sentimental. May the New Creation manifest its triumph and glory in your hearts to the Glory and Honour of its King !

For we which believe do enter into His Rest. Yours in this great "Day,"

T. AUSTIN-SPARKS.

T. MADOC-JEFFREYS.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our monthly receipts towards the cost of this paper are gratefully recorded below. They meet the current charges, but not that of this issue.

During the past year the cost of printing and of postage has almost doubled, but so far the Lord has prompted His people to meet the increased demand. If there are any on our mailing list who do not wish to receive the paper any more, we should be glad if they would intimate this to our secretary by postcard, as we do not wish to waste any copies. We now print 1,750 a month, and of these nearly 1,000 are mailed.

Local, £3; Wimbledon, £110s.; Bermondsey, £1; Hexham, £1; New York, £1; Southend-on-Sea, 10s.; Palmer's Green, 10s.; Heaton, 10s.; Wolverhampton, 5s.; Bognor, 5s.; Broxbourne, 5s.; Tidworth, 5s.; Shaldon, 10s.; Seahouses, 10s.; Neweastle, 5s.; Belfast, 4s. 6d.: Swindon, 3s. 6d.; Bridgend, 2s. 6d.: Muswell Hill, 2s. 6d.: Maida Vale, 2s. 6d.; Paddington, 2s. 6d.; W. Kirby, 2s. 6d.; Clapham, 2s. 6d.: Newington Green, 2s.; Hornsey Rise, 2s.: Guernsey, 2s. 2d.; Brighton, 4s. 6d.; Edinburgh, 1s. 7d.: Neath, 1s. 3d.; Boscombe, 9d. Total, £13 8s. 3d.

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#### THE FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

#### THANKSGIVING.

Our December Conference was given to much rejoicing, for wc were celebrating the first anniversary of our settlement at the "Centre." One finds that the Holy Spirit honours remembrance when it is the vision and visitations of God that we would recall.

So looking back over a year of constant uncertainties, storms and trials of faith, we saw not these so much, except as the surface of a troubled sea upon which He has walked in triumph, and we with Him. His deliverances, His mercies, His hidden and strong consolations, His compensations for all that might have seemed like suffering or trial, have been so manifold and wonderful, that we need an "instrument of ten strings" a heart attuned to God, to sing His praise. Never did we so realise the truth of those words, "Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise!"

The year therefore had prepared us for the emphasis of the Conference which while dealing with the "Victory of Calvary" seemed to gather round the Victor rather than to be concerned with the Victory. But this is healthful, and truly the hall mark of the Spirit. That Holy Name of Jesus is becoming more and more "Wonderful" to us. Truly it is an "Enigma" to the natural mind; but God, by His Spirit, is unfolding its riches,—the Infinite Grandeur, Honour, and Glory of that Name of the Godhead in the Man, Jesus !

Name of Jesus ! Highest Name ! Name that heaven and earth adore. From the heart of God it came, Leads me to God's heart once more.

So all the theme of the Conference was illumined by the preciousness, the costliness of His Name: His exaltation into the Godhead, only made possible through that deep descent into hades. The humilitation of the Incarnation alone should be sufficient to provoke our wondering praise,—that God should so unclothe and limit Himself in the abasement of our likeness !

MINISTRIES.

These are becoming too manifold for announcement, but there are cortain matters that may he mentioned for prais and prayer.

The report from the Newcastle area is full of cheer and significance. The pattern of the Lord is seen in the openings for ministry among i week in district around. Dublin, 10th.

many groups of the Lord's people all around. This month our brother, Mr. Oliphant, has again been the Lord's messenger to these, and in addition to the Conference in the town of Newcastle itself, there was evidence of a real desire to go forward with the Lord in Swallwell. Friends interested should note that the third week in each month is devoted to this visit north, fixed by the fact that the third Friday is given to the Newcastle Conference.

Our young brother, Mr. Victor Thomas, is staying on at Aberdare. His comrade, Mr. Gresham Speedy is visiting Dublin for the next few weeks, where he will be in touch with the work at the Y.M.C.A. there. Prayer is asked for the Monthly Conference, due the second Tuesday in each month convened by our brother, Captain Wallis. Pastor P. W. Faunch takes the ministry there on January 10th.

The visit to Jersey, December 8th to 16th, was deeply fruitful. Guernsey was taken in on the way, and there one found a small group of intensely hungry souls, whose gratitude for the visit was overwhelming. Arrangements are being made possible for a regular sharing of the ministry to the two islands. It is hoped that our brother, Mr. Crowe, will spend a day there when due at Jersey from January 15th to 20th.

The meetings at St. Helier's, December 8-16 were marked by a real spirit of revelation, and our brother was greatly strengthened in his endeavour to gather the children of God around the central Testimony. - He proposes to conduct the Bible School through the Scriptures. While the meetings are held at the Friends' Meeting House, the "Fellowship" is an absolutely free one, the building being merely a matter of convenience. There was a "discerning of the Body " in a clearer light this time in Jersey, and much is expected from this "heavenly vision" in respect to freedom from every other interest but that of serving God's supreme purpose in this age. The remarkable work among the rural districts in the north of the island is still going on under the oversight of Pastor Pallot, between whom and Mr. Voisin there is close fellowship : and one cannot help feeling that the Lord will gather out a people for His Name in Jersey.

The Monthly Conferences at Willesden Green (Rev. Pearson-Harrison) call for our close cooperation in prayer. These are held the third Thursday in each month.

Colchester, Friends' Meeting House, January 3rd to 5th. Newcastle, 20th. the preceding

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#### A WITNESS AND A TESTIMONY

## NOTES FROM BIBLE-READINGS ON "NUMBERS"

WE have been led to narrowly consider the Book of Numbers as containing in type spiritual principles and directions for the gatheringtogether, the marshalling and progresses of the children of God unto His Divine Consummation, namely, the Translation and Out-Resurrection of His Church, which is the Body of the Christ. It also contains a history of tragic failure to enter into that inheritance for which this chosen nation was called, redeemed, and initially led. They failed to enter in because of unbelief, and because of disobedience springing from unbelief.

Key passages in the New Testament that indicate the purport of the Book are—1 Cor. x. 1-11; Hebrews iii. 7—iv. 11; Ephesians iv. 1-16. These should be read prayerfully and carefully, for apart from the general principle laid down in Romans xv. 4 that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning," it is plainly declared with respect to the experiences of the children of Israel recorded in Numbers, "now these things became our *types*" (1 Cor. x. 6) and "all these things happened unto them for types; and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages arrived" (v. 11).

The Holy Spirit would not have us ignorant therefore of what befel this "church in the wilderness" since He has recorded its history as a prophetic parable containing the history and experience of the Church of God, the Body of Christ, in its wanderings throughout this present evil age.

The "exodus" was always for the purpose of the eisodos—the deliverance, the way out of Egypt, but the first step for that "way into" the land of promise. The wanderings and failure while foreseen, were quite unnecessary from the Divine standpoint, and they did not glorify the "Name" in the first place, though God in His over-ruling wisdom and power used them to the disciplining of His people and to the praise of His grace. But we must not condone the failure, which is as much as to say, "Let us continue to sin that grace may abound."

So with the church of the Christ. There was a glorious "exodus" through Calvary's perfect triumph and Pentecost's perfect enduement. The *eisodos* has always been possible and therefore imminent. "Maranatha" has always been the cry of the Spirit. The church of the New Testament times came very near to that

possibility, but there have been the wanderings of nearly 1900 years. Now once again are wo being brought not to Kadesh-Barnea, but to the deeps of Jordan, as the place of entering-in. The call to the Lord's people to-day is to recognise the principles and orderings that the Holy Spirit has given for the gathering together and edifying of the Body of Christ, that we might

all arrive at the oneness of the faith, and at the oneness of the *full-knowledge* of the Son of God, unto a perfect MAN, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of the Christ." Ah, what a call is here to those who have humble, listening hearts! And how significant is that use of the silver trumpets,—"And when they shall blow with them, all the congregation shall assemble themselves to THEE (for Moses is but the type of that Infinite Mediator) at the entrance of the Tabernacle of the congregation " (Numbers x. 3). Thus would the Holy Spirit call us through the speech of that blood of our common purchasing and sprinkling, that we might be gathered into Oneness at the entrance into that greater and perfect Tabernacle in the heavenlies, not of this creation-to pass through as an "assembly" into the Glory of His Presence.

And let us remember that we cannot read the words the Spirit has given except the same Spirit energises the spiritual faculties of our hearts that we may understand the scriptures. One would not be surprised if the Holy Spirit were to use much these first five books of the Bible to the edification of the Church in these last days. The devil would specialise scripture, taking certain parts out of the whole volume, to create special teaching and thus create sects and schism. The Holy Spirit would preserve the grand unity of all the scriptures, and the blessed truths concerning the Body of Christ are found deeply embedded in all scripture, and do not belong to certain exclusive passages in the New Testament.

A brief comparison of the first five books of the Bible might therefore be useful at this point, though the information is familiar.

Genesis, the book of the beginnings or origins illustrates God's dealings with a fallen race upon the principle of *individual* calling. Here "the Spirit bloweth where He listeth," choosing men for His purpose according as He will, until He discovers in Abraham a recipient and custodian of that "justifying faith" (N.B.) upon which shall depend all His future dealings with men and nations.

The Voice of God is heard "in the breeze of the day." Genesis iii. S.

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Exodus, the book of the "Way out" has for its theme "Redemption," but in relation to a nation rather than to individuals.

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This elect nation, Israel, is the fruit of that elect individual Jacob, himself of the spiritual seed of Abraham, who represents "the spirit of service," but service made spiritual by the grace of God's dealings with him, so that he becomes Israel, one who prevails with God and men, for this nation is intended to serve God's purposes in the earth. It must therefore be redeemed and separated from the rest of mankind, and is accordingly delivered out of the power of the world and of its prince, typified in Egypt and Pharaoh—and in a definite and particular manner is it delivezed from the "lord of death" by "the blood of the Lamb."

Then the Voice of God is heard in the Mount. Revelation comes to a redeemed people. The law, which is spiritual, is given from heaven. But the people cannot bear the revelation of a Holy God, and so a mediator, Mones, is appointed; also the Tabernacle of the Testimony is constructed upon a Divine pattern so that a Holy God may dwell among a sinful people through mediation and priesthood. (How plainly is the church set forth here! We are the heavenly counterpart of this Israel,---a heaven-born and therefore a heavenly people, purchased unto God Himself for a possession. His inheritance : redeemed out of this present evil age and the authority of its god, that in a Holy Ghost Life, that is, a heavenly life hid with Christ in God, we might serve our God in a ministry of intercession that shall re-act upon the principalities and powers that rule this world.)

Leviticus is the book of access and communion for this redeemed people through a priestly ministry, that of Aaron. But propitiation and sanctification in their manifold forms of sacrifice are needed to maintain this people in the grace of God. In addition the Day of Atonement marks the fact that the way into the Holiest of All is barred to their uncleanness, though Aaron as their representative is admitted to the Divine Audience once in the year, not without blood—and while he, and they representatively, are thus accepted, they are bidden afflict their souls as they contemplate the fact that a Holy God can have no abiding fellowship with their continually, sinful and unholy nature. . The Voice here is significantly in the tent of the congregation.

Numbers, briefly the book of "orderings" deals with the assemblings and journeyings, the

fellowship and pilgrim march to victory and inheritance of this redeemed and sanctified people. They gather around a central "Testimony" which makes them an ordered host, and when all the conditions constituting Unity obtain (chapters i. to x.) they "MARCH" to a promised destination under Divine Guidance and protection. They are "in the wilderness," but the Voice is heard from the "Mercy-Seat" (ch. viii. 89).

Deuteronomy, as its title implies, s the Rehearsal of the Law. Instantly comes to mind the words, "He shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Moses recounts all things that have come to pass in the Lord's manifest dealings with them, and all His words. They are about to enter into the premised "Land." This is another generation than those who failed.

It is the book of the Spirit and of the Inheritance of the sons of God. How significant the fact that the Son of God when challenged by Satan at the end of those "forty days' temptation in the wilderness" as to His Sonship and Inheritance quoted exclusively from Deuteronomy.

Here the Voice is also the voice of a Man! Moses, type of the Mediator, speaks, and sings, in the midst of the church.

"I am the Good Shepherd! My sheep hear My Voice, and they follow Me!" Whither, Lord? Into that Heavenly Land of Promise. Jordan is dried up for us by the Ark—and the sons of God enter into their heavenly possessions!

To return now to this "Book of Numbers," which as we have noted is rather a book dealing with the ordering, assembling, and journeying of a redeemed people who must be found gathered together in a unity around a central "Testimony." It is important to recognise that the first ten chapters form an *introduction*. The Holy Spirit considered it worth while to record with a care and reference to detail that reads laboriously to our carnal mind the necessary conditions apart from which the very first step forward of a united God-ordered and God-directed people could not be taken.

But how essential is that "March forward" if the Divine Will is to be realised. They are not their own, they are bought with a price, serve a Divine Purpose, to enter a "Land" occupied by the enemies of Jehovah who must become their enemies. They are to overthrow and cast out "seven nations," and this simply

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by their obedience in following the Ark of Testimony and the due proclamation of their faith in the "Name"; but this must be ordered and united. How vividly does the Spirit thus portray in type the warfare of the church with those evil principalities and powers, who arc to be cast out of their present realm in the lower heavenlies by the united testimony of a people obedient to a unity of "the faith." The theme of "Numbers" is warfare, but warfare realised and the faith for it kindled in the wilderness. The numbering is for war: not all are numbered. As we read the first four chapters, this thought of a calling that is for war is constantly pressed. Note the description recurring in the numbering of each tribe in Chapter 1, "all that were able to go forth to war." It is for this purpose they are ranged around the tabernacle of the Testimony in Chapter ii. pitched by their own standards. The further and more intensive aspects of this warfare of a "Faith" are presented in the "work" of the Levites and the worship and intercession of the priestly family, chapters iii. and iv. The phrase " perform the service " describing the ministry of the sons of Gershon, Merari, and Kothath is literally "war, the warfare"! (ch. iv. 23, 30, 35).

But all this must be in the order of God. They must recognise *His* election both to salvation and to service, and that these are distinct and separate appointments of His grace.

Chapter i. deals with the numbering of the tribes according to their pedigree or birth, verse 18. Chapter ii. records their numbering according to service. The God who calls to salvation, must also call to service. His Sovereign grace must be acknowledged equally in both phases of our life. If this principle of the Divine appointment for ministry in the Body of Christ were mutually recognised what deliverances would swiftly come to pass in the present chaos of the church of the first-born !

Let us also note that before the question of service comes in, the ministry of the, as yet, unnumbered Levites is suggested, their encampment being immediately around the tabernacle of the Testimony (ch. i. 47-54). The rest of the sons of Israel, "far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch" (ch. ii. 2), probably at the minimum distance of [the 2,000 cubits mentioned in Joshua iii. 4; and this lest there be "wrath." There must be no presumption to serve. Salvation may be secured, but this does not warrant an intrusion into holy things

except under a Divine invitation and a commissioning by Divine appointment. How shall they preach except they be sent? It must always be the compulsions of the Holy Ghost and not the impulses, choices, and desires of our own flesh that create our service. And every one of us must give account unto God. Though the Foundation is truly observed wc must take heed how we build thereon, for our works in this respect will be revealed in fire (1 Cor. iii. 10-15). But we say this not to quench zeal or to deter service, but rather to encourage it in holiness and fear of God, for every warrior numbered in chapter i. because of salvation is also numbered in chapter ii. for service; but there is an interposition of reverence and godly fear, and they pitch their standards according to a further call to ministry, and listen for the sound of triumpets, waiting at attention, so to speak : saying, "Here am I ! send me: but as Thou dost appoint, and not as I desire." And no brother clashes with brother, neither is there any rivalry or competition or self-interest of service among the hosts of God. There is one order for salvation then: and another for service. By birth we are all borne upon the High Priest's shoulders, without respect of persons. Exodus xxviii. 9, "according to birth," and Reuben, though unstable as water is given his place; but upon the Breastplate there is another order of God's choice and Judah comes first though Reuben has still a place. This is the numbering "according to the twelve tribes." So God gets some, Eph. iv. 11, but all are called to serve " for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ." He, the Holy Spirit, distributes to all severally according to His will (1 Cor. xii.). We are all "members in particular," and " unto each one of us is given grace (for service, here) according to the measure of the gift of the Christ" (Eph. iv. 7). And the mightiest ministry is "a hidden one" in the Holiest of All, and he that is least among you shall be the greatest.

Let us rapidly recount the principles of "numbering" those whose names are written in heaven, according to chapters i. and ii.

1. Numbering must always be upon a basis of Redemption, and *remembrance* of redemption. No other numbering is permitted. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, When thou takest the SUM of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord when thou numberest them, that there be no plague among them

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when thou numberest them" (Exodus xxx. 11-15). It was for no prompting of pride or power that Israel was ever to be numbered, but as a redeemed people. They were to remember the Blood of their redemption, and make their acknowledgment in the half-shekel, a pure remembrance of the sanctuary before God; and in this they were all alike, with no superiorities or inferioritics—sinners redeemed by costly blood, who had thus become members of a holy nation. Thus two things should come to the heart of the true believer, nay three-Redemption, realisation of their membership of a holy nation, and also of their pilgrimage towards a speedy destination. Are not these embodied in the Lord's Supper: (a) We remember His death; (b) we should discern the Body, the church, especially that of it present in the members gathered with us; (c) we labour and wait in the Spirit unto His Coming.

Such are the numberings of chapters i. and ii., and also of chapter xxvi. But when David was provoked by Satan to vain glory and selfexaltation, and ordered the numbering of Israel for mere statistical purposes, see what disaster ! 2 Samuel xxiv. How does this reflect upon church statistics ?

2. The second principle in numbering, as we have already seen, was that of "pedigree" birth. Thus the phrases (a) By their generations, (b) after their families (c) by the house of their fathers, (d) and these, according to the number of names—are repeated with regard to every tribe. These references might be considered redundant were it not obvious that the Holy Spirit is emphasising with great particularity the necessity that each individual should be able to establish his identity, verse 18. It is literally then a counting of heads," by their polls," but "according to birth."

Church membership must be established then not only upon a basis of redemption, but upon the fact that those who claim this can also substantiate their birth-right. The "new birth" is as essential as redemption. They are complementary, and one is not manifest without the other. But the "birth" must not only be avowed but proven, And how? By the witness of the Spirit. God leaves us not without witness. "Hereby know we that we abide in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit (1 John iv. 15, also iii. 24; Romans viii. 16, 17.)

No one who is not "born-from-above can serve in the heavenly army of the Lord." 3. The third basis of numbering was maturity: "twenty years old and upward." Note the "upward": "There is no discharge from this warfare": These accordingly were "able to go forth to war in Israel." The "babes" were ineffective and added to the labours of the warriors since they had to be protected.

This, of course, is the urgent emphasis of the Spirit in Eph. iv. It is essential for the great Purpose of God that every believer should be brought to "maturity" in order that they may enter into the work of the ministry. All the revelation that issues out of that "Holiest of All" through the service under unction of those who also "war the warfare," the sons of Kohath, Gershon and Merari (typifying the ministry of prophet, teacher and evangelist, who bear the burden of the Lord's revelation), is for the purpose of "perfecting the saints." And this perfection as we have so often recognised is "full-growth" or "maturity," which God intends should be brought about as speedily and healthfully as possible. The tragedy of even evangelical circles to-day, let us repeat, is arrested development." The burden of such an anomaly issues in a travail of beseeching throughout the epistles, "that we be no more children "!

How far are we from the ideal set forth in this manifold ministry issuing in the "maturity" of a great army as described in chapters i-iv l Even our highest thought of Holy Ghost ministry is that of successful evangelism, a great gathering-in of converts. We think if we swell the ranks of the Lord's hosts with a mighty increase of those who may be truly born again we have attained the end of the "Word." And what becomes of these "babes"? The land is strewn with the derelicts of successful missions. Even the multitudinous "movements," based upon experiences, and of "schools" based upon interpretations of the Bible as a text-book are largely due to these "babes" being thrust shephcrdless into a supernatural wilderness atmosphere where "the prince of the power of the aerial hosts" lies in wait for the unlearned and the unwary. True, the Lord is over all, and His grace and Anointing provide a marvellous protection and guidance to tho meek and lowly. But He has ordained that we should live as members of "One Body" and not as individuals endeavouring as best wc may to reach a promised "Land." We are called upon. "One Hope of our calling," and the prayer of the Great Shepherd was that we might be perfected into "One." Let us

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remember that while this oneness of His Life is true for each believer as we are found joined to Him, the Purpose of God is that this Onences should be realised, that it should function, and that at the end of the age, the members of the Body should arrive unto it.

It is therefore necessary that in addition to a true evangelising ministry in the Holy Ghost whereby, in the presentation of the solid foundations and fabric of the Truth in Christ, children should be brought into "birth" (the burden of the sons of Merari) there should be the unveiling of the further truth for edification in the ministry of teaching (the burden of the sons of Gershon), and the revealing of the things of the "sanctuary," the heavenlies of the Christ (burden of the sons of Kohath) so that the "babes" should be fed first with milk, then with solid food, that they might become "perfect "-mature : warriors instructed and instrengthened by the Spirit in the heavenly T. M. J. warfare.

(To be continued.)

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## "THE SONG OF MOSES-AND THE LAMB"

#### A MESSAGE AT THE SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE.

THE fragment of the word of the Lord which . is basic to our meditation is in the Rev. xv. 3-4: "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty, righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest."

"And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." And what is that two-fold song, or that one song which gathers up this marvellous Old Testament and this glorious New Testament theme. It is the song of a great emancipation; the song of a great deliverance; the song of a great gathering out accomplished; the song of a freeing by the almighty power of God. "The song of Moses the servant of God" (we will look at it in a minute). "And the song of the Lamb "—one song ! But it is the song of an exodus, a going out, a deliverance, a freeing, an emancipation by a specific method, and that is why it is called not the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of Jesus the Son of God, but it is the "Song of the Lamb." That is its supreme significance, because in both instances, in the typical and in the literal, the Lamb slain was the way out, and the way through, the basis for everything. It is the song of the Lamb. A way, a peculiar way, a specific way. That, beloved, is why we gathered round the ninth chapter of the gospel of Luke this evening. The account or record of what is called the transfiguration of the Son of Man, because it was in that transfiguration mount that Moses the servant of God, accompanied by Elijah, appeared with the Lamb in the glory, and spake not of His death (that is not the word in the original, though so translated in one of our versions), but concerning the exodus which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem —a mighty accomplishment in an exodus through a grave, through death. There was never another death in all the history of death like that ; never another grave in all the history of graves like that grave. The death and the grave by which this infinite deliverance, or exodus was accomplished, "And they spake

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with Him concerning the exodus that He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." It was an hour of the triumph of faith. Now mark every word, "An hour of the triumph of faith." And if you had understood—been able to enter into-the deepest meaning and secret and experience of the transfiguration mount you would have found that it was the scene of a grim conflict; not less grim than Gethsemane, and through the conflict—the triumph of faith. Wherein did the conflict lay? Why, He was already glorified, why then go through the Cross ? Why not now pass with the glory into the glory? Why not go right through into glory now? We have before mentioned that many authorities think that in that passage with which we are familiar the translation ought to be this-" Who instead of the joy set before Him-endured the Cross, despising the shame "---" Who instead of the glory...." Whether you accept that, or not, the principle is there: That was the battle-ground, for here was the glory, here was the joy of the glory set before Him, the open door into heaven. They appeared with Him in glory. There it is, and if. He had sought His own, claimed His own, and stood alone for His own, and had let go this other work relative to all these unsaved sonls, He could have gone right through into the glory: It was His by right. He was the Prince of glory. The battle then was-Shall I go through to the glory, or shall I go the other way? Shall I go this way, or that way? And there appeared unto Him Moses and Elijah and spake with Him concerning the exodus. I wonder what they were saying. Moses I am quite sure was encouraging and saying— "Don't forget long, long ago that people came out through the Red Sea." That was the way of their deliverance. And Elijah was saying— "Don't forget there was a day when I stemmed the waters of Jordan, they parted and made a way for me, and I went through by a chariot into the glory. That is the way. They spake of the method of His exodus which He was about to accomplish. And faith triumphed, and He came down from the mountain, and did not go through to the glory. He waited a bit, in order to take us with him, "Who, by the grace of God, should bring many sons to the glory," instead of going alone. That is the way through. That is the achievement of Calvary. That is the accomplishment at Jerusalem, and that is the basis and theme, key-note and harmony of the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb-exodus through the

grave. O, but what a grave! That is the point. It is not an ordinary grave, and it is just exactly what that grave stood for which gives the key, the interpertation to this whole theme. That grave as symbolised in the exodus of the people of God of old. Israel from Egypt went through the grave of the Red Sea, and it was a grave as it proved to be ' very literally, as we shall see in a moment. Their exodus through that grave was typical, and symbolic of the destroying of the whole tyranny and domination of sin. That is the first note in the heavenly chorus. Sin dealt with in that grave. Sin in its root principle; but I am not going to trouble you to turn again to such familiar words as in Romans vi.-"Having been buried with Him," "planted together in the likeness of His death," " sin shall no longer have the dominion over you." Well that is there, and, in order that He might save His people from their sin, and vindicate His title, His Name, He will make His exodus by way of the Cross, the grave.

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Now that is the first, simple elementary truth of the gospel for any sinner. That is where you begin, beloved. Have you visions and imagina-. tions of singing the song in the glory. You say, you hope to be there, you want to be there: Now begin here. Do you know the cancellation and blotting out of sin as by a death that puts sin deep, deep in the abyss of a grave like the grave through which He passed ? Never a grave like that ! It was a grave that went right down to Hades; a grave that ploughed its way down to the deepest depths where sin dwells, and deals with sin at rock-bottom. But a grave like that must stand between your old life and your life in Christ if you are to know anything of singing "the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb." You begin there, pardon me beloved saints for being so elementary, but one has to start there, and you know we have not got out of the realm of preaching the gospel yet. May the Lord deliver us from ever having this laid to our charge—that we have no gospel for the un-saved. Now that is the gospel pure and simple at its beginning, but that is not all of the gospel—you begin there. "The song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb" is the song of an emancipation from the dominion of sin. Mark you, I am not saying from the presence of sin, but from the dominion of sin. You have got to learn to have dominion, if you are going to share thrones and reign, and it is the exercise of your spirit

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in the power of reigning life that is your training to have dominion in the spirit. That is why the Master never wiped the Devil out in the Cross ; He dealt with Him but never wiped him out, but gave him a certain lease of life in order to give us a chance of sharing His triumph and His throne, in order that there might be a counterpart in the church of His own treading upon the head of the serpent, that He might say to us-in the language of Thomas Goodwinas to His church—"Come, my beloved, I have put my heel on his head, come you and put your foot where I have placed mine," and so the apostle realizes that He shall say unto us also,the church, 'put your feet upon him '--" God shall bruise satan under your heel shortly." Then Calvary's bruising must have this counterpart, and so He has not eradicated sin root and branch from us; but He has delivered our spirit from the bondage, and put our spirit, by grace, in a place of ascendency, so that it is for us, by the energising of God in our spirit to have the dominion. It is that the victorious Christ, victorious over sin, dwelling in our spirit may work out His own triumph in us as He wronght it in the Cross. Do not misunderstand me. That is a point upon which there is a good deal of misunderstanding, but there it is-dominion -from that tyranny of Egypt. As you who are familiar with the word of the Lord here know, Egypt throughout the Old Testament is always a type of the senses of the natural man, and out from the tyranny of those senses which are all polluted by sin He has delivered us by His Cross, and we live no longer after the senses, we live after the Spirit. It was also an exodus by which life's barren waste and ineffectiveness might be put away, and that we might come out into our true vocation. You see these people in Egpyt were working very hard, but to what purpose ? They were spending their strength, exhausting their resources but all in the interests of the enemy, and they groaned, we read, by reason of their taskmasters, and, in order that they should not have the opportunity of contemplating the exodus their labours were increased. That is the way of the enemy, no clearly defined purpose being accomplished, no work accomplishing the eternal ends of God. Beloved, you don't know, and you never can know why you were created until you are a sharer in the triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ in and by His Cross, and then you begin to discover in your spirit a sense of purpose. You notice that one of the first gestures of a newlyborn life is to do something for the Lord, the

first inclination, the first working out arises out of this sense—that this birth is unto something, and although many mistakes are made in that early infant consciousness of the newly-born spirit, nevertheless, there is this thing, a sense of purpose, of vocation, of definite calling as of something to be done. Sooner or later there comes through a revelation in the main of our relationship to the eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ before the world was, and then, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we begin to discover the nature of our place in that purpose, and we begin to realise the enduement and equipment to fulfil that for which, as we now realise, we were eternally elected in Christ. The whole matter of vocation as related to some intention of God settled before the foundation of the world comes up now, and life becomes dominated by a sense of the eternal purpose. And they came out through the Red Sea into the purpose of God to be the instrument and channel, sphere and vehicle of His own revelation.

Now I am still speaking perhaps to many who have not yet been identified with the Lord in that death and that burial,—so many who are wondering why they are alive, some even complaining because they had no choice in the matter—an injustice has been done them-they would rather not have come: But O. how far that is from this, that we are called into His eternal purpose in Christ to fit into a plan conceived in the heart of God before the first man was created! To you who are "called according to His purpose "-"Chosen in Him:" Wonderful conception! But, mark you, you never put your foot upon that territory until you know the power of His death, the depths of His grave over all that which can never come into the service of God, for our "old man," our flesh, can never serve God. We, beloved, in our natural spirit can never be of any use to God. I would that all who profess to be the Lord's would settle that once and for all. Our flesh can contribute nothing to the purpose of God, not a fragment. There is nothing in us by nature which God will take and use. Now settle it, for you will have to come to it sooner or later, if you are going on with God. The service of God is service in the spirit on the ground of His own working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, because He is resident in us, and He is only resident in His own begotten-again children. Are you clear about that? You only make a mess when you try to do God's work for Him.

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The matter then of spiritual ascendency over sin is a matter of resurrection with Christ from the dead by having shared with Him His cross and His grave. The matter of spiritual service is in the same relationship by the same way. And then, blessed be God, in that grave death's sting was plucked out. He went through the grave, and as He went through He plucked the sting of death from death. It was the death of death that He died so that death is robbed of its sting and of its prey in the grave of the Lord Jesus. It was a terrific death! A mighty death! You see that in the symbolism in Israel's case. We have so often pointed. this out. Just let us say it briefly again The battle of the Paschal Lamb and the exodus was the battle between the Lord of Life and the Lord of Death. The blood was the basis of that tremendous thing, and the Lord of Death coming to Egypt met the Lord of Life in the presence of the blood poured forth and encircling the portal of the threshold of the house of His people, and that blood resisted the Lord of Death. He had no access for that blood was the occasion of the access of the Lord of Life into the house of His chosen. The position was not pass by, it was—pass over the threshold right in. He stepped across the blood at the threshold, and made a covenant of Life on the ground of that blood with those within, who, by faith, had taken the blood. They may well have said, "Well, this is a very silly sort of thing to do, we don't see much in this sprinkling the blood on the lintel of the doorposts! What is the eeffct of this?" O, by faith they sprinkled the blood, and it was the triumph of faith in the blood which brought about a covenant of Life with the Lord of Life, so that the Lord of Death was excluded and vanguished, and all that was accomplished in the blood, and secured a safe exodus from the grave which would have swallowed them up, but for that blood and that covenant, and that victorious faith! That is why the writer of the Hebrew letter speaking in solemn language, refers to those who "trampled under foot the blood of the covenant and accounted it an unholy thing." There it is in the symbloism of Egypt, of Israel. The basis of a covenant of life by which death, and the Lord of Death is robbed of authority, of power, of right of access, and a way out from death into life is made in union with the victorious Lord of Life through the blood, and so they sing their song. It was the song of life in

prospect. The song of Moses the servant of

God was just that song which we shall sing one day, "O death where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory." "Then shall be brought to pass that which is written." That is the song of the Lamb, the prophesy of the song of Moses the servant of God. Death swallowed up in victory through the blood of the Lord Jesus. Beloved don't confine that to physical death, if that is what is horizoned in your minds by what I have said. Death is an infinitely bigger thing than that, and life is infinitely bigger than salvation from physical dissolution.

Then you notice this other note, perhaps the note which was most in the ascendent in the song of Moses the servant of God," the horse and his rider have been cast into the depths of the sea"—

"I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously:

The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and song,

And He is become my salvation.

This is my God, I will praise Him;

My father's God, and I will exalt Him.

The Lord is a man of war:

The Lord is His name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea:

And His chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.

The deeps cover them :

They went down into the depths like stone.

Thy right hand, O Lord is glorious in power." etc. The ascendent note of the song is, not only are the instruments of the enemy destroyed, but the enemy himself is destroyed. He has used sin; he has used bondage; he has used tyranny; he has used death, and they, with himself are now swallowed up. The enemy is wiped out, and that is the song of the Lamb as it was the song of Moses the servant of God.

Now, what 1 like about it is this, that it is corporate. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel." Moses did not sing a solo, there was a chorus, and when you come over to the Revelation, it is not the Lamb singing His song of triumph. it is the redeemed who are with Him singing the song of the Lamb, the one song of Moses and of the Lamb, which has one basis—absolute deliverance from every form of tyranny, bondage and ineffectiveness through the grave.

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Now beloved, that might be very good in prospcct, but that is not good enough. David sang : He hath put a new song into my mouth," and unless we are able to sing this song now, we had better abandon hope of singing it then, because Calvary in all its meaning is now effective, and all its fruit is now available, and the whole of the word of God brings it emphasis to bear upon this, that the full meaning of the Cross of the Lord Jesus is to be the present experience of His own. In other and familiar words,-the secret of victory and the song of victory is knowing our union with Him in His death, in His burial, in His resurrection. O, you have heard that, I know, thousands of times! It does not matter, do you know it ? Do you really know it? Can you sing now the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. To begin with, can you sing by reason of a spiritual emancipation from the tyranny and dominion of sin ? I do not mean that you never fail, that you never break down, but have you got in your possession the secret of spiritual ascendency ? Shall I put it another way. Do you know what it is to have a new life mdwelling you which rises up and gives you the enablement, even if you do fail, to get up and go .on, instead of succumbing to the tyranny and dominion of sin? Do you know what it is to have that continuous uprising of resurrection life that makes you say, " Though I fail, yet will I rise." Not that your life should be one continual succession of falling and rising, being floored and getting up and going on again, but that you are progressively and certainly going on in ascension life, and gaining the ascendency in your spirit over your flesh. That is the course, that this "old man" from day to day, is being brought into the captivity and control of that "new man" which is in us. This outer man of the soul, with the sinful principle in him, is being reduced to tho authority and power and dominion of that "new man" with the Spirit of holiness as His principle. That is, the course of spiritual experience. There is a progressive and continuous rising and taking ascendency on the part of the inner man, renewed in God by the energising of the Holy Spirit, over the outer man, the "old man." Do you know the cominion of thrist is your suirit, or are you just where you were twelve months ago, or more ? Is the law of sin being broken by the law of Christ's resurrection life in your spirit that you do not abide in the bondage of sin. 1 do not know why the Lord is keeping us . so full of purpose and meaning and effectiveness

back at the beginnings. Perhaps the foundation has got to be renewed, and in many cases laid, even in cases who know all about this as a truth. Now, beloved, is this true in your experience. That is the thing that is in my heart. O, the danger of being familiar with teaching of this kind, and yet not to be abreast of it in experience! Unless you are learning progressively to sing of victory over sin hero, there is no hope of your singing that song there.

Are you afraid of death, to start with ? Are you afraid of physical death? O, I ask that question deliberately, for I know something in a way, on this matter. There are people who have for many years been preaching Romans vi., and have been considered authorities on the subject of the Cross of Christ, who dread death as they dread nothing else. Now, beloved, what about it, that form? But that is nothing compared with what death really is. Do you know victory in your spirit already over death in all its forms, that death over you is swallowed up in victory? Of course I know that it requires test cases: and test experiences to prove this in many instances, and it is not until you really come up against it that you discover what peace there is, how wonderful is the truth of this thing. Some of us have proved that in recent months, that whereas in years gone by there was an apprehensiveness, we have discovered in the time when the earth, and things of earth were slipping away, a marvellous peace. The thing was proved up to the hilt. I know it wants test cases, but here we begin to interrogate our hearts. Are we sure that the bitterness of death is passed for us in our spirit, not in our emotions and imagination, but really that we have passed already from death into life. For us there is no such thing as death. Now in as much as the test case may be necessary, to prove the reality, beloved, you must lay the foundation of it by your identification with His death, the death that swallows up death. Victory over death in all its forms. Well, there is the surc ground of it.

I must stop, but this song must begin now: you must know it in your heart now. " And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb," which is the song arising out of our vital union with Him in that death of deaths, in that grave of graves, and in that resurrection into a Life indestructible, beyond the reach and power of death. A life

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that it is a life of the Lord's own living, and the Lord's own working. May the song of the Lord begin in you. May you begin to sing the new song.

> He took me from a fearful pit, And from tho miry clay, And on a rock He set my fect, Establishing my way.

He put a new song in my mouth, Our God to magnify: Many shall see it, and shall fear, And on the Lord rely.

That is the fruitfulness of it all.

May the Lord make you good singers in this choir of the redeemed by a deep experience.

But there is another side to the theme which need only be mentioned in closing. The song is peculiarly the song of the Lamb as the praiseful expression of the issue of His passion. There was an hour when He passed through a total eclipse. Friends and followers were cut off in trust and help. His work appeared to have been all in vain, there was no evidence of it having been of permanent value. Enemies compassed Him about like bees. His physical strength broke down and gave out when He fell beneath His load. Much more, but as the crowning agony He lost for a time His Father and His God. The Divine countenance was hidden and in that awful moment all His spiritual exercises were of no avail. While He did not break down in His faith, it was a grim faith which bad nothing in the realm of the senses to help it. But he got through. It could not be otherwise. And on the other side He saw all the meaning and had an adequate answer to the far-reaching "Why?" Hence He is the author of this song.

Beloved, you and I may be called into "the fellowship of His sufferings," and at the time there may be almost total eclipse. If we have truly been united with Him in the likeness of His death we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection and this must surely mean that out of the sob a song, out of the nystery a full vindication, out of the death—life, but most of all and inclusive of all the revelation that the whole Body of Christ has in some way been benefitted and enriched : a ministry which could only be fulfilled this way, to say nothing of the impact of it all beyond our sense or sight upon the prince of Darkness.

Let us hold on to that day which will compel us to say, "Right was the pathway leading to this." T. A.-S.

# NOTES OF THE CONCLUDING ADDRESS AT THE DECEMBER CONFERENCE

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There are some passages we should read together, first in John i. 32-34: "And John hare witness, saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and *it* (the dove, but "He" the Spirit) abode upon Him. And I knew Him not (that is, did not recognise the Christ), but Ho that sent me to baptise in water, the same said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is He that baptiseth with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

THIS was the confirmatory testimony of John the Baptist, and it is of an amazing character when we come to think of it, the heavens opened ! The Spirit in His total ty coming to rest in and upon this One ! See John iii. 34. Therefore this One, possessing, and possessed by, the totality of the Spirit of God would baptise in the Spirit of God. And this is the clear evidence of His Diety. For who can baptise in the Spirit of God but "I have seen, and have borne God Himself ? witness that this is the Son of God," Son of God in that supreme sense that we have by revelation: not the Son of God as detached or dissociated from God, but the Son of God as One with God the Father, this in One Spirit....Forthere is only One God-God the Father and God the Son related in the Life of One Spirit as the everlasting and unchanging God. We do not therefore dissociate the Son from the Father; much less do we not dissociate the Spirit from either. They live in and by One Spirit.

Therefore, if the Spirit came upon Him as Man in His totality, then He is none other than God Incarnate. And He baptises in the Spirit which is His own Spirit as well as the Spirit of God the Father.

But not yet! Calvary, and His triumphant Ascension into the Godhead, must come first. Nevertheless, even at this early stage it is thus revealed to John the Baptist that this is the otherwise unrecognisable One who shall baptise in the Holy Spirit of God when He as Man shall have been glorified. And we press it home to our hearts for faith, How can a Man baptise in the Spirit of the Everlasting God unless that Man be God Himself ?

We find this testimony of John the Baptist confirmed in that familiar passage of John vii. 37-39: "Now on the last day, the groat day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me (into Me), as the scripture hath said, out of his inner being shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

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Turn now to the 14th Chapter of John, and we need to remind ourselves that the central truth of the 14th to 16th chapters of John is that of the Spirit-Paraclete or Comforter-in verse 16 we read, "And I will pray the Father (I, the Son of Man, Glorified, Ascended into the Throne of Deity. will pray the Father, Who shares One Life with Me in the Spirit), and He shall give you another Comforter...." We need here to recognise, as we have so often in these "Fellowship gatherings," that the first Comforter Who came from the Father was the Son. Jesus Himself in His Presence here on earth as man in the similitude of sinful flesh, that is, not an effulgent being like Adam was before he fell, but a being like unto ourselves in outward form, veiling His glory, that He was the first Paraclete of God, God Himself present in Man-form among us. Now there shall be another Paraclete, another Presencing of God; but this will not be in a limited sense, nor in an external experience, but in a universal sense, and in an inward experience, as He shall come to dwell in them who believe upon the Name of the Ascended Son of God. Jesus, limited and local here on earth shall become Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent in His Ascension. He shall fill the heavens, and the universe shall subsist through Him, and He shall pour forth the Spirit of the Father Who is also His own Spirit in the glorified Man, "that He may abide with you unto the age."

This is a very important reading of the verse, "for ever" is literally "unto the age." The Holy Spirit is given for an age purpose. He could not have been so given in any former age, for "Jesus was not yet glorified." He will not be so given in any future age, for a certain purpose is to be achieved in this age, which is a parenthesis among the ages, being called the "To-day" of the Holy Ghost; and when this purpose is accom-plished, "the ages to come" are ushered in. We already should know that purpose, it is the building of a Habitation for God. The Spirit therefore is released out from the Godhead as in the Ascended God-Man for a certain work and working in this age. Reading on, "He is the Spirit of the Truth (the Truth of God in the Man, Jesus the Christ, the Truth of the Incarnation, the Truth of the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh) Whom the world cannot receive because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him : but ye know Him (He says to the disciples), for He abideth with you. Now, in My Presence, the Comforter is already here. I am God present among you through Him, and he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. You have recognised the Presence of God in Mo, the first Comforter. It is the same Spirit Who is in and upon Me Whom I shall send to be in and upon you. I, here and now, am the Comforter come in the flesh : He shall be the Comforter, the same Comforter in fact, but in the Spirit, My Spirit, the Father's Spirit, but in you as your life and as your God, Who shall reveal Me as in the Godhead, and working in and

upon you shall build you up with all such heavenborn ones into my very Body ! Ob, the marvels of this Sovereign grace of God. What things are these that the Saviour-God of mankind and of Israel is saying to these future members of His Body ? And, beloved, He is saying them to us also." He shall be in you. I will not leave you as orphaus, as those who are cut off from the Presence and Sustemance of Parenthood, as desolate, separate in life-essence from God the Father. God in heaven, far away : and you on earth trying to nourish a desperato faith. Yet how often is this the character of what is called "Christian experience"? Children of God, desperately lonely, cut off from all spiritual resources apparently, trying to hold on to some mental assent, and all the while having a very hard and lonely time of it. No, this is not what the Lord declared should be our state. The Spirit-Comforter shall come, as really as Jesus the Christ came as Comforter in His flesh, and the same Presence of God as was in and upon Him shall be in and upon us, in measure, for He was in and upon Him without measure.

Notice how the interchangings of the Persona in the Tri-Unity come in these words, "I will come: We will come (The Father and the Son): He (the Spirit) shall come." You cannot dissociate the Persons in the Trinity, for God is One. But this coming of the Fulness as out from the Ascended Lord is to be the consequence of Calvary's Triumph, the result of the Glorification of the Son of Man in the Godhead through the Passion of the Cross. "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend-up where He was before ?" But not as Son of Man in His self-imposed limitation but the Son of Man Who is Son of God in the Infinite Power and Glory of Deity, a Man baptising in the Divine Spirit, baptising His church into His own Life and Being, and therefore providing proof of His Deity, proof of His Triumph. "I come unto you. I, Jesus, with the Father, and in the Spirit, as One God with them, come !" Marvellous words !

Previous to these chapters He had been saying what seemed to His disciples to be a strange and mystic thing, for in reply to Peter's earnest protestations of utter devotion even unto death, He had said, "Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow afterwards." Whither was He going ? Not only to the Cross, but back to the Godhead through the Cross, and this as Man. He was going to meet in His lonely and God-forsaken soul, for it was in His soul, His self-consciousness as man, that there in the garden and upon the tree, as the representative Sinner, as the Lamb of God, that He met both the accusation and power of the enemy and the judgment of the Divine Nature upon sin. He tasted a spiritual death for all men, namely that essential separation from God in His soul. But that having been met and overcome He dismissed His pure Spirit to take its overlasting Home in the Bosom of the Father.

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Thus we see that we have in the Passion of the Lord Jesus, not only the saving of man, as He takes upon Himself the bruden of our iniquity, "God causing to meet in Him the iniquity of us all," but we have also a vindication of the Divine Nature before the enemy, the justification of God Himself. Satan himself shall have no accusation to make against the Almighty. You have to recognise that in the Cross there is a vindication of God as God. This is what we read in 1 Timothy iii. 16, that the mystery of Godliness is not only the fact of God being manifested in the flesh, but that He also is justified in the Spirit, and it is thus that He is now seen by angels, &c. The marvel of the Cross is that God was in the Christ doing all this. It was through the Eternal Spirit He offered Himself. It is God Who is coming through His creation in the Self-vindication of His sacrificial love. Thus Paul says in Romans iii. 4, quoting from Psalm li: "That Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged." God Himself is cleared. Satan will be obliged to confess with all sinners before an assembled universe in the great Judg, ment that God is Holy, Pure, entirely Love-without taint of character upon which any accusation can fasten, for it is He Himself Who passes this way in the Passion of the Christ, and as Man ascends into His Throne "justified in the Spirit." Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess Jesus as Lord, and this to the Glory of the Father, Who, by the Spirit, dwells in and upon Him.

The WAY therefore that He is treading which no flesh can following is the WAY through the Cross into the Ascension that He may be glorified in the Godhead. . We must see far more in the resurrection than its mere physical aspect; we do stress this constantly. It is not the mere re-animation of the body of our Lord, but some-thing far more than that, though it includes it. The resurrection from among the dead is the glorification of the body to become a shrine of Deity, a habitation of God by the Spirit. It is the revelation of the Infinite nature of the resurrection that we need to have, namely, that it is the point of our Lord's accomplished Passion where He breaks back through into the Godhead as the Son, but now as Man. There is an Infinite expansion of the relationship of His Person at this point. He Who became, as it wero, limited and iccal upon this little planot : He, the Creator Who subjected Himself to creaturehood, breaks back through to Infi ite Deity raised by the Glory of the Father into the Godhead. This the Clory of the Resurrection as an infinite Act of God, and this is the point noted in Hebrews i. 5, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." Have you noticed how from that point Ho is addressed as Dioty in the chapter, "Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever ": " And Thou Jehovah," verse 10. Thus the Resurrection is seen in its climax as the Ascension of God in Christ, and the word to Nathanael is fulfilled, "Thou

shult see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Infinite Creator !

But we are speaking of His unique and only WAY whereby He the Son of Man, made sin for us, might triumph in that Cross so as to wrest authority from the devil over the race of men, and ro-enter the Glory of the Godhead as Man. That was the mystery the disciples could not understand. Do we understand it ?

understand. Do we understand it ? And so He says, Chapter xvi., "But now I go My WAY to Him that sent Me; and none of you Asketh Mo, Whither goest Thou ?....Nevertheless 1 tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter (His Spirit) will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you."

Thus we see that the consummation of the Victory of Calvary is the release of the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus to those who accept His death.

And we need further to see that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is an act of God commensurate to this Life. It is not an isolated individual experience to be enjoyed here on earth so as to give us some self-satisfaction in our faith, but an immersion into the Life of Him Who is in the Throne. It therefore brings us into a oneness with Him and with all others who are thus in Him. The expression of the Spirit, and the consummation of the Spirit's purpose is Unity. But to accomplish this self and personal interests must. be swept out of the heart, ah, but this is the Cross; and the baptism into His Life brings of. necessity a baptism into His death, His life is only possible as we consent to die, and to die continually. The Cross is made actual in us through the Spirit. And this is the manifestation of His Victory before principalities and powers, that you and I are brought to a place where we willingly lay down our lives (souls) continually, we consent to that death of Calvary being wrought out in us, so that His Life may be manifested in us also. For we have known and have believed the Love of God as revealed in the Cross. We see that Calvary was an act of God in that con-summate Man Who embraced in Himself all the creaturehood of God, and has thus reconciled all things to Himself, things visible and invisible. And so while Calvary was enacted upon this little planet, it spans the universe and beyond. It is presenced in time and space, and we see it thus, but it is infinitely greater than what we can see or measure. It is God Himself coming through His universe, fulfilling the Passion, and then, breaking back through to His Throne in the Man. As we have said more than once recently, it is the wonder of wonders that the Eternal God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, should make this little planet the scone of a universal victory. But so it is, and the opening words of scripture are surely not without significance in this respect, " In the beginning the Triune God united to create the heavens and the earth," the earth being brought

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into significant relationship with all the heavens. The more one knows of the vast ranges of this universe with its incredible distances and spaces and multitudes of stars and constellations, the more marvellous is this mighty Gospel, that tells us that here upon this little tiny world, and in this form of human life which you and I share, God Himself should have come and registered a Victory that has brought back the universe into that purpose of His Divine Love which the mystery of iniquity had seemed successfully to frustrate.

But, oh, how we need to be humble and teachable; how we need to be constantly crying to God that He would look in mercy upon our native ignorance, to lighten our darkness, and to bring us into the counsels of His Spirit so that we might know the things that He is seeking to do in the earth, and might co-operate with Him, and not hinder Him with our blundering and business.

Let us consider God's poor Man, this suffering, humble, poor One, Who here on earth was bereft of all but *faith*, and lived by that faith in humble obedience upon the resources of the Spirit, denying His pure and sinless soul. Oh, that humility of Christ! He was perfect in that self-renunciation continually. He Who had been rich in the Godhead became voluntarily the poorest of the poor. None of us so poor as He! But it was in His poverty of resources as in Himself that He was enabled by faith to draw upon the resources of the Father for all the work of grace. The Cross that denies the self-life was continually operative in Him, and Calvary was but the climax to that obedience of His faith.

He has given us an example that we must carefully follow. If ever there was a time when the Lord's children should entreat that they might be made truly humble and teachable it is now at the end of the age, for, believe me, beloved friends, God Almighty is seeking to do a thing at the end of the age that will be the marvel of eternity. As He gets now a people so consenting to the Cross, so abandoned to God, so prepared to allow that thing to work out in their lives that they cease to be, God the Holy Ghost shall sweep through and take that corporate company right through to His Throne. But it will be a corporate company (not individual translation, how Satan gets the self into a clutch upon the holiest things of (lod's purpose), and the triumph of its faith will. mean the outbreak of all those who sleep through Jesus, and thus that crowning manifestation of God's own triumph shall come, the glorious Body of the Christ. He is seeking to work this mighty thing out in you and me as constituent members of that Body. . If the release of the Holy Ghost is the consequence of Calvary's Victory the com-pletion of the Body of Christ is the consummation of that Victory. Without the indwelling and continual energising of the Omnipotent Spirit of the Christ you and I cannot enter into the process of that consummation : we shall not be contributory members. The endurcment from on

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high, the clothing of the regenerate spirit with the Spirit of the Ascended and Glorified Lord is essential to the testimony of the church in this earth and in the heavens. The Comforter must come or the church does not exist as such. Individual believers there might be, but of what avail are theso ? Their faith, of its kind, perishes with them, or persists merely as a relic of an ancient creed. Are there not many examples of pseudo-Christianity in the world ? But it is a corporate company persisting throughout this age as the instrument of the One Spirit that has been effecting any Divine world-purpose; and at the end, as at the beginning, this company must be manifest before principalities and powers. On the day of Pentecost 120 persons were swept by a mighty act of God into a oneness of Life with the Risen, Ascended Lord. By One Spirit they were baptised into One Body. There is no other baptism. And He is the Spirit for the age : He comes for an age. purpose. We have already noted John xiv. 16: "that He may be with you for the age ": connect this with the concluding words of Matthew's gospel, literal translation, "Lo, I am with you all the days even unto the completion of the age." It is a consummation that God is seeking to bring about, and this can only be effected by the Spirit of the Triumphant Lord ; but He again is limited to a corporate instrument on the earth, and this is the Body of Christ as found in the unity of the Spirit. How earnestly ought we not to seek and to pray for a realisation of their Oneness by the members of Christ's Body, and of the fact that the Holy Spirit is not given so much for an individual experience as for the energising of us in selfless prayer unto a common end.

You will by this time know how the Lord has laid this need for Holy Ghost praying, as a burden upon one's heart, and one is continually emphasing it for one's own sake; for this passion of God in prayer is not in you or in me by any attainment of religious: devotion. We cannot enter into this in our own desire. It is in the Holy Ghost, that is to say, it is in God, in the Divine Being; for it is His Love, His Desire, breaking through in our renewed spirits. It is not even in that born-from-above spirit as in itself, but in the Spirit of our Ascended Lord. Such praying is His praying. It is He Himself asking the Father in the Throne for the inheritance, but as king through the members of His Body, and these Throne prayers being uttered on earth. -<u>41-4--6-</u>-(To-be commund.)

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#### 1928 MOTTO CARDS

These are now obtainable at 2d. each, or at 1s. 9d. per dozen.

#### JANUARY CONFERENCE

This, as already announced, is due for Friday, December 30th to Monday, January 2nd, and the accustomed gatherings will be held.

accustomed gatherings will be held. Theme, 'The Cross, and the Vision and Vocation of God through the Cross.'

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