

LECTURES IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

DR. C.D. COLE

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INTRODUCTION

The author of this book, the late C. D. Cole, claimed one qualification for offering a work on theology; his love for the subject. Brother Cole had a doctrinal mind. His writings are easily grasped and readily understood.

We hope that this book will fall into the hands of those who will seriously consider the spiritual truths it sets forth, and pray that it will be studied with a spiritual mind. After having published several other books written by Brother Cole, we believe this book is grounded in Bible truth. It is saturated with scripture and teaches what the Bible teaches.

The Bryan Station Baptist Church has printed this book as a part of our missionary endeavor. We believe it will strengthen the faith of the reader by revealing to him how great and wonderful is our God.

We greatly appreciate the permission of the author (now in glory) to publish this book, and we are thankful for his love for the truth and his desire to see it spread to others.

Alfred M. Gormley,

Pastor Bryan Station Baptist Church

I.

WHAT IS BIBLICAL THEOLOGY?

Our question concerns what we will be studying in this course of study in the New Testament. Biblical Theology must be distinguished from Systematic Theology, from Exegesis and Exposition, from Apologetics, and from Biblical Introduction, although it is related to all these subjects. Biblical Theology is a combination of these. Biblical Theology concerns itself with why something was written as well as with the content of revelation.

Biblical Theology views revelation as progressively given, while Systematic Theology views the Bible as a whole and divides it into topics or doctrine: the doctrine of God - Christ - sin - salvation, etc. To use a crude illustration, Systematic Theology compares the Bible to a large cake cut into various and many pieces while Biblical Theology may be likened to several small cakes baked at different times. In Biblical Theology we study revelation at its historical source and according to the time and the writer. And so we have doctrine according to Paul and John and James and Peter and the Synoptics. In this way we are occupied with the creed of early Christianity in contrast with the later development of doctrine in the history of the church.

Biblical Theology recognizes that revelation was not completed in one act, but was unfolded in a long series of successive acts and through the minds of men of different culture and background.

A METHOD OF STUDY

Biblical Theology is, therefore, a method of study. Bernard has emphasized the importance of this approach to the Scriptures. He said: "Into all our parishes and all our missions thousands of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sent forth with the Bible placed in their hands, and with solemn charges to draw from its pages the gospel which they preach. But when these pages are opened, they present, not the exposition of a revelation completed, but the records of a revelation in progress. Its parts and features are seen, not as arranged after their development, but as arranging themselves in the course of their

development, and growing through stages which can be marked, and by accessions which can be measured, into the perfect form which they attain at last."

Inspiration is vital to this method of Bible study. We need to know that we have in the Bible the verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant, authoritative, and adequate, with the correct answer to every question vital to the welfare of the human soul. Prof. Gaussen, many years ago, gave a definition of inspiration that has hardly been improved upon, and one easily understood. According to him, "Inspiration is that inexplicable power which the Divine Spirit put forth of old on the authors of Holy Scriptures, in order to their guidance even in the employment of the words they used, and to preserve them alike from all error and from all omission." As we analyze this definition, we shall notice,

1. Inspiration is really inexplicable. It is power over men by the Holy Spirit, but we cannot explain how that power operated. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).
2. Inspiration is limited to the authors of the Bible. Nobody else has ever been so inspired, neither before nor since the Bible was written. This sets aside all other so-called sacred books as uninspired, and rejects all the claims of Councils, Creeds, and Ecclesiastical dogmas as having no authority equal to the Bible.
3. Inspiration means that the human writers were guided by the Holy Spirit in the choice of words. This is plenary and verbal inspiration.
4. This definition of inspiration also means that the writers were kept from all error and from all omission. The original documents were not only accurate but also complete. They contained all that God wants men to know concerning Him and His will. The Bible is "the faith once for all delivered to the saints". No room or need for any additions or revisions. The Bible is adequate as a revelation from God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

Time will not allow any lengthy argument for the proof of inspiration. The Bible is self-authenticating. It needs no human confirmation. The only way we can know that Christianity is of Divine origin is to have an infallible Bible. If God is true and worthy of trust and worship, and if He has given us a revelation of Himself and His will for us, this revelation must also be trustworthy. If the Bible is a human book it will partake of human frailty and error. The human writers were either giving us what God was saying or else stating a falsehood. The Bible is either a perfect revelation or it is false. A Bible that is trustworthy in spots, however small the spots, is not trustworthy at all.

There is a presumption in favor of the Bible. The argument is simple: man needs a written revelation in human language, and God is able to give such a revelation. The revelation of God in nature is inadequate. Heaven and earth and the human conscience all testify to the fact there is a God, but they give us nothing as to His moral character, they do not give any revelation of His grace, love, mercy, and holiness. Wherever the Bible has not gone, there is no conception of a God of love.

THREE GENERAL VIEWS

It has been pointed out that there are today three general views of the Bible in Protestant Theology: the orthodox, the neo-orthodox, and the liberal. Orthodoxy takes the Bible as the infallible word of God, liberalism denies this and brings the Bible to the bar of human reason, while neo-orthodoxy is "an attempt to pass between the traditional and the liberal view. Neo-orthodoxy claims to be a new reformation theology. It denies the Bible as an objective revelation apart from the one who receives it. It makes revelation to be an event, a personal encounter between God and man. It attempts to distinguish between the Bible as a revelation of information and the revelation of a person. But the Bible is both - it is the revelation of information about a person, Jesus Christ. How could it be a revelation of Jesus Christ if it did not give information about Him? We are being told by neo-orthodox scholars that the Bible is a book to look through to the revelation of God. But if the Bible does not give a true view of God we worship a caricature and not the true God. We are told that the miracle in revelation is not in the Bible as the objective revelation, but in a miraculous subjective revelation - the ability to arrive at the truth by means of a lie. The issue between orthodoxy and the so-called new orthodoxy is as sharp as between orthodoxy and liberalism. Neo-orthodoxy is more subtle than outright modernism. And is more infectious.

Those who contend that the Bible is full of errors and untrustworthy delight to call Bible believers bibliolaters - worshippers of a book. Of course this is not true. We worship God - the God Who is revealed in the Bible. Again we ask, How can we worship the true God if we do not have the truth about God? And where will we get the truth about God except in the Bible? Nature is a revelation of God, but not a full revelation. And the world by its own wisdom cannot know the true God.

The Bible as an objective revelation is a blessing only to those who receive it and feed their souls upon it. But it is the Word of God whether received or not. "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. 119:89). The Bible needs no defense for its own sake. Spurgeon said that he had as soon defend a lion as the Bible. The Bible will take care of itself, for it is the living, indestructible word of God. But for the sake of the faith of others we must contend earnestly for the

faith once delivered. Paul wrote "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (II Tim. 2:18).

II.

THE STRUCTURE OF REVELATION

Let it be remembered that the first Christians had only the Old Testament for their Bible. And the first evangelists got the material for their sermons from the Old Testament. Peter's sermons in Acts were taken from the Old Testament. In Acts seventh chapter we have Stephen's review of the Old Testament history of Israel. In Acts eighth chapter we have Philip's sermon to the Ethiopian eunuch from Isaiah 53. And wherever Paul went, as seen in Acts, he preached from the Old Testament.

The early Christians believed that the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth were the fulfillment of Old Testament predictions. This led the Bereans to search the Old Testament Scriptures to see if the things Paul preached were true. The gospel of the New Testament evangelists was according to the Old Testament. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43); "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3,4). The gospel is prophecy in the Old Testament, and history in the New Testament. And it is the same gospel. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39); "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7); "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me" (Ps. 40:7).

We must also remember that the gospel of Christ was first given by word of mouth - it was an oral gospel before it was written. It was about twenty years after the ascension of Christ until the first book of the New Testament was written, and about sixty-five years until it was completed. The story of Christ was first given orally by the apostles as eyewitnesses. And it was so many times repeated that it took on stereotyped form. The early church had a fixed creed or body of doctrine before the New Testament was completed. "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us" (Lk. 1:1). And Paul exhorts Timothy, while at Ephesus, "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (I Tim. 1:3).

Before long men began to put this oral gospel into written form. Luke says that many had undertaken such a task. And those who were divinely chosen and Holy Spirit guided gave us a true story of the gospel of Christ with a divine interpretation.

WHY FOUR GOSPELS?

The four gospels were given, that we might have a fourfold picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit, through human authors, has photographed the Lord Jesus from four different angles, viewing Him in four different relationships. Matthew presents Him as King, Mark as servant, Luke as man, and John as God. These four views correspond to the Old Testament predictions of the coming Messiah. ... "Behold thy King"... (Zech. 9:9): ... "Behold my servant"... (Isa. 42:1): ... "Behold the man"... (Zech. 6:12): ... "Behold your God"... (Isa. 40:9).

These four views also fit the fourfold prophecy of the coming Messiah as the BRANCH. ... "I will raise unto David a righteous BRANCH, and a king shall reign and prosper"... (Jer. 23:5). "Behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH" (Zech. 3:8): ... "Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH"... (Zech. 6:12): "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious" (Isa. 4:2): If Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment of prophecy, then the New Testament history must be in harmony with Old Testament prophecy concerning Him. No human authors, unless guided by the Holy Spirit, could have made the history fit the prophecy in such pointed detail.

THE SYNOPTICS

Even a casual reading will reveal that the gospels fall into two divisions: three and one. Matthew, Mark, and Luke may be "seen together". They present a common view of Christ. They present Him in human and earthly relationships, as king, servant, and man, while John presents Him in divine and heavenly relationships as the Son of God.

There has been much said and written about the so-called Synoptic Problem - the problem of agreement and difference - what they have in common and what is peculiar to each. The question concerns the source material of the writers. As students you may have been exposed to the four-document hypothesis of Streeter as well as to the Mark hypothesis, the view that Mark was written first and that Matthew and Luke copied from him. Augustine, on the other hand, held that Mark, being the shorter, was a condensation of Matthew.

After reading much of the current debate, concerning the Synoptic Problem, it is my judgment that each writer wrote independently under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, selecting from a common source that which served his particular

purpose. If, as some claim, Matthew and Luke copied from Mark, how did it happen that they departed from the copy and wrote a fore-history? Christ told the apostles that the Holy Spirit would ... "teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

These written gospels were needed to meet the need of three specific groups: Jews, Greeks, and Romans. Matthew, an office holder, wrote for the Jews to show that Jesus was the King of the Jews in fulfilment of Old Testament Scriptures. Matthew quotes from or alludes to the Old Testament about sixty-five times. Mark, who was not an apostle but the servant of the apostle Peter, was chosen to write his gospel to present Jesus as the Servant of God. There is very good evidence that Mark wrote by way of interpreting the sermons of Peter, and that he wrote at the request of Roman believers. In keeping with the purpose of his gospel, he presents Jesus as a doer, and his gospel is the gospel of deeds. Mark has no genealogy for the reason that pedigree is not important in a servant. Luke tells of many who had undertaken to put in narrative form what had been told by eyewitnesses, who must have been the apostles, since they had been with Christ from the beginning. Luke presents Jesus as the perfect man. His gospel is the gospel of redemption. "And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38); "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel"... (Luke 24:21); "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). Luke makes much of prayer. He wrote to confirm Theophilus in the Christian faith. The name of Luke occurs only in Paul's epistles. "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you" (Col. 4:14); "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (II Tim. 4:11); "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers." (Phil. 24). We know that the writer of Acts also wrote the gospel of Luke, and the "we" sections of Acts indicate that the writer was a companion of Paul on his journeys, and this fact points to Luke. Tradition also ascribes the book to Luke. Luke wrote for Gentiles. He closes Acts by leaving Paul in the Roman prison for two years.

THE NEED OF WRITTEN GOSPELS

Human memory is not sufficient for the propagation of the true gospel. Jesus told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would be their teacher and bring to their remembrance what He had said. And so the gospels do not give us what men, of themselves, remembered, but what the Holy Spirit brought to their remembrance.

Bible translators have discovered that the oral gospel cannot be propagated from memory. People who hear the gospel and do not have it written in their own language will soon preach a distortion of the truth. The Ixil Indians of Guatemala

have had an oral tradition of the gospel for 400 years, and today it is but a travesty of the simplest gospel facts. According to their oral gospel, God is an old man unable to govern His world and has turned it over to His strong Son to keep order. They have a story of Jesus being captured by some Jews who tied Him up in a corner and sat down to celebrate with a pot of chicken stew. When Jesus blessed the chicken it jumped in the pot, splashing the stew into the eyes of the Jews. And while they were wiping their eyes, Jesus escaped. Another story current among these Indians is that the twelve apostles hung Jesus on the cross.

The Wycliffe Bible Translators are diligent in their work of translating God's Word for Bibleless tribes. There are some two thousand languages spoken in the world today that are still without a single verse of Scripture. About eleven hundred and twenty-seven languages have the Scriptures in whole or in part, and only two hundred and fifteen have the whole Bible.

THE GENEALOGIES IN

MATTHEW AND LUKE

We meet with difficulty here, but the most probable view is that Matthew, presenting Jesus as King, gives the legal genealogy through Joseph; Luke, presenting Him as Son of Man, gives the real or natural genealogy through Mary. Matthew shows Jesus to be the legal heir to the promises made to Abraham and David. The genealogy in Matthew is abridged, divided into three unequal periods of fourteen generations each - forty-two generations covering two thousand years. The first period of fourteen generations covers one thousand years; the second period of fourteen generations covers four hundred years; and the third period covers six hundred years. Matthew is descending, using the word "begat", while Luke is ascending, using the phrase, "was the son of". From David the two genealogies are separate and diverging lines, touching only in Salathiel and Zorobabel.

We might ask why there are only four gospels. There were many more to start with "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us" (Luke 1:1). The first century of the Christian era was one of great literary activity. It was the age of Cicero, Virgil, Horace. Seneca, Tacitus, Plutarch, Pliny, and Josephus. Within a generation the story of Jesus spread over the whole known world, and enlisted thousands of devoted followers. Naturally, there arose a great demand for written narratives of His life. Luke, observing this, has a desire to give his account of the things about Jesus Christ which were "most surely believed among us". Only four of these narratives have survived the ravages of time. God Himself took a hand in the preparation and preservation of the four we have in

the New Testament, and these give us all we need to know about the earthly life of our Saviour.

THE FOUR GOSPELS COMPARED

The four gospels are parallel accounts of the same person, narrating in the main the same things, complementing one another, but without any serious conflict.

Only Matthew and Luke tell of the birth and childhood of Jesus. Matthew and Mark dwell on the Galilean ministry, Luke on the Perean, and John on the Judean. John omits most of the Galilean ministry, and records visits to Jerusalem which the others omit. The others omit the Judean ministry except the last week, which all four give rather fully. The last week of our Lord's life on earth occupies about one third of Matthew, one third of Mark, one fourth of Luke, and one half of John. John devotes seven chapters, one third of his gospel, to what occurred on the day of crucifixion, sunset to sunset. This suggests the importance of the death of Jesus. But in spite of this, there is a growing tendency to depart from the doctrine of blood atonement. A professor has recently been dismissed from the faculty of New Orleans Baptist Seminary for repudiating vital gospel truths. This man complains that some of us are making too much of the death of Jesus. He says that "nothing but" in the hymn, "Nothing but the blood of Jesus", produces a theology of the cross which leads to a distortion of the Christian faith. This man, who has been teaching Baptist preachers, does not believe in the inspiration of the Bible. He makes bold to say, that we must not speak of the Bible as the word of God in the sense that it consists of infallible, revealed truth given to men in written form. And again he says, that to equate the word of God with the Bible is a distortion because to do so is to identify the word of God with human reason and human words. No wonder that when a man denies the Bible as the word of God, he also denies every fundamental of the faith. This man denies the immortality of the human soul, and rejects the doctrine of eternal punishment, holding that the unbeliever is destined for total destruction of being.

God be thanked for the many who still believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible word of God! And young men, if you ever lose faith in the trustworthiness of the Bible, get out of the ministry and give up the bread of the church.

III.

THE BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION OF JESUS

These two events are closely related both in time and meaning. Putting the synoptic accounts together, we find that Jesus was tempted of the devil for forty days, and after that by a special temptation while in an exhausted condition. And

these temptations followed His baptism immediately. No sooner anointed by God than assaulted by Satan.

The mission of John was to prepare the way for the Messiah and announce His coming. What was done for oriental kings was done for Jesus by John. For an oriental king a highway would be prepared over which he would travel, and a herald would travel, and a herald would go before and announce his approach to the city. What was done for political kings in a physical sense was done for Jesus in a moral and spiritual sense. John's business was to get people ready for the Saviour, Who was to be a spiritual King.

John's message and baptism corresponded to His mission. To get people ready for the Saviour he preached repentance and baptized those who repented. He turned all others away, saying, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8). Repentance implies two things: sin carrying judgment, and grace bringing salvation. If there is no sin unto judgment, repentance is not needed; if there is no grace unto salvation, repentance is useless.

John baptized those who confessed their sins as indicative of their repentance, refusing to baptize those who wanted baptism on the ground of their relation to Abraham. John preached judgment in order to produce repentance. He would make men conscious of their sins and put the fear of God in their hearts that they might realize their need of a Saviour, the Saviour Who was already at hand.

John's baptism is called the baptism of repentance. He said. "I indeed baptize you with water unto (*eis*) repentance..." (Matt. 3:11). Does this mean that baptism is in order to repentance, or because of repentance? In other words, was John's baptism a sacrament producing repentance unto salvation, or a symbol declaring one had repented? Pity that such a question should ever need to be asked!

WHAT IS A SACRAMENT?

According to the Encyclopedias sacrament is not a Bible word at all. In classical usage it was a military term to designate the oath of obedience taken by soldiers, and it was also a sum of money deposited by two parties to a suit which was forfeited by the loser and appropriated to sacred uses. The word "sacrament" occurs often in the Latin Vulgate (the work of Jerome in the 4th century) as a translation of the Greek word *mysterion* (mystery). This word *mysterion* occurs 27 times in the Greek New Testament and is translated "mystery" in every case in the King James Version.

Although the word "sacrament" is not a Scriptural word, the idea of sacramental salvation is being propagated by the sacramental translation of the preposition

eis. This Greek preposition has the general meaning of "with reference to", the context determining what the reference is, and also whether it looks forward or backward. The preposition itself may either be translated "in order to" or "because of". One example where the meaning can only be "because of" is "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here" (Matt. 12:41), where the men of Nineveh repented at (*eis*) the preaching of Jonah. This can only mean that they repented "because of" and not "in order to" the preaching of the prophet. And so John baptized in water unto (*eis*) repentance, that is, because men had repented. Phillips, an Anglican, translates Matt. 3:11 thus: "I baptize you as a sign that your hearts are changed."

I

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

One day when John had baptized all the people for that day, Jesus arrived from Galilee and requested baptism at his hands. The Baptist demurred at first, saying, ..."I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" (Matt. 3:14). John had been given a sign by God by which he would recognize the Messiah when he had baptized Him. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost" (John 1:32,33). But before the sign was given, John seems to have at least been suspicious that Jesus was the Messiah or Christ who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. At least he felt that Jesus was better known than he. He was baptizing those who confessed their sins, and he could not think of Jesus as a sinner. And so John hesitated until Jesus said, ..."Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). The question is, How could John's baptism of Jesus fulfil all righteousness? This could not have been true of the baptism of any other man. It seems obvious that the baptism of Jesus did not actually and literally fulfil all righteousness. And yet in some sense it did fulfil all righteousness. The question is, In what sense?

Now let us go back a little in our thinking. Jesus in His mediatorial office came to this world to fulfil or provide righteousness for the unrighteous. And so He is said to be made by imputation wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, to the believer. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21). Righteousness is based upon obedience. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the

cross" (Phil. 2:8). And it is by His obedience that we become righteous. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19).

Now since the obedience of Christ unto death was the actual fulfillment of all righteousness for His people, it follows that His water baptism fulfilled all righteousness only in a typical and prophetic sense. It was a prophecy and pledge and type of the cross. Christ's water baptism looked forward to Calvary, just as ours looks back to Calvary. It was by His baptism of suffering on the cross that He actually provided all the righteousness needed by His unrighteous people.

On His last trip to Jerusalem, Christ informed His disciples of His approaching death under the figure of a baptism. When the mother of James and John asked Him for places of prominence in the kingdom, Christ said to the sons "But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able" (Matt. 20:22). In Luke 12:50 a long time after His water baptism, Christ said, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

The baptism of Jesus by John was His initiation into His Messianic work. For this work He was anointed by the Holy Spirit. He knew that He was to fulfil His Messianic mission as a Mediator Who would be made perfect officially through suffering. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). And Satan seems to have known this also. The Divine plan is for Jesus to be tested by Satan to prove His qualifications as the Fulfiller of all righteousness by His obedience unto death.

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

The temptation of Jesus was Satan's response and challenge to God's announcement: "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17).

The literal meaning of the word "tempt" is to try, to test, or to prove. It is used in the Bible both in a good and in an evil sense. The moral character of the testing depends upon the object in view and the means employed. If the object is to entice or incite to sin the testing is evil. In this sense God never tempts and cannot be tempted. But when the object is to prove or improve the character of a person, then the testing is good. And if the means used is lawful then the testing is also lawful. In the good sense God tempted or tested Abraham, and in this good sense God allowed Satan to tempt Christ to prove that He was the

sinless Son of God. Of course Satan always tempts in the evil sense, he tries to get one to do wrong.

Our Lord endured many temptations. He said to His disciples: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations" (Lk. 22:28). But we are now to be occupied with the temptations which immediately followed His baptism.

In thinking of the temptation of Jesus we face the problem of His peccability. Was it possible for Him to sin? If so, then it was possible for Him to fail as the Saviour. Perish any thought of His failure as Saviour! On the other hand, if He could not sin, then how could He be tempted? If we think of His human nature in itself, apart from His deity, this human nature like the sinless Adam was capable of sinning. However, this human nature was owned by a Divine person, and as a person He could not be tempted or induced to sin. He had a human nature which was peccable, but this nature cannot be separated from the Divine person, and as a Divine person, as God manifest in flesh, He was impeccable. In being tempted Christ could suffer but could not sin. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:18); "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Matthew says that after His fast of forty days He was hungry. Mark and Luke say that he was tempted of the devil forty days. The nature of this temptation is not stated, but He must have been so occupied in mind that He was not conscious of any hunger.

Matthew and Luke describe the threefold temptation at the end of forty days. Whatever he had been doing during the forty days, Satan now changes his tactics and attacks Jesus when He is in a state of starvation. He is tempted not only as a man, but as a man with a mission - the mission of human redemption. To redeem sinful men, He must be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. If Satan can break His will to obey God, he gets the victory, and there is no human salvation.

In the first temptation we have faith versus disobedience, or the temptation to under-confidence. "And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread" (Matt. 4:3). Jesus was where the Spirit had led Him, and the issue was whether He would trust God to keep Him from starving, or take matters into His own hand and provide for Himself something He had power to do as the Son of God. In His reply Jesus said "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the

LORD doth man live" (Deut. 8:3). As a man He must keep the commandments of God. Jesus suffered hunger, but with no desire to feed Himself and thus distrust God.

In the second temptation we have faith versus presumption, or temptation to over confidence. "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee.." (Matt. 4:5-6). Satan was quoting "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. 91:11), as proof that no harm would come to Him. Satan deletes from this Scripture the words "to keep thee in all thy ways". "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matt. 4:7). Jesus was quoting "Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God" (Deut. 6:16). This means that one must not experiment with God to see if He will keep His word. Testing God to see if He will keep His word is doubt rather than faith; presumption rather than trust. If God had commanded Him to leap from the temple it would have been faith to do so. When God says "Prove or test me by doing thus and so" it is faith to do what He says. But to needlessly rush into danger to prove that God will take care of us is wrong. We must not presume where God has not promised.

In the third temptation we have faith versus compromise, or temptation to other-confidence. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matt. 4:8-9). The issue is, Who shall be supreme: the true God or the Usurper? And the further question is, whose Messiah shall He be: God's or Satan's? Here is an effort to turn Jesus from His purpose to go to the cross. He can have the kingdom on easier terms. Quoting "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him" (Deut. 6:13), where all idolatry is forbidden, Jesus summarily dismisses the tempter, saying, "..Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10). Jesus was tempted objectively, but there was no inner conflict in resisting the temptation. Men yield in temptation to escape the pressure, but Jesus faced the pressure without any desire to do what He was asked to do. He suffered, but He would not yield. He wanted food, and protection, and dominion, but not at the cost of disobeying God. Truly our Saviour could say, ..."The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30).

IV.

The Kingdom of God

We shall begin by saying that parallel passages in the synoptics prove conclusively that there is no distinction between the "kingdom of God", and the "kingdom of heaven" as some have sought to make. Matthew uses both terms: kingdom of God about four times and kingdom of heaven more than thirty times. The kingdom which was said to be at hand is called "kingdom of heaven." "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17), and "kingdom of God." "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk. 1:15). Christ Himself used the terms interchangeably. In the parable of the mustard seed He used "kingdom of heaven." "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field" (Matt. 13:31), and "kingdom of God" in Mark and Luke. Other parallel passages are to the same effect.

The idea of the kingdom has its roots in the Old Testament, going all the way back to creation. The Old Testament emphasizes the universal sovereignty of God. "For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth" (Ps. 47:2); "The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all" (Ps. 103:19); "That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.... And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:25, 35). And in the beginning of creation man partook of the blessings of the kingdom. Man, made in the image of God, was not only a holy being; he was also a royal being with a universal kingdom, subject however to the will of God. Man lost the kingdom through the sin of the first Adam - the first race-head; it is to be recovered by the last Adam, the second race-head. The eighth Psalm predicts the universal sovereignty of man (*enosh*, frail and fallen man) in "the world to come". This Psalm speaks of a cosmic redemption when fallen but redeemed man is restored to sovereignty. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:19-22). This redeemed man is the "one new man" made up of saved Jews and Gentiles of whom Christ is the head. "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace" (Eph. 2:15). The eighth Psalm is quoted "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the

works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:7-9), with the comment that we do not yet see the fulfilment of this prophecy, "But we see Jesus ... crowned with glory and honour." We see sovereignty in the hands of Jesus Christ as the beginning of the fulfilment of Psalm eight. And His sovereignty is the ground and guarantee of the glorification of the redeemed race.

Later on the nation of Israel possessed the kingdom of God. God sovereignly chose Abraham and his seed to be His peculiar people, and redeemed them from Egyptian bondage. On condition of obedience they would be His peculiar treasure and a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. But national Israel lost the kingdom through disobedience which culminated through the rejection of their Messiah. "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43). God's covenant with Israel was a conditional covenant, carrying with it promise of material blessings for obedience, and curses for disobedience. Deuteronomy 28 lists the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience. In the light of the nation's history it seems strange that anyone will contend that the land of Palestine still belongs by Divine right to the Jews. In his farewell address to the nation of Israel, Joshua said, "And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you" (Josh. 23:14,15). Long ago God fulfilled all the good promised in the Abrahamic covenant concerning natural Israel. As that covenant concerned all nations, it is now in process of fulfilment in a spiritual Israel made up of redeemed Jews and Gentiles. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.... There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:7-9, 28-29).

In the Old Testament the kingdom of Christ is the subject of prophecy. In the gospels we have the setting up of the kingdom. In Acts and the Epistles we have

the development and expansion of the kingdom. In Revelation we have the catastrophic consummation of the kingdom. We have in the New Testament two phases or stages of the kingdom: the present, gradual expansion, and the eschatological consummation.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST A PRESENT REALITY

Prophecy has become history. "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone

was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:28-45). We have five world empires. The first four are represented by a great human image composed of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay. The fifth is seen as a stone which smites the image and becomes a great mountain. This is the kingdom of Christ or Messiah. It had a small beginning (the size of a stone), but will ultimately fill the whole earth. And it is to have no successors, for it is an everlasting kingdom. As proof of its present existence in the world we shall notice,

1. John the Baptist and our Lord announced that it was at hand. "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk. 1:15); "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). If it was at hand then, it must have arrived and is present now.

2. We are expressly told that the kingdom of God began with John. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk. 16:16); "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John" (Matt. 11:13). "Through John the kingdom had passed out of the sphere of pure futurity belonging to it under the Old Testament and had become something actually engaging the thoughts and swaying the emotions of men" (Vos). "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11), and yet the above scripture indicates that John the Baptist was not a partaker of the full privileges of the kingdom, and was not in the full light of the kingdom possessed by the disciples of Jesus.

3. The kingdom is to be entered in the gospel age. Christ must have been speaking of a present kingdom when He said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Christ charged the scribes and Pharisees with shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men; for they would neither go in themselves, nor suffer them that were entering to go in. We are told that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given to Peter, and he must have used them while he lived; therefore, the kingdom was a reality in his day. Christ would build His church and give to Peter and others the keys to the kingdom. This shows the close relation between the kingdom and the church, and clearly indicates that the church is the agency for promoting the kingdom by preaching the gospel. Paul says "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13). This proves that the kingdom was a reality in Paul's day.

THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM

A kingdom implies a king, subjects, and territory; therefore, we must of necessity speak of it in political and earthly terms. Messiah's kingdom is the kingdom of David, and His throne is the throne of David, but the nature of Christ's kingdom is not political and earthly like that of David. Paul uses military terms when he says, "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)" (II Cor. 10:4).

Christ's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. It is not advanced by military might or by economic ideas. "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36). The adverb "now" gives the logical connection. Christ is saying that since His disciples had made no armed resistance or attempt to rescue Him, it is put beyond question that His kingdom is spiritual and not earthly. If Christ's kingdom is like David's in its nature it would have to be supported and advanced as his was by force of arms. This would put carnal weapons into the hands of every Christian.

The Pharisees had the political concept of Messiah's kingdom and asked Jesus when it would appear. They thought it was something that could be seen with the natural eye. "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:20,21). Because the kingdom is a spiritual kingdom it cannot be seen with the natural eye.

There are those who insist that the kingdom of Christ is political and earthly like that of David. We are told that Christ offered Himself to Israel as an earthly king; that He was rejected, and the kingdom was postponed until His second coming when national and natural Israel of a future generation will receive Him. But the evidence is overwhelming that He did not offer Himself as a political Messiah. This is what the nation wanted Him to do. Following the miracle of feeding the five thousand. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone" (John 6:15). Israel did not reject Him as a political king, but because He would not be this kind of a king. If He did not offer Himself as an earthly king, He was not rejected as such, and therefore such a kingdom could not have been postponed. If Jesus had presented Himself as a political king, and had taken up arms against the Romans, the Jews to a man would have followed Him to the death.

THE KINGDOM PARABLES

The parables of the kingdom throw light on the origin, development, the mixed character and consummation of the kingdom. They are short stories to illustrate the various features of the kingdom as a present reality. The parable of the sower is a prophecy of the gospel's reception. Some will not even listen. Some will listen, but will soon lose interest and fall away. Some will hold on longer, but gradually lose interest. And some will persevere and bring forth fruit in varying degrees. The parables of the tares and the net are similar stories to show the mixed character of the kingdom. The parable of the tares gives us the territory of the kingdom and two kinds of subjects. The field (territory) is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the devil. The harvest is the end of the age when counterfeit subjects are gathered out of the kingdom and cast into their furnaces of fire. The parable of the net also shows that the territory of the kingdom has in it both good and bad which are to be separated in the end of the age. "He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (Lk. 19:12-27). The parable of the pounds is similar to that of the tares in Matthew. A nobleman goes into a far country to receive a kingdom and return. The servants are professed subjects, and the citizens are rebellious subjects who say, "We will not have this man to reign over us." When the king returns he deals not only with the professed servants, but

also with those enemies who openly and boldly rejected his authority. The parables of the hid treasure and goodly pearl are a double illustration of the same thing: the priceless value of Christ to the human soul. The parables of the mustard seed and leaven are similar stories which illustrate the small beginning of the kingdom, its gradual and imperceptible growth and ultimately reaching vast proportions.

THE SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM

The subjects of the kingdom are those born from above. Since the kingdom is spiritual the subjects must be spiritual. The beatitudes give us the characteristics of those who are partakers of the blessings of the kingdom. In the beatitudes we have what might be called spiritual photography - word pictures of a subject of the kingdom taken from different angles - snapshots of the Christian or pictures taken without posing. The saved person can find himself revealed in the beatitudes.

1. He is poor in spirit, the very opposite of a proud and boastful spirit. The Christian is not self righteous, but is conscious of his lack of personal worthiness - he feels unworthy of the least of God's mercies - he realizes that he is poor and needy, and not sufficient of himself for any good thing.
2. He is a mourner, one who mourns over his sins. The poor in spirit goes a step further and grieves over his sins as he struggles for perfection. The Christian is sensitive to indwelling sin and longs to be perfectly whole.
3. He is a meek person. Meekness is a spirit that does not seek to avenge a wrong. Vengeance belongs alone to God. Moses showed his meekness by ignoring the criticism of Aaron and Miriam. He did not avenge their attack upon him, but God avenged him by striking Miriam with leprosy. Meekness must not be confounded with weakness. Christ was meek but not weak. The meek shall inherit the earth; they do not fight for it.
4. He is hungry and thirsty, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Hunger and thirst are metaphors of soul desire, and when combined express very strong desire. The saved person longs for personal and practical righteousness. By faith he has the imputed righteousness of Christ, but he wants to be personally what he is representatively in Christ. As to his standing, the believer is absolutely perfect. He is justified from all things and no charge can be laid against him. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39); "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Rom. 8:33). But as to his state, the believer is only relatively perfect. He has not arrived, but is on his way to sinless perfection. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already

perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, 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" (Phil. 3:12-14). If Paul, the greatest of all Christians, confessed he had not attained perfection, it ill becomes anyone else to claim it. However, the promise is that the hungering and thirsting soul shall be filled. He shall ultimately be as good as he wants to be and tries to be. With the Psalmist the believer can say, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psa. 17:15). "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" (Phil. 1 :6). Salvation is of the Lord and there are no abandoned souls on the highway to glory.

5. He is merciful. Mercy is more than emotion; it is active good will towards the needy. The good Samaritan showed mercy to the wounded man on Jericho road by ministering to him and by providing for his needs. The story is told of Jacob Bright, father of John Bright, that one day on his way home he found his neighbor in great trouble on the road. His horse suffered an accident and had to be killed on the spot. As Jacob Bright arrived on the scene, the poor man was surrounded by other neighbors who were expressing their sorrow over his misfortune. To the man who kept on repeating how sorry he was, Jacob Bright said, "I am sorry five pounds. How much are you sorry?"

6. He is pure in heart. "Blessed are the pure In heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). The pure in heart is the one who is poor in spirit and who grieves over sin; therefore purity in heart is not sinless perfection. A pure heart is one who is sincere in his confession of sin and desire to love and serve God.

7. He is a peacemaker. The Christian is not only concerned about peace in human relations; he is also interested in making peace between God and men. And in this sense he makes peace by preaching the peace God made for sinners by the blood of His cross. "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross"... (Col. 1:20). As Christ's witnesses we have the ministry of reconciliation: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:19, 20).

THE KINGDOM COMING WITH POWER

"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of

God come with power" (Mk. 9:1); "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. 16:28); "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:27); These three are parallel passages. From these passages we see that the kingdom in power was in some sense imminent. The question is, When was this prophecy fulfilled? This promised vision may have been fulfilled in the transfiguration which occurred six days later. In all three synoptics the prophecy is followed by an account of the transfiguration as a miniature second coming. Peter alludes to this when he says, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (II Peter 1:16).

The view of Lenski is worth considering. He makes the prophecy refer to the destruction of Jerusalem and expulsion of the Jews from Palestine. That coming in power with judgment on the nation began in 66 A.D. and ended in the year 70. This judgment on national Israel marked a definite turning point in the gospel that transferred the kingdom from the obdurate nation to the receptive Gentiles. It marked the definite time when the kingdom was taken from earthly Israel and given to a spiritual Israel, according to Mr. Lenski. Either view looks forward to the final judgment when the kingdom will reach its consummation.

V.

The Teaching of Jesus Christ Concerning God

Jesus Christ was the world's greatest Teacher. When He had ended the Sermon on the Mount, the multitudes were astonished at His teaching, for He taught as having authority and not as the scribes. The scribes were always quoting rabbi so and so, but Christ spoke with His own authority. He would say, You have heard that it has been said, but I say unto you. What He said was final and needed no support.

Jesus taught in the temple, in city streets, and from the bow of a ship. He taught in private homes and in the most public places. He was a sensation and was followed by crowds. He did not have to run people down in order to preach to them.

Jesus taught on many subjects, He taught about God, about Himself, and about the Holy Spirit. He taught about man, sin, salvation, and the kingdom of God. He had much to say concerning righteousness, repentance, responsibility, and judgment to come. He discussed anxiety, fear, faith, and forgiveness. He gave instruction about money, covetousness, hypocrisy, humility, and love. He gave

the truth about divorce, defilement, prayer, and worship. And He was the most misunderstood teacher of all times.

We do not know much about the childhood of Jesus. We see Him at the age of twelve. "And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46). And He also answered some questions. "And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers" (Luke 2:47). One wonders if He did not embarrass the doctors with His superior knowledge, even at that early age. And after that, Luke tells us that He grew physically, mentally, and socially; He grew in favor with God and man. One cannot be sure just when He became conscious of His divine Sonship and Messianic mission; however, He seems to have realized something of it at the age of twelve when He said to His parents, ..."Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49). The coming of the Holy Spirit upon Him at His baptism must have restored to Him His preincarnate wisdom, and endowed Him with power to perform miracles.

Jesus wrote no books, but there are more books written about Him than about any other person who has ever lived. He built no schools, and yet there are more schools teaching His life than all other lives put together.

What Jesus taught about God was in marked contrast to the pantheistic and polytheistic systems prevailing among the oriental nations. The world by its own wisdom never has and never can know God. Man by searching cannot find God. God must reveal Himself if He is to be known. Jesus of Nazareth was the incarnate word of God, God clothed in flesh. John says, "No man hath seen God at anytime; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him" (John 1:18).

JESUS RETAINED THE JEWISH

CONCEPTION OF GOD

And this was the Old Testament conception. He taught that God was a trinity of persons in one divine essence. He did not confound the persons nor divide their substance. As to substance He said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). As to persons He distinguished between Himself and the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus believed in a personal God of intelligence, moral sensibility, and will. He taught that men ought to love God with all their heart and soul and mind. He urged upon men the responsibility of doing the will of God, and this implies a personal God.

2. Jesus taught that God is universal. It is difficult for the mind to conceive of a universal person. One naturally thinks of pantheism, the idea that all things in

the aggregate go to make up God; or that the universe in its totality is God. But when we speak of God as a universal person, we mean that He is without limitation of locality or time. Limitation is essential to finite personality, but not to infinite personality, such as God has. God is universal as to space; He is everywhere. Solomon, in his prayer dedicating the temple, said, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" (I Kings 8:27). Jesus taught the woman of Sychar that no particular place is necessary for the worship of God; that He is Spirit and can be worshipped without going to any temple made with hands. God is also universal as to time. He is the God of eternity, self-existent and ever existent. He is the ancient of days, but not ancient in days. Time writes no wrinkles on His brow. To God there are no boundaries of time; one day to Him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day. God is universal as to wisdom. He knows all things in one eternal now. He knows all things that are past, present, and future to us.

3. Jesus emphasized the ethical qualities of God. He believed not only in the natural attributes, such as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and eternity of God; He also believed in the moral perfections, such as love, mercy, and holiness. Jesus taught that God only is good in the absolute sense.

THERE WERE SOME NEW FACTORS

IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS CONCERNING GOD

And in this we see the Bible in its progressive revelation. All the truth about God is not found in the Old Testament. Christ built upon the foundation of the Old Testament, but He went beyond it in His teaching about God. In the Old Testament God is predominantly a King. "The Lord is King for ever"... (Ps. 10:16). "For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us" (Isa. 33:22). "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all" (Ps. 103:19). Samuel was greatly displeased when Israel insisted upon a king like other nations. The Lord said to him, ..."They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (I Sam. 8:7).

But with Jesus the characteristic name for God is Father. He speaks much of the kingdom of God, but seldom does He speak of God as King. He speaks of God as His own Father, and also as the Father of others. In speaking to His disciples, He not only said, "My Father," but He also said, "Your Father". But notice, He never said "Our Father", for God is not the Father of Jesus in the sense He is the Father of men. Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God; all others are sons by adoption. Paul often used the expression "our Father", because he like us was

a son of God by adoption. How carefully the Scriptures guard the unique Sonship of Jesus Christ, thus emphasizing His deity.

Another new thing in the teaching of Jesus is that He makes God the Father of the individual. With Jesus fatherhood is a personal relationship. In the Old Testament God was the Father of the nation of Israel rather than of individuals. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" (Hos. 11:1). The sin of the nation is described as disobedience of children. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me" (Isa. 1:2).

The fatherhood of God to Israel denoted His gracious interest in and providential care over them as His vehicle for bringing the Messiah into the world. The primary purpose of the law of Moses was to keep Israel a separate and distinct people until Christ as the seed of Abraham should come, through whom the promises to Abraham were to be fulfilled. The law served as a partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and did more to keep the seed of Abraham a separate and distinct people than all physical barriers could have done. A Jewish pedigree was very important until Christ, the seed of Abraham, came into the world. But it has no importance in our day, for in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. Today the Jews themselves cannot agree on who is a Jew. But in the New Testament the real Jew is a believer in Christ, who has experienced circumcision of heart. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:28, 29); "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3); "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham....And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:7, 29).

Jesus taught that God's fatherhood involves an ethical relationship. It can exist only where the correlative sonship exists. One must become a child of God by the new birth, and an adopted son through faith before God becomes his Father. Christ said to certain Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). He also said to them, "If God were your Father ye would love me"... (John 8:42). And Jesus taught that the Father-child relationship is personal, and not as the result of being included in a nation, or institution, or organization. It is not by virtue of church membership that God is our Father, but because of the new birth. Nobody has any business in the church until he is a child of God in regeneration. "That is,

They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Rom. 9:8).

Jesus taught that God is good to all men, making His sun to shine on the evil and sending rain on the just and unjust alike. He also taught a special providence watches over His people and that God exercises a Fatherly care over His children. He warned against anxiety and carping care on the ground that God our Father takes care of us, He who clothes the lilies and feeds the birds will not neglect His children.

Jesus taught that God loves sinners. He was charged with being the friend of publicans and sinners. One of the most amazing things is that God loves sinners, especially the sinner who now speaks to you. Do not ask me to explain why God loves me. As a matter of reason there was no more in any sinner to cause God to love him than there was in Jesus Christ to cause men to hate Him. Just as Jesus could say, ..."They hated me without a cause" (John 15:25). that is without anything in us to attract His love. God's love for sinners is a gracious, sovereign love. We do not deserve His love. His love is not a matter of justice; He was under no obligation to love us. I repeat with adoring wonder, that the love of God for sinners - for rebels - for those who would, if they could, climb to heaven and drag Him from His throne is the most amazing thing one can conceive of. God's love for sinners is a matter of revelation and not a deduction from human reasoning. Where the Bible has not gone, people have no conception of a God of love.

One day as the officers of law were taking a drunken, dirty, profligate woman to prison, a beautiful, charming, and cultured, Christian woman left her place among the spectators, made her way to the vile wretch and planted a kiss upon her cheek. Shocked into sobriety for the moment, the poor wretch exclaimed, "Why did you do that?" And the answer was, "Because I love you." Beloved, this is only a weak illustration of the love of God that caused Him to stoop and give us the kiss of reconciliation. We love Him because He first loved us. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10).

THE LOVE OF GOD IS A RIGHTEOUS LOVE

Christ taught that the love of God is a righteous love, and is consistent with His justice. God's love does not dethrone His justice, for "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Ps. 89:14). Christ gave recognition to the justice of God against sin when He said to Nicodemus, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14-15). Paul was giving recognition to the justice

of God when he wrote, "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:19). In love God was in Christ on the cross rendering satisfaction to His justice, so that the believer might not perish at the hands of justice. The death of Christ was not the cause of God's love, but it did enable God to remain just and at the same time justify the believer in Christ. "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10). Any other plan of salvation would not have been suitable to a God of holiness and justice. What so-called modernists ridicule as derogatory to the divine character is, according to the Bible, highly becoming to God. Redemption by blood is the only scheme that harmonizes all the attributes of God. To exemplify, let us suppose a sinner standing before God, the Judge of all the earth, to see what is to be done with him. For the sake of clarity, I will be the sinner. I stand before God, and the question is, What shall be done with me? We ask justice, and justice says, Cut him down for he is a rebel before God. We ask truth, and truth says, He or I, one must perish, for I have said that the wages of sin is death. We ask holiness, and holiness says, Send him away, for I hate the workers of iniquity. What a sad situation! How hopeless am I! Is there no voice to plead on my behalf? Has the last word been said? Is there not some attribute to plead for me? Yes, blessed be His Name, for God is rich in mercy because of His great love for us. And mercy pleads on my behalf. What then! How perplexing! Is God divided? Is there to be war among the divine attributes? Yes, unless there is still another attribute to be heard from. Will justice and mercy quarrel? No, a thousand times, No, for God is also a God of wisdom, and here comes wisdom, leading a bleeding Saviour and saying, Deliver this sinner from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom. And so in the dear Lamb of God, in the Christ of Calvary, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10). Without Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, every man faces the justice of God to receive the reward of rebellion. Sinners are saved by grace, and this grace operates through faith in Christ's redeeming blood. How blessed are the words of Paul concerning Christ Jesus: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7).

VI.

THE TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST CONCERNING MAN

What our Lord Jesus Christ taught about man is far removed from the popular conception as well as from what we find in many theologies. Christ did not teach that there is a spark of goodness in every man that needs only to be fanned into

a flame. According to His teaching every man needs to be born from above in order to have life and entrance into the kingdom of God. He used many metaphors to illustrate the awful havoc sin has wrought in the human race. Sin is blindness, sickness, bondage, and darkness, and debt. He never talked about men being good at heart. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:19). He corrected the false notion that man is defiled by something from the outside. The Jews washed their hands to keep morally defiling germs from entering the body through the mouth. But Jesus taught that defilement is of the heart; that human nature has been depraved by sin. What the author of our text book (Dr. W. T. Conner) says about man being a spiritual being made in God's image needs to be amplified, if not corrected. Christian Science, falsely so-called, insists that man is in the image of God and, therefore, cannot be a sinner. But this is to deny the fall of the race in Eden. I would not speak of man as a spiritual being in his fallen state. I would distinguish between natural and moral image. The lost man is in the natural image of God, which means that he is a person with all the attributes of personality. But in the fall man lost the moral image of God as a holy being. Fallen man, like God, is a person, but he is not like God as a holy person. The old man (the unregenerate man) is corrupt, the new man (the regenerate man) is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. 4:22-24). "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:9-10). Man in his natural state since the fall is not a child of God, but a child of wrath. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3).

CHRIST TAUGHT THAT GOD LOVES SINNERS

Christ came to seek and save the lost. He did not come in the interest of good people but to save bad people. In the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, Jesus taught that to be justified one had to take the place of a sinner. The Pharisee, who thought he was good and boasted of it, went home a condemned man, while the publican, conscious of his sinnership, went home justified.

Every man is qualified for salvation by being lost, but in conversion he becomes qualified by his realization of his lost condition. "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:12). Men, do not have to be good to be saved; they have to be consciously bad.

CHRIST TEACHES THE WORTH OF MAN

And He does this by way of comparison.

1. He compares man with the material world. The eternal welfare of the human soul is worth more than the whole world. ..."What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk. 8:36). Men are prone to ignore eternal interests for the sake of paltry gain in this life. There is nothing so valuable as the human soul. This stems, not from any moral goodness in man, but from the fact that he is the acme of God's creation and made for fellowship with God, and from the further fact of man's potential in the matter of eternal joy on the one hand, and eternal misery on the other hand. No other creatures, unless it be the angels, have such capacity for joy and misery.

2. Christ compares man with the animal creation as to worth. Man is much better than a sheep. "How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days" (Matt. 12:12). He says this in answer to His critics who had blamed Him for healing a man on the sabbath. He reminds them of what they would do in rescuing a sheep which might fall into a pit on the sabbath. And if they would do that for a sheep, what should be done for a man who is better than a sheep?

3. He compares man with religious institutions. "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mk. 2:27). The sabbath was made to be a blessing, and not a burden. But this liberty concerning the sabbath must not be abused. The sabbath was made for rest and worship, and not for fleshly gratification. And it is a blessing only when properly observed. In His teaching on the sabbath Christ said there are three kinds of works permitted on the sabbath: works of mercy in helping the needy; works of necessity relieving hunger as in the case of plucking grain by His disciples; and works of religious instruction.

A look at the Decalogue will reveal a difference between the fourth and the other nine commandments. The fourth gives us our duty towards an institution, while the other nine give us our duty to persons: God and man. The fourth commandment is predominantly ceremonial, while the other nine are wholly moral in their nature. And Christ taught that the ceremonial must give way to human need since it was given for the good of man. The Sabbath as an institution is not on par with the great moral precepts, which are unchangeable. It needs to be observed that while Christ pushed the moral precepts of the Decalogue into the inner realm of thought and desire, thus making them more difficult to keep, He gave a more lenient interpretation of the law of the Sabbath on the ground that it was made for man as a blessing. It should also be observed that the nine moral precepts of the Decalogue are given over and over

again in the New Testament, while there is not a single command to keep the seventh day. Moreover, the seventh day Sabbath was given to a specific people in a specific place for a specific purpose. It was given to the nation of Israel, redeemed from Egyptian bondage and brought into the land of Canaan, for a sign between them and God. "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deut. 5:15). "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you" (Ex. 31:13). Paul taught that the ceremonial aspect of the sabbath was done away with by Christ on the cross. "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days" (Col. 2:13-16).

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT THE SOUL

He distinguished between soul and body. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). From this verse one would judge that man is constituted of soul and body. Jesus must have meant the whole man so far as his constitution is concerned. In speaking of man's moral nature He says "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41). He is here speaking of the two natures of the saved man. The nature received in the physical birth and the nature received in the spiritual birth. The regenerate man has two natures: flesh and spirit.

We are sometimes challenged to give a specific text that teaches the immortality of the soul. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). This teaches it by implication, man can kill the body, but not the soul. But God can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. And this will not be destruction of being, but of well-being. We might make the counter challenge and ask for a text that says the soul is mortal.

Dr. Conner says that Jesus seems to assume or take for granted that man lives after death. He speaks of the resurrection of the righteous to a new kind of existence. It will not be a flesh and blood existence, involving marriage and

propagation of mankind. There will be no increase of the human race in the eternal state.

Our Lord's answer to the Sadducees proves that He believed in a continuation of human existence in a resurrection life. He quotes the words of God to Moses at the burning bush: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32). The Sadducees insisted that physical death ended conscious existence; hence there could be no resurrection.

Moreover, Christ speaks of the punishment of the wicked in a future state of existence. He speaks of Gehenna as, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mk. 9:44).

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT SIN

1. He describes sin as a debt, a defaulting in one's obligation to God. He taught His disciples to pray to be forgiven their debts. "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). In the parable of the creditor and debtors, He taught that men cannot pay their moral debt to God. "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty" (Lk. 7:41). And here He taught degrees in guilt, one man owed 500 pence while the other owed only 50 pence. They differed in the amount they owed, but were alike in that they had nothing with which to pay. The parable also teaches that one's gratitude is measured by his conception of salvation. The sinful woman in the case thought of herself as a great sinner who had been forgiven much. She expressed her gratitude by washing Christ's feet with her tears, drying them with the hairs of her head, kissing his feet and anointing them with ointment. She loved much because she realized she had been forgiven much. Most Christians are shallow in their feeling of guilt and gratitude. It is little sin, little salvation, and little service. We must realize that we are great sinners, if we are to be grateful for a great salvation.

2. Christ warned against the unpardonable sin. "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matt. 12:31,32). "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation. Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit" (Mk. 3:28-30). "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the

Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven" (Lk. 12:10). In these three passages we have all that is directly said about the sin that hath no forgiveness. And here we have this particular sin defined and described; we are told what it is and how it is committed. And in the context we have a case given: certain Jews had attributed the work of Christ in healing one possessed with a demon, to the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. They blasphemed the Holy Spirit by Whom Christ cast out the demon, by calling Him an unclean spirit. They were blaspheming both Christ and the Holy Spirit, but it was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit for which there was no forgiveness.

We must distinguish between the one unpardonable sin and an unpardoned sin. All sins of the impenitent are unpardoned, but they are not all unpardonable. The sin that hath no forgiveness is plainly said to be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Any and every sin against Christ may be pardoned on repentance and faith. And all sins against the decalogue may be pardoned inasmuch as Christ died to redeem from the curse of the law. And many sins against the Holy Spirit may be pardoned, such as grieving Him, resisting Him, and quenching Him. There is only one kind of sin that cannot be pardoned, the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This is a sin for which Christ did not die, and a sin for which the Holy Spirit will not convict, and this is because God will not forgive it.

According to the popular view, the unpardonable sin is unbelief or the rejection of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. We cannot adopt this view for several reasons. First, this makes it a sin against Christ, whereas we are plainly told that it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. And we do not see how unbelief can be equated, with blasphemy of the Spirit. However, none but an unbeliever will blaspheme against the Spirit. Moreover, it is a sin for which there is no forgiveness, either in this world or in the world to come. But all of us were unbelievers at one time, and being convicted of this sin by the Holy Spirit, repented and put our faith in Jesus as the Christ. Of course, nobody can be saved as long as he rejects Christ as Saviour, but all lost people have not committed the unpardonable sin.

Another view held by many makes the unpardonable sin the resisting of the Holy Spirit. According to this view the Holy Spirit strives with sinners in an effort to regenerate them, and is overcome by the sinner's resistance, and gives up the effort. In other words, there are some sinners who are so bad that the Holy Spirit cannot regenerate or convert them. We cannot subscribe to this theory for the simple reason that it makes a sinner mightier than the Holy Spirit, thus making man mightier than God. In Acts seven Stephen charges some Jews with resisting the Holy Spirit, just as their fathers had in olden times. And he tells how they resisted the Spirit. They resisted the Spirit by rejecting the message of the prophets and persecuting them. There is an objective ministry of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the gospel of Christ, and when the gospel is rejected and the

messengers mistreated, the Holy Spirit is resisted. But this is not the same as overcoming His subjective ministry in the work of regeneration or a new creation. When the Holy Spirit comes to grips with a human soul for the purposes of regeneration, He does not try in vain, He suffers no failure, for He gives understanding of the gospel and overcomes the natural enmity of the heart. We can pray for the worst of men with the assurance that the Holy Spirit is able to convert them to faith in Christ. It is our bounden duty and blessed privilege to preach Christ to all men: it is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit to make our preaching effective by removing from the human soul that which causes the rejection of the gospel. A church covenant adopted by many Baptist churches begins with these words: "Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour...". Paul gives us the same truth when he says, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought" (I Cor. 2:6). And may one and all, give the Lord Jesus all credit for providing salvation, and the Holy Spirit credit for making us Christians, remembering that we are but ministers through whom men believe, even as the Lord gives to every man. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (I Cor. 2:5).

VII.

WHAT CHRIST TAUGHT

CONCERNING SALVATION

The Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal Word knew of the tragedy of the fall of man in the garden of Eden before He ever came into the world. He was foreordained to be the Saviour of sinners, and stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He came into this world on a mission of mercy to men in the misery of sin. He did not come to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Christ did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

As a teacher Jesus had much to say on the subjects of sin and salvation. He came not only to preach the gospel, but to provide the gospel. He Himself is the gospel, and so we speak of the gospel of Christ; not merely as coming from Him, but as being about Him. "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:3-4). Paul gives a clear cut definition of the gospel when he says,

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3,4). Christ's death, burial and resurrection make up the content of the gospel, while the words "for our sins" give us the design of His death. His death was not that of a helpless martyr to a good cause; death with Jesus Christ was an accomplishment. While on the mount of transfiguration, "And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Lk. 9:30,31). His life was not taken from Him,. "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:18). Christ did not die for the moral influence the story might have on sinners in softening their hearts and making them want to live better. There is only a small element of truth in the moral influence theory of the atonement. Neither was His death for mere governmental purposes in which God was showing His hatred of sin, and as a deterrent against sinning. The death of Christ for our sins means that He was suffering in our room and stead; that He was bearing the guilt and penalty of our sins in His own body; that He was putting away the damning power of our sins by the sacrifice of Himself. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21); "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (I Peter 3:18); "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24); "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). In His death Christ was acting as the sinner's substitute under law to redeem us from its curse. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13).

WHAT SALVATION IS ACCORDING TO CHRIST

Jesus spoke of salvation as forgiveness and remission of sins. He thought of salvation in relation to God as a person. He spoke of salvation as restoration to fellowship with God. Only one time does He use Paul's favorite term "justify." "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.." (Lk. 18:14). Paul emphasized salvation in relation to God as Lawgiver, viewing the sinner as a condemned transgressor of God's holy law. Jesus emphasized the need of fellowship with God as the heavenly Father. And so His favorite terms are forgiveness and remission. These terms mean to send away, to discharge, to remit as a debt. In the Old Testament God is said to put sins behind His back, and to cast them into the depths of the sea, and as removing them as far as the

east .is from the west. "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (Isa. 38:17); "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19); "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." (Ps. 103:12).

Forgiveness is not like justification which is done once for all. The sinner needs initial forgiveness before he can come into the presence of God as Father. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). And the saint, the child of God, needs forgiveness also. Jesus taught His disciples to pray for forgiveness. "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). This shows that saints sin and need to be brought back into fellowship with the Father. We are justified once for all through faith in Christ Jesus. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1-2). In justification we are delivered from the curse of the law, and never put back under the law as the way of life and salvation. Sin cannot damn us because we are not under law for justification. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14).

But we shall need forgiveness again and again until the end of our earthly sojourn. We are never told to pray for justification, but we are told to pray for forgiveness as we pray for our daily bread. Justification keeps us from being condemned by God as Lawgiver; forgiveness keeps us in fellowship with God as our heavenly Father.

The two parables on forgiveness are those of the two debtors and the prodigal son. When the debtors had nothing to pay, the creditor was gracious and canceled the debt. The prodigal son returned to the father's house and to a place of fellowship.

The teaching of Christ on forgiveness is used by some to oppose the satisfaction theory of the atonement. It is pointed out that in forgiveness no satisfaction is demanded, and that where satisfaction is demanded there can be no forgiveness. But let us remember that revelation is progressive. Christ did not give all the truth in a single statement. Forgiveness does mean that nothing is demanded from the one who is forgiven, but it is false to say that there is no just basis for forgiveness. Paul connects forgiveness with redemption. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). Jesus told His disciples that He had many things to say unto them, but that they could not at that time bear them. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not

speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13).

There is a book entitled *The Gospel of the Incarnation*, published by the Westminster Press, and written by Prof. George S. Hendry. This book is a criticism of blood atonement. The author makes bold to say that there is no support from the words of Jesus for the view that He took upon Himself responsibility for the sins of men. To quote him verbatim he says, "There is no word of His (Jesus) to suggest ... that He deliberately submitted Himself to the judgment of God on sin." In refutation of the contention of this book, it is sufficient to say, that Christ states emphatically and plainly, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). And Paul quotes Christ as saying at the institution of the memorial supper, "And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:24). Prof. Hendry rehashes the old Socinian argument that forgiveness based upon satisfaction is not really forgiveness, and that there is no genuine mercy if Christ died for guilty sinners. This argument denies the justice of God, and overlooks the fact that it is the mercy of God in Christ that provides atonement, and a just basis for forgiveness. Saving faith is faith in Christ Who was lifted up on the cross. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14,15).

I said the other day that our battle is over the Book, over the Bible as the Word of God. The Bible is vitally important because it emphasizes blood atonement. The devil hates the blood, and if he can get the blood out of the gospel he has accomplished what he failed to do in the wilderness temptations, when he made repeated attempts to swerve Jesus from His determination to go to the cross and redeem sinners with His precious blood. That blood was precious to Peter as the price of redemption, and woe to him who lightly esteems it. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:29). The devil knows that the death of Jesus Christ spells his doom, and he wants to keep the blood out of the story of His life. The devil well knows that the only way the sinner can meet his accusations and overcome him is by pleading the blood of the Lamb, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29).

How are the mighty fallen! Prof. Hendry occupies the Charles Hodge Chair of Systematic Theology at Princeton University, but his teaching is far removed from the teaching of Hodge who said, "It is the language and spirit of the whole

Bible and of every believing heart in relation to Christ, that His blood alone has power sufficient to atone."

Jesus Christ was more than a herald of salvation; He was also the provider of salvation. His mission to earth was not primarily to preach salvation, but to provide a salvation to be preached. Paul says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (I Tim. 2:5,6).

CONDITIONS OF SALVATION

The author of our text book acknowledges that this expression is somewhat misleading. We have already seen that Christ met the conditions of salvation in giving His life as a ransom for sinners. And so what we mean by "conditions of salvation" is the terms upon which the salvation provided by Christ is offered and received. What we are thinking about now is salvation as a conversion experience. Dr. Conner warns against thinking of a checker game in which God makes a move and then waits for the sinner to move. Salvation is of the Lord, both in its provision and in its application. Christ provided salvation and the Holy Spirit applies it. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

In speaking of the terms of forgiveness, Jesus used two words: repentance and faith. He did not develop these two doctrines as they are later developed by the apostle Paul. If all the truth on salvation is to be found in the gospels, the rest of the New Testament would be nothing more than repetition.

Repentance

Repentance was called for by Jesus. "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3). After His death and resurrection, He commanded His disciples to preach repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations. The word for repentance means a change of mind, such a change of mind that leads to a change of action. It involves a reflection on the past and the realization that one is a sinner facing the wrath of God. It involves also hatred and repudiation of sin. When Job repented he abhorred himself. Repentance is viewing sin as God views it. Repentance is taking sides with God against self. In speaking of the ministry of John the Baptist, "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" (Luke 7:29, 30). John baptized those who confessed their sins, thereby justifying God in His charge against them. But

the Pharisees refused to take the place of sinners, thereby rejecting God's charge against them.

We get a good definition of repentance in the parable of the two sons. A man had two sons. He said to the first, ..."Son, go work today in my vineyard" (Matt. 21:28). This son, at first, refuses and says, "I will not." But he got to thinking this matter over and repented; that is, he changed his mind and went. He had a change of mind that led to a change of action. And when we preach repentance and remission of sins in the name of Christ, we are urging men to reflect on their past, and change their mind toward sin and Christ.

We have a good illustration of repentance in the parable of the prodigal. He got to thinking over the past, had a change of mind about what he had done, and said, "I will arise and go to my father." There was an inner change of attitude leading to a change of conduct.

Faith

Faith is another word often on the lips of Jesus; however, it does not have the place in the Synoptics that it has in Paul and John. In the Synoptics, faith is seen primarily in connection with physical healing. When Christ saw the faith of the men who brought the man of palsy and let him down through the roof of the house. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mk. 2:5). To the woman with the issue of blood, "And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague" (Mk. 5:34). Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, sought Jesus on behalf of his daughter. And as Jesus journeyed to his house, word came that the child had died. "As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe" (Mk. 5:36). The father of the boy with a dumb spirit came to Jesus with report that His disciples had failed in their efforts to cast out the evil spirit and frantically appealed to Jesus saying, "And oft times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk 9:22-23). To blind Bartimaeus, the Lord Jesus said, ..."Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." (Mk. 10:52). To the sinfull women who washed and kissed his feet, "And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke 7:50). And so it seems that physical healing and forgiveness of sins went together on the condition of faith. To His critics our Lord said, "For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?" (Matt. 9:5). Jesus often rebuked His disciples for lack of faith. When Peter was to sink as he walked on the water, "And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou

doubt?" (Matt. 14:31). Let us remember that the blessings of God are by means that honour Him, and this is by faith in His power and promises.

VIII.

What Jesus Taught on the Subject of Prayer

Luke, the evangelist who presents Jesus as the perfect man, emphasizes His teaching on prayer. The Lord Jesus began and ended His earthly life in the attitude of prayer. He was praying at the time of His baptism, and His last word from the cross was a prayer. He spent the night in prayer before appointing the twelve. After feeding the five thousand, realizing a crisis, He withdrew into a mountain to pray. He was praying when He was transfigured. In Gethsemane, anticipating the horrors of the cross, He agonized in prayer. And on the cross the Lord Jesus prayed. "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;" (Luke 18:1). In many a trial and difficulty we would soon give up if we could not resort to prayer.

THE NEED OF PRAYER

To say that we need to pray is another way of saying that we need God. Prayer implies two things: our own impotence and God's omnipotence. The power of prayer is not in the one who prays, but in God to Whom prayer is made. Spurgeon once said, that if we do not pray about everything we will worry about most things. Prayer ought to be a fixed principle in our lives. "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess 5:17). There may be vacation from preaching but not from praying. We need to live on the knees of our soul. We are sometimes told that we should not ask God to do for us what we can do for ourselves, but there is nothing we can do for ourselves. Did not Christ say, ..."Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). To be a fruit bearing Christian we must abide in Christ as the branch abides in the vine; and in this matter of abiding in Christ, prayer has a vital place. There is no abiding in Christ apart from prayer. Paul gives prayer as the prescription against anxiety or distraction. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

When a doctor has a patient who is not improving, he is apt to call in another physician to help out. And this other physician may not know anymore than he knows, and may not be of much help. But this is not the case with God. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," (Eph. 3:20).

The Lord Jesus enforced His lesson on prayer by two parables: the friend at midnight, "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go

unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." (Luke 11:5-9), and the unjust judge, "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:1-8). The purpose in these parables is to point a contrast. God is not like the neighbour who did not want to be bothered, and whose unwillingness had to be overcome by much begging. God is willing to hear us and we are not bothering Him when we pray. Our importunity is to follow from the facts that He is both willing to hear and able to bless us, so that we can keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking. We do not trouble God as the widow did the unjust judge. And so these parables point a contrast that we may be encouraged to pray and not to faint. Prayer is the only alternative to fainting.

The Syrophenician woman is an example of persistence in prayer. Jesus immortalized this woman by saying, ..."O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt".. (Matt. 15:28). Wherein was the greatness of this woman's faith? It was in the fact that she had little to base faith upon. She had little encouragement to faith, and she persevered in prayer in the face of discouragement. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Christ had not said much for her to build faith upon. However, there was a little hope held out in the words of Jesus. "But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs" (Mk. 7:27). Here was a hint that there was something for her, and she grasped at this hint. She reminded Jesus that the little dogs, household pets, get the crumbs, and so there must be something for her as a dog. "And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the

house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matt. 15:22-28).

THE NATURE OF PRAYER

Prayer has been defined as the sincere desire of the heart expressed or unexpressed. Hannah prayed though her lips did not move. God heard the desire of her heart and answered with blessing. Prayer must be sincere and not a hypocritical display of piety before men. Christ described the hypocrites of His day as standing in the synagogue or on street corners to advertise their piety, to be seen of men. And He says, They get their reward. They get what they want. They do not want anything from God; they want human praise and they get it. Let us consider my own definition of prayer: Prayer is coming to God as our Father, in the name of Jesus Christ His Son, with a sincere desire for some blessing, believing that He is able to bestow it but willing to be denied it if it is not His will to give it. Now let us analyze this definition. It is coming to God as our heavenly Father. The name father is so rich in meaning. It speaks of love, provision, and protection. We pray to a loving Father and not to an unjust judge. What a happy thought! And we come in the Name of His Son. What a humbling thought! It reminds us that we are sinners with no standing before God in our own name or on our own record. We plead Christ's righteousness and not our own, for we have none. Then we come with sincere desire for some blessing. If we do not really want what we ask for, then we lie in making our petition. And if we do not believe He is able to grant what we want, we will not pray much. Moreover, if we are not willing to be denied the blessing we crave, then our prayer is not petition but dictation. In much of our praying we do not know what the will of God is in that particular thing.

I like what Dr. Conner says about reverence in prayer. Prayer is not communion between two equals. We must not talk to God as we would to other believers. We must not get chummy with God. We may come to God boldly, but we must come to Him humbly, remembering, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Ps. 89:7).

PRAYER AND THE WILL OF GOD

Prayer must respect the will of God, Who is sovereign over all. We are not to try to change God's will in prayer. When we say, "Thy will be done and not ours", we must mean it in our heart. In much of our praying we do not know what

God's will is in the matter before us. Take the matter of service. Shall I answer this call or that call? Or will there be any call? How will I know God is in the call? I had to face this in coming to Toronto for this period of service. How could I know God's will in the matter? One cannot always go by impressions for they are apt to fluctuate. It has long been my policy in facing decisions that must be made, to endeavor by prayer to surrender my will to the will of God, and have no choice of my own. As long as we have a will of our own, we are not subject to His will. And finally, in making decisions, I try to turn the whole thing over to God, and trust His providence in leading me to make the decision. I find myself saying to Him, "O gracious and all wise God, do not let me get out of Thy will; see to it, that I make the right decision."

Take the matter of health. When we are ill, there is no way for us to know whether or not it is God's will to heal us. We may believe He is able, for His word assures us there is nothing impossible to Him. But how can we know that He is willing to heal us? One cannot open His Bible and find that healing is promised in this particular case. One can only say, as did the leper. "And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Mk. 1:40). May I give two illustrations of what I am trying to get over to you. David had a sick child. He prayed for God to heal it. He was so earnest in prayer that he had no appetite for food. He was so deeply distressed that he wept and lay all night upon the ground. He must have believed that God was able to heal the baby, else he would not have continued to pray. "And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (II Sam. 12:15-23) As if to say, I did not know God's will until the Lord took the child. But now I

know and am submissive to His will. I cannot bring the child back, but I can go to him.

Paul had a thorn in the flesh and he prayed three times for it to be removed. He did not know God's will, but he certainly believed God was able to take it out of his flesh. God revealed that it was not His will to remove the thorn. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Cor. 12:7-10).

PRAYER AND FAITH

There is a vital relation between prayer and faith. James says that we must ask in faith, nothing wavering. The author of our text book discusses (but not very helpfully) one of two texts which have been of great perplexity to your teacher. One is "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22), and the other is "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Both of these texts are found in connection with the cursing of the fig tree. When the disciples marvelled at what was done to the fig tree Jesus told them that if they would believe and doubt not, they would not only be able to do what was done to the fig tree, but could say to the mountain, ..."Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done" (Matt. 21:21).

We must distinguish between charismatic faith and saving faith, or between miracle working faith and justifying faith. One of the gifts of the Spirit to the early church was faith. This was not faith in Christ for salvation, but faith bestowed on the saints for the working of miracles. Paul's discussion of the gifts of the Spirit. "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of

healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked. That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (I Cor. 12:1-30). The power to work miracles was possessed by some who did not have saving faith. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22,23). "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach,

saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:1-8). And remember that Judas was one of the twelve, and yet he never had saving faith. "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him" (John 6:64).

Miraculous gifts were found in the church at Corinth. These gifts were sovereignly bestowed and distributed. Some had one gift and others had a different gift. "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (I Cor. 12:30-31). "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing....Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away...And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (I Cor. 13:2,8,13). The apostle compares these gifts of the Spirit with the graces of the spirit: faith, hope, and love. He says one may have faith to remove mountains, miracle working faith, but if it does not work by love, he is nothing. He says that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit will cease to be given, but that the graces of faith, hope, and love will abide. These gifts of the Spirit were to accredit Jesus as the Christ to the Jews, and when the nation rejected Him and the Gentiles were turned to with the Gospel, these gifts ceased, they were no longer given.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). It is my conviction that much confusion and heartbreak and shock to faith have resulted from making the above scripture apply to our time. They were promises to the early church in the Pentecostal era when public miracles were the order of the day. And to plead them as promises today is to claim possession of the miraculous gifts. And those who do claim to possess miraculous gifts, never claim the power to raise the dead, and yet this power was given to the apostles, and they were commanded to raise the dead. "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). Another gift to the early church was the ability to speak in a foreign language without any study of that language, and yet those who claim that the gifts to the early church are still possessed never go to a foreign country and speak to the natives without learning their language. It is too obvious to need any argument, that we do not have public miracles in our day. Sir Robert Anderson, in his book The Silence of God, says on page 18:

"The divine history of the favoured race for thousands of years teems with miracles by which God gave proof of His power with men, and yet we are confronted by the astounding fact that from the days of the apostles to the present hour the history of Christendom will be searched in vain for the record of a single public event to compel belief that there is a God at all!"

And the same writer, dealing with the claims of "faith healers" says on page 170:

"Religious miracles also claim a passing notice here. I do not allude to the tricks of priests, but to cases of extraordinary cures from serious illness; and some at least of these appear to be supported by evidence sufficient to establish their truth. The phenomena of hysteria and mimetic disease will probably account for the majority of cases of the kind. Others again may be explained as instances of the power of the mind and will over the body. The diseases which are necessarily fatal are comparatively few. But when the patient gives up hope his chances of recovery are greatly reduced. On the other hand, the progress of disease may be controlled, and even checked, by some mastering influence or emotion which turns the patient's thoughts back to life, and makes him believe he is convalescent. But while the vast majority of seemingly miraculous cures may thus be explained on natural principles, there may perhaps be some which are genuine miracles. There are no limits to the possibilities of faith, and God may thus declare Himself at times.

"There is nothing in this admission to clash with the concluding statement of my second chapter that in our dispensation, unlike those which preceded it, there are no public events to compel belief in God. I am there dealing, not with the mere fact of miracles, but with their evidential value; and if there have been miracles in Christendom, that element is wanting in them. . . . The annals of "faith healing," as it is called, are rich in cases of mimetic or hysterical disease, but about the spiritual wreckage due to failures innumerable they are silent."

I have personally known of several cases where faith was based upon Matt. 21:22: "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." When I was a young pastor at Mortons Gap, Kentucky, little Mary Orange, a sweet and charming child, was taken ill. There was much prayer at the church, and by individuals privately. One day, Bro. Chester O'Bryan, an uncle of Mary's, came to me in high hopes. He said that he had the assurance in his heart that Mary would get well; that he had pleaded Matt. 21:22, and by faith had claimed the promise. But in a few days Mary was dead. Had God refused to keep His word! One can well imagine the shock to the man who had based his faith upon what Christ had promised in Matt. 21:22. Brother Boyce Taylor, long time pastor of the First Baptist Church at Murray, Kentucky, and one of the great preachers of the Southern Baptist Convention, was burdened with many afflictions. He was voted out of the pastorate of his church. He published a

paper, "News and Truths", and operated a book store. His bank failed and tied up his deposits. He became ill and was taken to the Baptist Hospital in Memphis, Tenn. He was a great man of prayer, and pleading the promises of Matt. 21:22 and Mark 11:24, he believed he would get well and be restored to a useful ministry. But Brother Taylor died. Had God gone back on His word? No, a thousand times No! Our dear brother was basing his faith and prayer on a promise for a particular time - the day of public miracles. The closing illustration cannot be documented, but I think I received it orally from the lips of the late A. W. Pink. George Whitefield, the great open air preacher and friend of the Wesleys, had born unto him a son. He prayed that this son might become a preacher of the gospel, basing his faith upon Matt. 21:22 and Mark 11:24, and having the assurance of answered prayer. But the child died at a very young age. One thinks of the great disappointment to this great man of God.

The kind of praying inculcated in the New Testament epistles is found in Phil. 4:6: "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ." We are to make known our requests to God and be at peace. We are to tell Him our feelings and our wishes, and then leave the matter entirely in His hands, remembering that He is wiser in giving than we are in asking.

IX.

What Jesus Christ Taught About Himself

What did Jesus of Nazareth think about Himself? What claims did He make concerning His person and work? In this place we think and speak of Him as the unique Son of God by Whom the worlds were created and by Whom all things are sustained. We oppose the notion that He was Divine only in the sense that every man is Divine. We oppose the view that He was only a little more Divine than other men; that His Divinity was only in the sense of perfect humanity. We oppose the teaching that He was more like God than other men, but still only a man. In this place we teach the absolute Deity of Jesus Christ, and not divinity in its popular connotation. We believe that Jesus Christ was and is of the same substance as the Father; that He was God manifest in the flesh, the image of the invisible God.

Does Jesus concur with us in what we think and say about Him? If He is in agreement with us, this agreement will be disclosed in what He says about Himself. And the only way we can know what he taught about Himself is to know the record of His teaching concerning Himself as is found in the gospels in John as well as in the synoptics.

Dr. Conner thinks the best way to discover what Jesus taught about Himself is to study the titles He used in speaking of Himself. And the titles He applied to Himself are Messiah, Son of Man, and Son of God.

MESSIAH

Messiah of the Old Testament and Christ of the New Testament mean the same thing: the Anointed One. The background for our thinking is the Old Testament. In the Old Testament men were anointed to be kings, and priests, and prophets. And we know from the New Testament that Jesus filled these three offices and your teacher believes He filled them concurrently rather than in successive periods or dispensations. As a priest after the order of Melchizedek. He is a royal priest; King as well as Priest. And as a prophet He still speaks from heaven. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb. 12:25).

We find that prophecies in the Old Testament about the coming of the Anointed One are in the New Testament applied to Jesus. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:16-21). What else could He have been saying, but that He was the Messiah, the anointed one?

While healing the sick in Capernaum, the demons witnessed to Him as the Christ. He rebuked them and shut their mouths, for He did not want testimony from such a source.

When He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, He was definitely presenting Himself to Israel as their Messiah, and King. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9). His entry was in fulfilment of scripture and also indicated the kind of king He was. He did not enter as a political and military King, but as one who was meek and lowly, riding upon an ass rather than a war horse.

When Jesus came into the world the Jews were in a state of expectancy. They were looking for their long promised Messiah or King. But would he meet their expectations? Would he be the kind of Messiah they wanted? They wanted a Messiah who would deliver them from the Roman yoke which is the same as a political Messiah. And Satan did his best to get Him to be that kind of Messiah, and thus meet the popular expectations. But this would have cost Him the very kingdom He came to establish. When He read Isaiah 61 at Nazareth, He read only that portion which related to His first coming, stopping at a comma, for to have read "and the day of vengeance of our God", would not have been true of His present mission, and He could not have said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He did not come the first time to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

It is true that Jesus did not urge His messianic claims upon the people, not even upon His own disciples. He wanted them to come to this conclusion for themselves and at the proper time He drew from them such a confession. At the end of His Galilean ministry, at Caesarea Philippi, He questioned His disciples concerning the popular belief. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:13-16).

It must not be thought that this was the first time His disciples had confessed Him as the Messiah. It was this conviction that caused them to follow Him in the beginning. "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:40-41). However, since Jesus did not fully meet the expectations of His own disciples, their faith in Him was sorely tried, and nothing but a God-given conviction would carry them through. Even John the Baptist, who had given such signal testimonies to the Messiahship, was in perplexity as he lay in prison, and sent messengers to Jesus with the question, ..."Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. 11:3). He may have wondered why Jesus had not assumed His Messianic authority in his deliverance.

THE SON OF MAN

It has been well said that to determine the meaning of this title is one of the most difficult tasks. This was our Lord's favorite term for Himself. In the gospels none but Himself uses the term, and in Acts, it is used only by the dying Stephen when he says, ..."Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56).

This term also has an Old Testament background. And there it is used in a twofold sense, pointing both to a person of humiliation and also to one of dominion and glory. In Psalm 8 the "son of man" means simply one who shares human qualities in contrast to God. "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Here "son of man" is a designation for man in his characteristics of weakness and frailty. In this sense the title is applied to Ezekiel about eighty times as a reminder of his weakness and mortality, and as an incentive to humility in his prophetic office. In Daniel 7 we have a symbolic designation of foreign nations under the figure of beasts. The seer beholds in contrast to these powers another figure coming with the clouds of heaven and establishing an everlasting kingdom. And this person is "one like the Son of man," and speaks of dominion and power.

When we come to the New Testament we find two groups of Scriptures of the same paradoxical nature. One group speaks of the Son of man in humiliation, "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mk. 8:31). "For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day" (Mk. 9:31). "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born" (Mk. 14:21). While these and other Scriptures speak of a suffering Messiah, there are others used in connection with His *parousia* in glory. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31). And so these paradoxical Scriptures present the Son of man as both a suffering and reigning Messiah. They comport with Philippians 2 where we have His descent from glory to a condition of humiliation on earth, and then His exaltation in glory. These Scriptures describe Jesus in His mediatorial work which began in humiliation and will end in glory. His mediatorial kingdom was established through suffering on earth, promoted during the gospel age among all nations, and will be consummated when He returns to earth in glory. And so this phrase, "Son of man", is seen to be a title of dignity as well as humiliation.

The question has been much discussed whether or not the "Son of man" was a current Messianic title in the days of Jesus. Dr. Conner seems to have been acquainted with the discussions, and reached the conclusion that it was a Messianic title in a veiled form. The term would not necessarily be understood by His hearers as a Messianic claim. If He had plainly told the people that He was their Messiah in the beginning, it would have aroused false hopes and precipitated the crisis of death too soon. And so He waits until well within the last year of His ministry before He even draws from His disciples the confession that He is the Christ.

During the last week of His ministry Jesus spoke publicly and said that the Son of man must be lifted up. The people seem to have associated the title "Son of man" with Messiah. "The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" (John 12:34).

THE SON OF GOD

1. This title is applied to Jesus by others several times in the synoptics. At His baptism, "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). In the temptations in the wilderness, Satan acknowledges Jesus to be the Son of God. In announcing His birth beforehand to Mary, "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk. 1:35). He is recognized by the demons as the Son of God. "And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ" (Lk. 4:41). Mark defines the gospel he is going to write as "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk. 1:1). When His disciples saw Him walking on the water, they worshipped Him, saying, ..."Of a truth Thou art the Son of God" (Matt 14:33). At Caesarea Philippi, Peter, speaking for all the apostles, confessed Him, ..."Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). Even the Roman centurion, who supervised His crucifixion, was so impressed with the way He died, that He exclaimed, ..."Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54). Obviously, all these testimonies mean that Jesus was the Son of God in a peculiar sense, the Son of God in the sense that none others are or ever can be the sons of God.

2. This title is applied by Jesus' to Himself. We have already seen that Jesus favorite self designation was "Son of man". And while there is no passage in the synoptics in which He explicitly calls Himself "Son of God", He does use the correlative terms Father and Son in such a way as to be the equivalent of such a title. In Matt. 11:27 He says, ..."My Father," and adds: ..."No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" So also in Mk. 13:32: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." These passages clearly denote that Jesus is the Son of the heavenly Father in a distinct and exclusive sense.

3. It is significant that Jesus in speaking of God to others, even to His own disciples, never uses the term "Our Father". He never classes Himself with other men under a common term. As the Son of God He never puts Himself in the same category as other sons of God. He says, "My Father," and "Your Father,"

but never "Our Father," except in the so-called Lord's prayer, which is not the Lord's prayer, but the prayer He taught the disciples to pray. It is not the prayer He prayed, but the prayer they were to pray. In Matt. 11:27 He says, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father"... And in Matt. 6:32, speaking of food and raiment, Jesus said, ..."Your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of all these things." Some years ago a preacher in Memphis tried to demonstrate his claim that one could become so spiritual as to be able to live without food. And he fasted until he just about starved, and awoke to his folly barely in time to eat and live. At that time I remarked, Why doesn't somebody tell him to read Matt. 6:32 where Jesus said, ..."Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

4. Modernism makes the Sonship of Jesus differ only in degree from that of other men. Stevens in his *Theology of the New Testament*, says that most recent scholars agree that the term "Son of God" as used in the synoptics is primarily an ethical one, which means that Sonship to God was realized perfectly by Jesus, while in others it is only partially realized. The truth is that Jesus was and is the eternal Son of God. Men may become sons of God by adoption, but not Jesus, for He is the eternal Son of God, of the same essence as the Father. Isaiah calls Him the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father.

5. It is granted, that the synoptics do not emphasize the Deity of Jesus as does the gospel of John. The synoptics present Jesus in human and earthly relationships, and therefore, it was not within their province to emphasize His Deity. However, even in the synoptics, His Divine Sonship is guarded as being more than the mere ethical perfection of one who is man only.

6. The title "Son of God" does involve the ethical perfection of Jesus. If He was the Son of God only as a sinless man, how do we account for His unique sinlessness? Why was He the only sinless man? Why has sinlessness never been repeated in any other man? Jesus was the only sinless man since Adam sinned because He was more than man, He was the God man.

Jesus stopped the question business of His critics by quoting Ps. 110, and asking "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" (Matt. 22:45). They could not answer this question, nor can anybody answer it who regards Jesus as man only. We can answer it by saying, that while Jesus was the son of David after the flesh, He was David's Lord because He was the eternal and ever existent God.

X.

The Teaching of Jesus Christ

Concerning His Death

In this lesson we are dealing with the death of Jesus at its historical source. We are not dealing with the theology of His death, but with the historical facts. This lecture would be different if we were treating of what Paul says about His death. And so we are to be occupied with what Jesus taught concerning His death as recorded in the Synoptics. That the death of Jesus was central in His own thinking, and in the thinking of the Synoptists is evident from the large amount of space given to it. All four of the gospels tell the story of His death, while only Matthew and Luke tell the story of His birth and childhood. This is significant in the light of the fact that many theologians are giving us what they are pleased to call "The Gospel of the Incarnation", a gospel with the blood deleted - a gospel which is not a gospel.

What did Jesus think and teach about His death? Was it something that slipped up on Him, something that took Him unawares, or was it premeditated on His part? Was it the result of a series of mistakes He made in dealing with the authorities, or was it purely voluntary on His part? In this place we believe and teach that Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us, and that He was God before He came to us. And in eternity past He certainly knew what His mission to this earth would be, and that it would be finished by death on a Roman cross. The eternal Son of God came by way of the manger into the human family; born of a virgin without a human father. He was not created, but incarnated; God clothed in human flesh. The incarnation was not the blending of the divine and human natures, for then He would have been neither God nor man. It was the union of the two natures, so that He is both God and man, the God man.

The question that now concerns us is what Jesus thought and taught about His death after He came to us from the bosom of the Father. His life on earth may be divided into two periods and studied in the light of certain occasions or historical events. Not much can be known concerning what He thought and said about His death prior to His public ministry. He may have said something about His death at the age of twelve when He astonished the doctors with His understanding. He may have had His coming death before Him when He said to His mother on that same occasion: ..."Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk. 2:49). And He must have known that His Father's business was a redemptive program involving His death. In speaking of His death as recorded in John 10:18, He said, ..."This commandment have I received of my Father." We, will now consider His teaching about His death after He entered upon His public ministry.

HIS EARLY MINISTRY

His words at the time of His baptism indicate His intention to die. Why was Jesus baptized? John was baptizing sinners, sinners who confessed their sins. But Jesus was not a sinner, and as Dr. Conner says, did not belong to the sin

bedraggled company of men John was baptizing. And yet in His baptism, He was in some way identifying Himself with sinners. His baptism was a pledge to save sinners by dying for them. When John hesitated about baptizing Him, "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him" (Matt. 3:15). He must have known that to fulfil all righteousness, He would have to be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man....For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings....Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:9,10,17). And so Christ's baptism in water was a type and pledge of His future baptism in suffering. After His water baptism, Christ spoke of His coming death under the figure of a baptism. "But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able" (Matt. 20:22); "But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Mk. 10:38); "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Lk. 12:50).

His temptations in the wilderness were based upon the assumption that He knew He had come into the world to suffer and die for the sins of men. The issue He had to face in the temptations was whether He would build His Kingdom as the suffering Servant of God or get it by an easier method. Satan proposed an easy way, but it was a false way. To save sinners Christ had to destroy the works of the devil, but this could not be done by yielding obedience to him.

THE TIME OF A NEW EMPHASIS

The Lord Jesus knew from the beginning that He was to die, but He did not speak of it in plain terms until the end of His Galilean ministry. The first occasion was when Peter confessed Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. All three Synoptists say that at that time He began to tell His disciples of His approaching death. "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21); "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mk. 8:31); "Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be

slain, and be raised the third day" (Lk. 9:22). This proves that the revelation of His death was progressive in His own teaching, but without subjective development in His own thinking. He had, from the beginning, been thinking about His death, but He could not until now speak plainly of it, for His disciples were not ready to receive it. He wanted them convinced that He was the Messiah before teaching them the truth as to the kind of Messiah He would be. And this was a hard lesson for them to learn. "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:41). The disciples had confessed Jesus as Christ or Messiah at the time He called them to follow Him. But since He had not gathered an army and set up the expected political kingdom, they must have been somewhat shaken in their belief; just as John the Baptist was when Jesus made no move to deliver him from prison. And now after more than two years in a ministry of healing and teaching in Galilee, He again questions His disciples as to their opinion of Him. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:13-17).

After Peter's confession, "Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ" (Matt. 16:20). And why? Because they did not know enough to tell it properly. If they had preached that He was the Messiah, they would have indicated that He was the One who would deliver Israel from their Roman oppressors, and set up His own political kingdom. Such preaching would have aroused false hopes in the multitude who were looking for an earthly king, and thus precipitate the crisis too soon.

After telling His disciples to tell nobody that He was the Christ, He explains: "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. 16:21-23).

The disciples of Christ were personally ambitious, and expecting Him to set up a political kingdom, argued among themselves as to who would be the greatest in that kingdom. They were on their last trip to Jerusalem, and must have thought He would fulfil their expectations soon after their arrival in the city. In reply to

the request of Salome for her sons, James and John, Christ explains that His kingdom is not like earthly kingdoms in which the great exercise authority; in His Kingdom greatness comes through service. It is well for all of God's people to remember this cardinal truth. In popular present day Christianity, the temptation to personal ambition is terrific. Here is a pitfall to be shunned by every servant of Christ. Our Lord sets Himself up as an example by saying, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45). Dr. Conner calls attention to the way Origen and others handled this word ransom. They held that the blood of Christ was a ransom price paid to the devil, for the release of his captives. It simply means that by means of His death He effected men's release from the bondage of sin. The ransom was paid to God as Lawgiver. "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps. 49:7).

THE LAST SUPPER

Just as baptism at the beginning of our Lord's ministry pointed to His death, so does the institution of the memorial Supper at the end. Using the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine of the passover meal as symbols, He takes the bread and says, "This is my body which is given for you." He then takes the cup, ..."This cup is the new testament (Gk. covenant) in my blood, which is shed for you" (Lk. 22:19, 20).

This was the new covenant foretold by Jeremiah. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:31-34). The blessings under the new covenant ratified in the blood of Christ are spiritual, including regeneration and forgiveness of sins. Under the new covenant there is not a word in Jeremiah or the New Testament about a piece of land or any other material blessing. Let us hear Paul on this matter: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).

THE GARDEN AND THE CROSS

Considering the teaching of Jesus about His death we cannot overlook His prayers in the garden and on the cross. In the garden of Gethsemane He anticipated the horrors of Calvary. "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt...He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done....And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words" (Matt. 26:39,42,44). This does not mean that Christ was not willing to die for sinners, but it does suggest that death would have been a foolish thing if sinners could be saved without it. The only way God could be true to His sense of justice and holiness and at the same time save sinners was to collect their sin debt from His Son. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10).

In Gethsemane the Saviour cried, ..."My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death"... (Mk. 14:34). What was it about death that Jesus dreaded? It was not physical suffering, for others have suffered physically as much or even more than He did. Neither was it the being forsaken of His disciples and the taunts of His enemies that he so much dreaded. He had been accustomed to all that. The thing our Lord shrank from and so much dreaded was His being made sin, treated as a sinner, and being forsaken of God. On the cross "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21). On the cross He cried, ..."My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). In justice God treated His Son as a sinner so that in love He might treat us as sons. God spared not His own Son so that He might spare sinners. This does not mean that God was personally displeased with Christ. As a Father He loved Him, but as a God of Justice He could not spare Him because He was voluntarily taking the sinner's place and receiving the sinner's due. What high priced people we are! We are bought with His precious blood and have no right to live a self centered life.

THE RISEN CHRIST

The crucifixion without the resurrection would have been a tragic failure in the divine plan of the ages. What a change His resurrection made in Himself, in His disciples, and in His enemies!

His resurrection caused His death to issue in glory. His humiliation was followed by exaltation. As reward for His sufferings unto death, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that

Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). The once despised name of Jesus has become a conquering Name.

His resurrection wrought a wonderful change in His disciples. They were altogether different men when assured that He was alive. The once cowardly Peter will soon charge the rulers of his nation with the murder of the Holy One of God. The very disciples that had forsaken Him and fled will soon rejoice in being counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name. And years later the apostle to the Gentiles will write "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Phil. 3:10).

His resurrection put His enemies on the spot, as it were, and led to the invention of many lies concerning what became of His body. The first lie was the result of a bribe. The guards were hired to say that they went to sleep and that the disciples stole His body while they were asleep. But sleeping witnesses are not very good witnesses. And all other denials of the bodily resurrection of Christ are as absurd as the first lie. The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ has been called the Gibraltar of Christian evidence and the Waterloo of infidelity.

His resurrection resulted in the great missionary movement which has run through all the centuries. Missionaries of the cross have gone to the ends of the earth with the message of salvation based upon the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

XI.

THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF ACTS

On leaving the Synoptics the author of our text book brings us to a study of what he calls Jewish Christian Literature, by which he means those writings that give us the Christian movement under Jewish terms and modes of thought. This literature is composed of the first part of Acts, the book of Hebrews, and the epistles of Peter and James. And so for the next few lessons we will have theology according to Peter and James and whoever wrote the book of Hebrews.

In this lesson we will look into the first chapters of Acts. This book falls quite naturally into two parts. In the first twelve chapters, Jerusalem is the center, and Peter is the main leader, and most of the believers are Jews. In the latter half of the book, Antioch is the center of missionary activity, Paul is the central figure, and the Gentiles are the chief beneficiaries of the gospel. During the first five or six years the gospel was not carried very far, but before Luke finishes his story

the gospel has spread over the Roman Empire and made converts in Caesar's household.

Acts is the first chapter in the history of Christianity. The gospel of Luke was written to tell what Jesus began to do and teach until He was taken up, while in Acts Luke continues the story of Christ's activity from heaven. In Acts the story of the resurrection, the commission, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the ascension are repeated; with the addition, that before the ascension, the disciples inquired if it was the time for Him to restore the kingdom to Israel. They still hoped that in some way He would deliver Israel from the Roman yoke, and make them a free nation again. Their Lord does not correct them, except to say that times and seasons belong to God, and that when the Holy Spirit came upon them, they were to be His witnesses among all nations beginning at Jerusalem. They will soon learn that they are to be suffering witnesses instead of sitting on earthly thrones and exercising authority.

The book of Acts introduces a new situation. Jesus was crucified at the Passover time, and from the Passover to Pentecost would be fifty days. During the period of forty days, Christ had made some ten appearances to individuals and groups of believers and then ascended back to heaven.

THE TEN DAYS' INTERIM

On returning from Olivet, the place of ascension, the eleven apostles stay together in an upper room. They are soon joined by certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brethren. In this upper room, or in the temple as some think, these believers to the number of one hundred and twenty, with one accord continue in prayer and supplication. In these days of waiting Peter, who has been reflecting on past events and finding in a psalm of David reference to Judas, whose office another was to take, suggests that the vacancy be filled at once. They nominate two men and call upon the Lord to direct in casting lots. ... "The lot fell upon Matthias and he was numbered with the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:26). "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord" (Prov. 16:33).

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

The strange phenomena. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). When all this was noised abroad a great crowd rushed to the temple and were amazed

to hear these Galileans were speaking in various languages so that wherever a man was from, ..."we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:11).

The attempted explanation, "And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine" (Acts 2:12-13).

Peter's sermon. Peter has the correct answer and gives it both negatively and positively. "For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day" (Acts 2:15). Nine A.M. was too early to be drunk, especially since the Jews were in the habit of fasting until after that hour on a feast day, nine being an hour of prayer.

Peter finds the explanation in a prophecy. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28). A part of the prophecy of Joel had not been fulfilled, but a beginning had been made. The new era had begun in which God's Spirit would multiply witnesses. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:21-23). They were guilty of murder, although accomplishing the divine purpose. Their wickedness was in their motive: they hated Jesus without a cause. The death of Christ had been determined back in eternity, and God controlled the wickedness of men to bring about His death. God is not the causative force in the sins of men, but He is the directing force. Men are rebellious, but they are not out from under the control of God. God's decrees are not the necessitating cause of the sins of men, but the foredetermined and prescribed boundings and directings of men's sinful acts.

The slaying of Jesus Christ by the Sanhedrin through Pilate was an act of the nation, and every Jew was guilty when it was made known to him, unless he disavowed and condemned it.

In his sermon Peter emphasizes the resurrection of Christ. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24). He finds proof of the resurrection in "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm

16:10). The apostle points out that David, in this Psalm, could not have been speaking of himself, for he is dead and buried and his grave is with us until this day. David is speaking as a prophet, knowing that God had promised with an oath that of the fruit of his loins He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. Seeing all this beforehand, David spoke of the resurrection of Christ. Peter claims that Jesus of Nazareth fits the picture and that God has raised Him up and exalted Him, and that from His place in glory He had poured forth what they have seen and heard. In the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus God had fulfilled His promise to David that Christ should sit on the throne.

The effect of Peter's sermon is electrical. His arrow hit the mark. His hearers were convicted of their awful mistake. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:36-37). By their very question they plead guilty to the murder of their Messiah. Their eyes are now opened to the wickedness of their previous attitude towards Jesus. They are hurt beyond words to describe. Just think of their predicament! They have crucified their own Messiah, thinking He was an imposter. And now they see their mistake. They cannot deny their guilt, and so with bleeding hearts that want to know if there is any way out of their trouble.

Peter's reply is hopeful and to the point. He does not say there is nothing they can do. If they had been asking what meritorious works they might do to atone for their sins he would have said, "There is nothing you can do to save yourselves." He tells them there is something they need to do in view of what they had done in putting Christ to death. He says, ..."Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). In repentance they were to change their mind, their whole attitude towards Jesus Christ. They must not only feel sorry for what they had done; they must also trust Him, look to Him for salvation. And as an expression and proof of such a change, they must be baptized in His Name. They must publicly declare their faith in Him by being baptized in His Name.

Acts 2:38 has been a battleground for centuries. Some have sought to build the whole plan of salvation on this one verse. The whole contention revolves around the preposition *eis*. Does the preposition look forward and mean "in order to" or does it look backward and mean "because of"? So far as the preposition *eis* is concerned it can look either way. Its general idea is "with reference to", and the context determines what the reference is. It does not always mean "in order to". It cannot possibly have this meaning in "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward"

(Matt. 10:41), and "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here" (Matt. 12:41). To receive a prophet in (eis) the name of a prophet is not in order to make him a prophet, but because he is a prophet. And those who repented at (eis) the preaching of Jonas, repented because of his preaching, not in order to his preaching. Repentance unto life includes faith in Jesus Christ, and this faith is publicly declared in baptism. And since faith works by love, baptism is an act of loving obedience to the command of Christ. Moreover, when baptism makes one a target for persecution, it becomes a very good evidence of genuine faith and love. Refusal to be baptized is a mark against the one who claims to be saved by trusting in Christ. On the other hand, in this day of easy going Christianity, baptism is not necessarily an evidence of repentance and faith.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Let us remark first, that Spirit baptism was not administered by the Spirit but in the Spirit. Christ was the administrator of Spirit baptism. Just as John baptized in water as the element, so Christ baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Let us notice the several instances of Holy Spirit baptism recorded in Acts. So far as the record goes, it was never repeated in the Jerusalem church or among the Jews. It was for the purpose of attesting the Spirit's presence in conversion and Christian living. Therefore when a new and distinct group of believers was made the Spirit's presence was attested. Philip held a revival in Samaria and baptized the believers in water. Later Peter and John were sent by the church at Jerusalem to inspect the work at Samaria. They came and prayed for the converts of Philip that they might receive the Holy Spirit. And after the apostles laid hands on them they received the Holy Spirit. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:12-17). These converts at Samaria must have been saved under Philip's preaching, for they had received the word of God. This proves that the gift of the Spirit was not the same as regeneration by the Spirit. "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:18-19).

We next notice the conversion of Cornelius and his party. Here was another new group where the Spirit's attestation was needed. While Peter preached salvation through faith in Christ, ..."the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44), just as he did at Pentecost. This was before baptism in water and apart from laying on of hands. Their conversion was attested by the Holy Spirit manifesting Himself miraculously in them, so that Peter's companions were amazed because they could see that upon the Gentiles as a class (article), the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out as well as on Jewish believers at Pentecost.

The next group is the twelve disciples at Ephesus. Paul laid hands on them, and they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. All these were cases of corporate baptism to attest the conversion of different groups of believers, and the unity of the mystical body of Christ.

And so we see that there was no uniform way or fixed time when believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit. At Pentecost and at Caesarea it was without laying on of hands. In Samaria and at Ephesus it was by laying on of hands. At Caesarea it was before baptism, while in other instances it was after baptism.

The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were given for attestation in the early church. But they have never been necessary for personal faith in Christ for salvation. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

And my young brethren, as you go out into this cynical world, go depending upon the Holy Spirit for effective witnessing. Do not claim, or try to regain, the *charismata*. Remember that Paul said that the graces of faith and hope and love are better than these miraculous gifts. And may faith strengthen you for the task, and love dedicate you to the task, and hope support you in the task. Mr. Webster defines a charism as "a grace, a miraculously given power of healing, or of speaking with tongues, or of prophesying, etc., attributed to some of the early Christians."

Those who have sought to revive the gifts of healing and speaking have not strengthened faith, but have made shipwreck of faith in innumerable instances. A few years ago Jack Coe found himself in the toils of the law in Miami. A mother who trusted his claims brought her crippled child to him to be healed. After praying for the child Mr. Coe urged the mother to act her faith and take the braces off the child. And when she did so, the little fellow stumbled and fell and was injured beyond recovery.

Some years ago an abortive effort to regain the gift of tongues started in California, spread to the old world, ran its course and died when its chief

exponents confessed they had been hoaxed by devilish spirits. The tongues had been nothing more than gibberish, and the translations nothing but imagination.

XII.

THEOLOGY ACCORDING TO JAMES

A casual reading of the epistle of James might lead one to think of it as a book of detached sayings on many subjects without any apparent connection, but a closer study will reveal that the subjects are closely related and concisely treated. The epistle is intensely practical and also deeply doctrinal. We believe the author to be James, half brother to our Lord. We do not know when he was converted. He first appears as a believer in fellowship with the apostles on the day of Pentecost. Paul tells us that James saw the risen Lord, and this may have been the occasion of his conversion. He soon became the leader in the Jerusalem Church, and wielded great influence. Peter reported to James after his release from prison. "But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place" (Acts 12:17). Paul acted on the advice of James regarding ceremonial purification. "And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present" (Acts 21:18). On his first visit to Jerusalem, after his conversion, Paul visited Peter and also contacted James. "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1:19). James presided at the Jerusalem conference and was the author of the resolution freeing the Gentile believers from the law of circumcision. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood" (Acts 15:14-20). The Judaizers sought to use the influence of James in their opposition to Paul. "For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision" (Gal. 2:12).

Eusebius says that James was a Nazarite, and used no wine, no meat, and no razor. But he did use his knees, and it is said that he spent so much time on his knees in prayer that they were callused and as hard as a camel's knees. Because

of his godly life, he was called James the Just. He was faithful unto death, and tradition says that he suffered martyrdom by being thrown from a pinnacle of the temple and then stoned because the fall did not kill him, being finally beaten over the head by a fuller's club.

James wrote to the Jews of the dispersion, to believing Jews who had fled Jerusalem and from the mother church on account of the persecutions under Saul of Tarsus. Those believing Jews to whom he wrote were low socially and poor in earthly goods. They were dwelling in the midst of unbelieving Jews by whom they were exploited and mistreated. These believers were facing many trials and had many faults. And so James wrote to comfort them in their trials and to admonish them about their faults. The epistle is one of Christian sympathy and moral admonition. May we now consider some of the doctrines of the epistle.

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

God was very real to James. His favorite name for God is the Lord. He is called the Lord of Sabaoth, or Lord of hosts. Three times the term "Father" is applied to God. He calls God ... "the Father of lights with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning" (Jas. 1:17). Unlike the sun and the moon, God's light suffers no eclipse. He is the giver of good gifts to men and the Author of spiritual life. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth"... (Jas. 1:18). James says that God is a jealous God and that unfaithfulness to Him is adultery. He is full of pity and mercy. His will must be considered in making plans. We are to say, ... "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (Jas. 4:15). God is the only lawgiver, Who is able to save and destroy.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Dr. Conner points out that James does not make Jesus prominent in his epistle. He speaks of Him by His full name, Lord Jesus Christ. He makes Jesus equal with God, calling himself the slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks of Him as the Lord of glory, and as the object of faith. "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons" (Jas. 2:1).

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

He speaks of man being made in the image of God. Here he indicates that man, though sinful, is in some sense like God. Man is the natural likeness of God as a person. He has all the attributes of personality and in this sense bears resemblance to God; because of this human life is sacred, and man must not be cursed. "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men,

which are made after the similitude of God" (Jas. 3:9); "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26). "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him" (Gen. 5:1); "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. 9:6). James teaches that all men are evil and subject to like passions. He defines sin as a perversion of the will and affections. Sin is selfishness, self before God and others. Sin is lack of love to God. In the fall man lost the image of God in holiness, but he retains the natural image as a person. The natural man is a person, but he is not a holy person.

THE DOCTRINE OF TEMPTATION

James uses the word "temptation" in its twofold connotation: as a trial or test, and also as enticement or inducement to sin.

He discusses temptation as a trial of faith. He says trials are good for them and are to be counted as occasions for joy. ..."Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations" (Jas. 1:2). Trials are for the good of faith. The trial of faith produces patience or constancy. And patience works perfection or maturity; therefore, let patience have her perfect work. Through trial faith grows into strong manhood. We are not to complain and murmur under trials, but thank God for them. If the trial is heavy and painful, we may groan, but we must not grumble, or charge God foolishly.

James thinks of the need of wisdom in meeting trials, and says we are to pray for it. We need wisdom to see the worth of trials to our faith. We need wisdom to properly react to trials. Without wisdom the believer will feel himself in the dark in the midst of trials. The prayer for wisdom must not only spring from faith, it must also be in the interest of faith. We usually pray for trials to cease, but James wants us to pray for wisdom to use our trials for the perfection or maturity of faith. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:7).

In the matter of trials the brother of low degree is to rejoice that he is exalted as an heir of God; and the rich brother is to remember that he is made low as one that will soon pass away. Let the poor man forget his poverty and the rich man his riches and through faith rejoice in the Lord. The trial of faith blesses the poor by lifting him beyond his trials to great height as a child of God; it blesses the rich brother by making him lowly, he thinks of himself only as a poor sinner saved by grace, whose earthly life is like a poor transient flower.

James also discusses temptation as enticement to sin. When we are tempted to sin we must never blame God for it. God cannot be tempted, nor does He ever tempt one to sin. There are many ways blame may be shifted to God. Adam blamed God for his sin when he said, ..."The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12). Men have asked, Did not God make us with these physical appetites, these animal passions? Yes, but they are to be regulated by His will, not ours.

In the so-called Lord's prayer, we are taught to pray that He might not lead us into temptation. This means that in His providence He will keep us out of places of temptation. We are all weaker than we think, and should shun places of temptation, and pray to be kept out of them. A young man out West was converted and baptized. He lived in the country and had been in the habit of hitching his horse in front of the saloon where he would get his drinks. The first time he came into town after his conversion, he used the same hitching post. An interested brother saw it and warned him to change his hitching post.

Jesus says that when we are enticed to sin it is from inherent lust, evil desires. It is something in us that conceives sin and gives it birth; the external circumstance becomes only the occasion for sinful nature to reveal itself. An office boy once planned to steal a large sum of money. It would be a perfect crime, and nobody would ever know he was the guilty party. But he found a card mysteriously left on his desk which read: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal" (Matt. 6:19). He was stopped cold in his plan, and shuddered at what he was about to do. And he always felt that God had providentially intervened. Perhaps all or most of us, both writer and reader, can look back and see God's good hand of providence in delivering us from temptation to sin.

THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH

James deals with faith in its social aspect. Faith must not be held with respect of persons. He gives brotherly admonition and explains what he means. He supposes that two visitors or outsiders visit their synagogue, one is rich, the other poor. As the rich man enters, the eye of the one who is to seat him catches sight of his flashy gold ring and his expensive clothes. He is given a cordial welcome, and offered a good seat. As the poor man enters, the eye of the same usher catches sight of his shabby clothes. While he does not have the door shut against him, he is told to stand by the wall or to sit on the floor. The rich man is shown great deference, while the poor man is shown no brotherly respect. James says that such judgment of men is from evil thoughts, and is not Godlike. God is not impressed with a gold ring and bright rags. He chooses the earthly poor and makes them rich through faith.

James describes the rich in their oppression of the poor by dragging them into court on the least pretence. The rich Jews of that day were principally the Sadducees. They were oppressors of the poor and blasphemers of the Name of Christ.

James exhorts his readers to keep the royal law of love. They are to love all men whether rich or poor, but in making such distinction between rich and poor they are not true to the law of love.

James also discusses faith in its practical aspect. True faith is not a barren faith, but like a tree bringing forth good fruit. Saving faith is not a dead thing; it is a living, working force in a human, life. James gives an illustration. He thinks of one in need coming to you for relief. You wish him well and express the hope that he will not freeze or starve, but you do nothing to keep him from freezing or starving: what good would all your talk do? The answer is obvious: it would be of no profit to the man in need. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas. 2:17). "We are saved by faith alone, but not by a faith, that is alone." Or as another has put it: "We are saved apart from works by a faith that produces works."

Paul and James on justification. Paul teaches justification by faith; James teaches justification by works. Let us put this in a clear perspective. Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8,9). And again: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). Now James says, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" (James 2:21). And again: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:24). Paul teaches a justification by faith apart from works; James admits this, but says that there is also a justification by works. How are we to reconcile the apparent difference? Some distinguish between works of law and gospel works. They say we are not justified by works of the law of Moses, but that we are justified by works of the gospel. But Paul speaks of works of any and every kind when he says, "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:9). Luther thought that Paul and James could not be reconciled, and thinking he had to choose between them, he believed Paul and rejected James as a "strawy epistle". We do not have to choose between Paul and James, for both are correct. But they are dealing with two different classes of men. Paul is thinking about the justification of an alien sinner, while James has in mind a professing Christian. When Paul says; no salvation by works and James says justification by works, the term "works" is used with entirely different associations. Paul is thinking about the acceptance of a lost sinner; James is thinking about the approval of a professing saint.

Let us try this approach. How is a man justified? Bring a stranger in here to use as an illustration. The question is, How is this man to be justified? Before I answer, I want to know something about him. Is he a believer in Christ or an unbeliever? Is he alive by a new birth or is he a dead sinner? If you say that the man is lost and without hope, but greatly concerned and deeply distressed over his lost condition, and wants to know how he can be saved, how he can be justified before God; this being his condition, my positive and unalterable answer is, that all he needs to do is to take the place of a helpless sinner before God and trust the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Christ is the Saviour of sinners, therefore, He is the sole object of saving faith. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. It is by the one offering He made that He makes us perfect forever. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). The very moment the helpless sinner puts his trust in the mighty Saviour, that moment he is justified; counted righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30); "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38,39); "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1); "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1).

If the lost man is to be justified by so called gospel works, then we have no salvation to offer him today, we must send him away to do these gospel works before he can be justified.

If I am told that the man before us is a professing Christian, one who claims to be saved, and the question concerns how he can be justified in his profession, then my answer is, by works and by works only. This is the man James is dealing with. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (Jas. 2:19). He is also saying that saving faith is more than mere talk, for that kind of faith cannot save. James is talking about the proving of faith, and this is by works and works only.

Paul and James illustrate their teaching by reference to Abraham. Paul says that Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. He was justified on the spot and before he had done any works of any kind. James says that Abraham was justified by works when he offered Isaac upon the altar. But this was many years after Abraham had been justified by faith apart from works. In offering up Isaac his faith was shown or proven to be genuine.

Every saved man is justified in two distinct senses and two distinct ways. As a lost man he was justified on the ground of the blood of Christ. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:9), and by faith in that blood apart from works of any kind. And as a saved man, he is again and again justified by works. His works justify his claim to faith. His faith produces the works, and is not produced by his works. Faith is the root and works are the fruit of a saved man. This principle honors God in two ways. It honors Him by giving His Son credit for all the merit in salvation, and it honors Him by works of love as proof of a living faith.

XIII.

PETRINE THEOLOGY

Peter, like James, wrote to comfort and strengthen suffering saints. But they did not write to the same group. James wrote to Jewish believers who had fled Jerusalem under Saul's persecution; Peter wrote to Gentile believers who are called "sojourners of the dispersion" - strangers scattered throughout five provinces of Asia Minor, who are suffering at the hands of pagan neighbors under the Neronian persecutions. The language in the address seems to have been adopted from Old Testament captivity of the Jews dispersed in foreign lands, and here applied to Christians as pilgrims on earth, saints away from home, suffering and journeying toward, and longing for the fatherland.

The churches in this area had been founded by Paul, and one wonders why Peter, apostle to the circumcision, is writing to them. Some have suggested that Paul was in Spain at the time and that he had an understanding with Peter to care for these churches in his absence. Others think that Peter wrote soon after Paul's martyrdom. One can only wonder why the apostle to the Jews would write to Gentile churches. It has also been suggested that these were Jewish churches, founded by Jews who were present at Pentecost and had returned home, but had never united with churches which were composed mainly of Gentiles. There are some things we might like to know which have not been revealed and about which we should not be unduly concerned.

Since the address is to sojourners of the dispersion in the five provinces of Asia Minor, the first impression one has is that Peter was writing to Christian Jews. "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (I Peter 2:10). This fits only Gentiles. "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (I Peter 2:12). "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings,

and abominable idolatries" (I Peter 4:3). We must lean to the view that it was written to Gentile churches who are described under Old Testament terms as a spiritual people. By virtue of their relation to Christ they are a separated people, strangers and pilgrims. People who are no longer common natives of this evil world. They were Gentile believers, suffering at the hands of unbelievers because they would no longer fraternize with them to the same excess of riot. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (I Peter 4:12). They are to glorify God in their sufferings, and cast all their care upon Him as the One Who cares for them.

In Biblical Theology it is usual to give a brief history of the writer whose book is to be studied. Let us note a few things about Peter. He was an early follower of Jesus, the third person to be converted under the ministry of John the Baptist. One day John was standing with two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus exclaimed, "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:41). Peter soon became the leader and spokesman for all the apostles. In the four lists of the apostles, Peter is named first. His birth name was Simon, but Jesus renamed him Cephas or Peter, meaning rock. This new name was reaffirmed about three years later when Peter made his great confession. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Peter had a wife who went about with him as he followed Jesus Christ. "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" (I Cor. 9:5). He was a native of Bethsaida, and had a home in Capernaum. He was in the fishing business with the brothers James and John. Peter was a natural leader, energetic, enthusiastic, impulsive, and impetuous. There is a tradition that Peter, on the advice of his friends, was fleeing from Rome to save his life when he met Jesus in a vision and said to Him, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" Jesus replied, "I am going to Rome to be crucified again." Peter, ashamed and humiliated, returned to Rome and, at his request, was crucified head downward as not worthy to die as his Lord did. It is not tradition but Scripture that Jesus Christ predicted Peter's martyrdom. While Peter was a leader among the apostles, he was not supreme and had no authority over the others. Jesus said to His disciples, "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Matt. 23:8). That Peter was no Pope is obvious from the severe rebuke he received from Paul when his practice contradicted his preaching. "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (Gal. 2:14).

We will now come to the consideration of Petrine Theology, or doctrine according to Peter. In going from the simplest to the more complex system of theology we should not begin with Paul but with Peter. Petrine Theology is the best source for learning what the early churches in Palestine believed.

XIII.

PETER'S DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

The person of Christ. Peter does not directly call Jesus the Son of God, but he does speak of God as His Father. He calls Him by His full name, the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks of Him as "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Peter 2:22), and "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:19). He declares His preexistence. "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (I Peter 1:20).

The sufferings of Christ. Peter views the sufferings of Christ as penal and substitutionary. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (I Peter 3:18). He no longer speaks of the death of Jesus as the crime of the Jews, but speaks of its redemptive value. To Peter the death of Christ was precious as redeeming blood. He speaks of Christ "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24). Believers are dead to the guilt and penal effects of sin through the death of Christ. Peter believed in blood atonement.

Christ's sufferings are held up as an example to us. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21); but before we think of His suffering as an example, we must trust it for its saving value. In our experience His blood must be saving, redeeming blood before His death can be an example to us. Our Lord's patience under suffering is an example for us. He was not resentful and revengeful, but patient. Christ suffered without sinning, and His people must do likewise. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). One yields to temptation to escape suffering, but Christ would not do that. He suffered, but would not yield. He suffered hunger and abuse, being forsaken of God and men, but He had no thought of yielding to relieve the pressure. He suffered to the end, without any feeling of constraint or compulsion to yield. I cannot agree that it was difficult for Jesus Christ to remain free from sin. He was tempted objectively. He faced inducements to sin, but He was not tempted subjectively. He had no desire to sin. He once said, "Hereafter I will not

talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30). There was nothing in the sinless Christ for the hook of Satan's temptation to attract. I believe in the absolute impeccability of our Lord Jesus Christ. As Deity in flesh He could no more sin than God can sin.

PETER'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

Peter, like Paul, believed in salvation by grace. He says that the Old Testament prophets prophesied of the grace that should come unto us, but did not know when nor how their prophecies would be fulfilled. They only knew it would not be in their day. Peter taught a present salvation to be consummated when Christ returns.

I like the way Peter sets forth the nature of salvation; he describes salvation in the most glowing terms. Our salvation is called an inheritance. "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:4). This inheritance is incorruptible; that is, there is nothing in the nature of it that is subject to corruption. It is not subject to disease or death from within. It is undefiled from the outside. There is nothing on the outside that can lay defiling hands upon this inheritance. And it is unfading, which means, that it will never cease to satisfy. Think how little in measure and how short in time things of this earth satisfy! Many who have plenty to live on have nothing to live for. Some years ago seven of the world's most famous and richest men died within a short time of each other; and all of them died tragic deaths in disappointment, and with no hope of future blessings. In blessed contrast the believer in Christ rejoices in hope of the glory of God when his inheritance is received.

This inheritance is laid up in heaven for us and will be ready when we get there. It is reserved for us, and we are preserved for it, according to Peter. No wonder that Peter breaks forth in such wonderful doxology! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:3-5).

PETER'S DOCTRINE OF HOPE

Hope is as prominent in Peter as faith is in James. Hope is a key word in First Peter; Peter has been called the apostle of hope. Hope implies two things: present sufferings and future glory. One who is satisfied with the present will not have his eyes on the future. Peter wants his readers to let hope lift them, above their sufferings to the place of their inheritance. These suffering saints had a

more fiery trial coming, but they also had a hope of glorious things beyond this vale of tears.

A GENERAL DEFINITION OF HOPE

Hope may be defined as the expectation of future good. Hope is always concerned about the future. We never hope for what we already have. Hope is made up of two ingredients: desire and expectation. When one desires something he does not expect, it is not hope but despair; and when one expects something he does not desire, it is not hope but dread. But when one expects his desire to be realized in the future he has hope.

Hope has been called the spring of all human endeavor. Without hope of harvest, the farmer would not plant and cultivate. Without hope of profit, the merchant would close out his business. Without some hope of winning, the politician would not run for office. Without hope of happiness, no couple would ever march to the marriage altar. In all the wedding cake hope is the sweetest of the plums.

Hope is the chief pillar of life. Hope supports the mind under all changes, trials, and difficulties. A man without hope would soon go mad. It is fairly safe to say that every suicide who leaves a note reveals that he has lost all hope of future good.

The hopes of many souls end at the grave. The hope of the rich man was soon dispelled. "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame....And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Lk. 16:22-24,26).

When Napoleon was being crowned emperor of the French in 1804, there was one person in the huge throng who was neither over awed nor overjoyed by all the pomp and splendor of the occasion. And that person was his old Corsican mother. During the ceremonies she was heard to say over and over again, "So long as it lasts." She knew that the glory that was her son's for the moment would end in despair. She realized that the crown then being placed on his head was only a fading chaplet. She had no hope that his popularity would last, and we now know from history that it did not.

The saddest thing about Napoleon was not his defeat at Waterloo by the Duke of Wellington. It was not his exile and loneliness on St. Helena. The saddest thing in the history of Napoleon was that day in May 1821, when he died and his soul entered that place of which Dante wrote: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." Hell is a hopeless place, the place of eternal despair.

A DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN HOPE

Christian hope is the well founded expectation of future good. Christians are the only people who have hope beyond the grave. Our hope in Christ is well founded and will not end in disappointment. Our hope in Christ is sure to be realized, it is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. The future good we expect is the inheritance reserved in heaven. That salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. And the grace that has saved us will also keep us and bring us to this inheritance, which embodies all the eternal blessings promised us in Christ. And one feature of this inheritance, and the main feature, is conformity to Christ. And so we sing, "Just to be like the dear Lord I adore, Will through the ages be glory for me."

Peter recognizes salvation as a present experience, but his emphasis is on an eschatological salvation. Salvation in the future at the second coming of Christ. This salvation is only a matter of hope in the present, and is in contrast with present suffering. And so Peter wants his readers to think of themselves as strangers and pilgrims in this world. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:13).

MORE GRACE TO COME

Peter exhorts, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:13). Salvation is by grace from beginning to end. Grace planned the way, provided the way, put us in the way, helps us by the way, and takes us all the way to glory. Peter thinks of the apocalypse of glory, which is the crowning manifestation of grace, as rushing towards us through the ages, and it will be here some sweet day. So certain is this grace that Peter thinks of it as being on the way. How glad we are that there is more grace to come! We are not self sufficient; we cannot walk alone; we cannot make our way to heaven; grace must bring heaven to us. Grace will perfect God's purpose concerning us; we shall yet be conformed to the image of God's Son.

"Hope on, hope on, O troubled heart

If doubts and fears o'er take thee,

Remember this the Lord hath said,
He never will forsake thee;
Then murmur not, still bear thy lot,
Nor yield to care or sorrow;
Be sure the clouds that frown today
Will break in smiles tomorrow.

"Hope on, hope on, though dark and deep
The shadows gather o'er thee;
Be not dismayed; thy Saviour holds
The lamp of life before thee;
And if He will that thou today
Should'st tread the vale of sorrow;
Be not afraid, but trust and wait;
The sun will shine tomorrow.

"Hope on, hope on, go bravely forth
Through trial and temptation,
Directed by the word of truth,
So full of consolation;
There is a calm for every storm,
A joy for every sorrow,
A night from which the soul shall wake
To hail an endless morrow."

XIV.

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

The book of Hebrews has been called God's final message to Judaism. The identification of both the writer and readers has led to much debate. All are agreed that it was addressed to Jews. To Jews who had embraced Christianity, but where? Some think it was addressed to Jews in Palestine; some say to Jews in Asia Minor and Greece; still others think it went to Jews in Rome. Lenski has a very good argument that it was sent to the seven synagogues in Rome, and to the Jews won by Paul while a Roman prisoner who had never joined the original church, which was made up largely of Gentiles. These Jewish Christians according to Lenski, had not been persecuted as severely as the members of the original church because they were not as distinctly Christian. Rome burned in the year 64, and in October of that year, Nero blamed the Christians for the fire, and many of them suffered martyrdom. But there is no evidence in this book that those to whom it was addressed had suffered severely. The author says, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:4).

Who is the author of this book? It appears nobody knows for certain. The title in the King James attributes it to Paul. In the ARV it is anonymous. Eusebius considered Paul as the writer. Tertullian called it the epistle of Barnabas. Clement of Alexandria thought that Paul wrote it and that Luke translated it into Greek. Origen says that the thoughts were Paul's, but added, that who wrote it God only knows. Luther guessed that Apollos wrote it, and Dr. Robertson concurs. Ramsay suggests Philip. Dr. B. H. Carroll was sure that Paul wrote the book, while Dr. Conner, of the same school, was just as sure Paul did not write it. As one reads all the different views, he is tempted to agree with the contention, that all books ought to be burned, since no two of them agree.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

It seems to be a carefully written treatise with a short letter appended. It does not begin like a letter, but it ends like a letter. And the author calls it a letter, for he says, "And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words" (Heb. 13:22). And this cannot apply to the whole book, for it is rather lengthy.

The book is made up of instruction and arguments, interspersed with exhortations and warnings. There is instruction concerning salvation and there are arguments to prove that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour, followed by warnings against turning away from Him to any other Saviour. Consider some of these warnings. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb 2:3). "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb. 3:14). Persevering faith

in Christ is proof of being a partaker of Him. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Heb 4:1). There is a promise of rest, the rest provided by Christ and we should make sure that we enter into that rest. "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39). To reject Christ as Saviour is to draw back unto perdition; to believe on Him is salvation. Let everyone be sure that he is in Christ.

THE THEME AND PURPOSE OF HEBREWS

Every book of the Bible has a prominent and dominant theme, and correct interpretation depends upon one's knowledge of the theme and purpose of the book. The theme of Hebrews is the superiority of Christianity to Judaism. To prove his thesis the writer compares everybody and everything connected with the law covenant to Jesus Christ, who is the Surety and Mediator of the new covenant, which is a better covenant. The writer proves that Jesus Christ is better than angels that were used in giving the law. Jesus Christ is the unique Son of God, while angels are only servants to God and His children. He proves that Jesus Christ is better than Moses the lawgiver. Moses is said to be faithful in all his house as a servant in the house, while Jesus Christ is the builder of His house and the Son who is over it. He proves that Christ is superior to the priests of the Aaronic order. The Aaronic priests were sinful men and had to offer first for themselves before they could make offerings for the people; Jesus Christ was sinless and needed no offering for sin. The Old Testament priests offered the blood of bulls and goats, which could not take away sins; Jesus Christ offered Himself without spot to God. The Old Testament priests had to repeat their offerings, while Christ offered Himself once for all: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). The Old Testament priests never got to sit down, for their work was never finished, and there was no chair in the most holy place of the temple where they sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat. "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb 10:11,12). HALLELUJAH! WHAT A SAVIOUR!

The purpose of the book was to check the movement back to Judaism. Those Jews who had embraced the Christian religion at once became the targets of persecution, and were under great pressure to return to the old covenant as a way of life and salvation. And so the writer warns that refusal to trust the sacrifice made by Christ is to be without any real sacrifice for sins, thus leaving them to face a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which would devour the adversaries. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall

devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:26-27). The whole burden of the writer's arguments and appeals is this: Keep your faith in Christ Jesus.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Hebrews presents the Lord Jesus both in His essential Deity and also in His mediatorial perfections. And these must be distinguished. In His essential Deity He is Creator and Sustainer of the whole universe. He is the effulgence of God's glory and the express image of His person. As Son He is of the same essence as the Father. He could truly say, "I and the Father are one."

To mediate between a holy God and sinful men, the eternal Son became a man. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:16,17). As a successful Mediator, the Lord Jesus has been appointed heir of all things. As Mediator He by Himself purged us from our sins. As Mediator He did the work of High Priest and was made perfect through sufferings. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). Personally, the Lord Jesus was ever the sinless One, but officially He had to be made perfect through sufferings. He could not be a perfect Saviour without going to the cross. It would not be becoming to a thrice holy God to save sinners without the suffering of His Son (Heb. 2:10).

THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

The greater part of Hebrews deals with the doctrine of the priesthood of Christ. His saving work was done as a priest. It was as a priest that He put away our sins. Let us now consider His qualifications for the priesthood.

First of all, He had to become a man. A priest represents men before God, and must have something to offer that will appease the offended justice of God. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

The priest who saves must himself be sinless. Jesus Christ had to make no offering for Himself as others did. "For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb. 7:26, 27).

As our High Priest, Christ is an abiding Priest. He could not have been a priest after the order of Aaron, for He was not of the tribe of Levi, but of the kingly tribe of Judah. The Old Testament priests died, and were succeeded in office, but Christ is a Priest Who ever liveth. Christ is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, who appears in history without any genealogy. As a man Melchisedec had parents and was born and died as other men, but there is no recorded genealogy, and no account of his birth and death; and this was because he was to be a type of Christ in His priesthood. Melchisedec was both a king and a priest. "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God" (Gen. 14:18). And so Christ is both King and Priest. He is a priest on a throne. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9). And Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of priests in which every believer is a priest and Christ is the High Priest. John breaks out in beautiful doxology: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5-6). The priest who saves must have an offering that will make the believers perfect. And Christ offered Himself, "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:19). "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). This is legal or judicial perfection, the perfection of justification and not the perfection of glorification, the perfection of standing and not perfection of state or of a sinless character.

THE DOCTRINE OF APOSTASY

There is a doctrine of apostasy taught in the Bible and particularly in Hebrews. And this doctrine does not militate against the doctrine of the preservation of the saints. And we need to emphasize that it is saints, born again believers, who are preserved and who persevere in faith. However, professing Christians may and do apostatize. History is filled with stories of apostates. The Roman Emperor Julian is known in history as Julian the apostate. This man was taught the Christian religion as a child, but when he became emperor of Rome, he renounced Christianity and opposed it. The apostle John has much to say about apostates. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19). An apostate is one who embraces Christianity and poses as a Christian for awhile, and then turns back to his old way of life in unbelief. John says that there were some in his day who had united with the Christian group, and then manifested that they

did not really belong with them by going out from them. And he says that if they had really been of them, they would have continued in fellowship with them.

The book of Hebrews emphasizes that the evidence of saving faith is persevering faith. The writer says that we are members of Christ's house, "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:6). And again, "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb. 3:14). "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised" (Heb. 10:23). And again the writer exhorts, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward" (Heb. 10:35). And recognizing that some have apostatized, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." (Heb. 10:39).

The warnings against apostasy in the Hebrew letter are addressed to men as professing Christians, and not to men as certainly born again believers. And God's ministers today need to sound the same warnings. All is not gold that glitters; all is not silver that shines; every cow that moos does not fill the pail; and every church member does not persevere in faith. Paul said to the Corinthians, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (II Cor. 13:5). And Peter calls upon his readers to make their calling and election sure, which means, to make sure they were really saved. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Peter 1:10). The writer is fearful that, as Baptists, we have too often left the impression that everybody who has had some sort of religious emotion is sure to go to heaven. Those who are really born again will never turn from Christ to any other Saviour.

XV.

PAULINE THEOLOGY

With this lesson we begin the study of doctrine according to Paul. Paul is the best known man in human history and the greatest Christian of all times. We might consider him first in the state of nature. Politically, he was a Roman citizen, which fact served him well at times in being rescued from mobs by Roman soldiers. Racially, he was a Jewish patriot. He knew Greek culture, but was not influenced by it. He had no patience with Hellenism. He boasted that he was a Hebrew of Hebrews. Doctrinally, he was a Pharisee with all the pride that characterized this sect. Academically, Paul was a man of much learning, having sat at the feet of the great teachers of his day. Socially, he was a high class

gentleman of clean morals and good reputation. He knew nothing of a low life of debauchery and moral impurity.

In the state of grace, Paul was a Christian. He delighted to say, ..."By the grace of God I am what I am" (I Cor. 15:10). He attributed the change that came over him to the grace of God working in him. And his abundant labors were attributed to grace. He says, ..."I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (I Cor. 15:10). In his sufferings he was supported by the grace of God. "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Cor. 12:9).

In discussing what went into the making of Paul's theology, I think Dr. Conner gives too much prominence to Jewish and Greek influences. No man ever had to unlearn as much as Paul did. Prior to his conversion he had accumulated a tremendous amount of religious error. He did not learn the truth as it is in Christ, either at his mother's knee or at the feet of Gamaliel. Nor did Greek culture contribute anything to his knowledge of Christ, Jewish customs and Greek culture were far removed from what Paul found in Christ. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11,12).

The life of Paul is of particular importance for three primary reasons. In the first place, his conversion is one of the strongest apologetics for the truth of the gospel. Men have actually become Christians while trying to disprove the story of Paul's conversion. Lord Lyttelton (1709-1773) and his friend Gilbert West conspired to expose the Bible as a cheat. Lyttelton would disprove the conversion of Paul, while West would prove that the story of Christ's resurrection was a fraud. Each went to his respective task with confidence, but the result of their efforts was that they were both convinced of the truth of Christianity. They came together, not to exult over their success, but to lament their folly and to congratulate each other on their joint conversion to faith in the Bible as the infallible word of God. "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. 119:89).

Paul's theology is the greatest system of truth in relation to God and man that has ever been devised. The greatest minds have wrestled with Pauline theology. Conflicting theories have sought help from Paul. Peter confessed that Paul, in all his epistles, had written some things hard to be understood. "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (II Peter 3:16). In this

connection, one is apt to think of "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is high unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak" (Heb. 6:1-9); "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:12-19); "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:1-3); "(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation

them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:8-26).

Paul's missionary zeal is without parallel in missionary romance. His campaigns covered almost the entire civilized world. He was always reaching out as a pioneer missionary for Christ. He did not like to build on another man's foundation. He wanted to go where others had not been. As the apostle to the Gentiles he touched the untouchables for the Lord Jesus Christ. He went from house to house, testifying ..."repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). As a pioneer he planted and left it to others to water.

PAUL'S CONVERSION

Luke records the story of Paul's conversion three times. In Acts 9 we have Luke's historical account of Paul's conversion received, no doubt, from the lips of Paul himself. In Acts 22 we have Luke's record of Paul's speech before the Jerusalem mob in which Paul relates his experience of conversion. And in Acts 26 we have Paul's speech before Agrippa, in which he again tells the story of his conversion to faith in Jesus, as the Christ and Saviour. In these three accounts it is the visibly miraculous that is prominent: the blinding light, his falling to the ground, and the audible voice of Jesus. "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and

have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3:1-9). We have in Paul's conversion that which is common in the conversion experience of every person. Every conversion is miraculous from the simple fact. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). But every conversion is not visibly miraculous, and this makes Paul's conversion unique. In Philippians 3 Paul describes his conversion under the metaphor of a discovery. He discovered that all of his inherited privileges and all of his personal attainments had no value in the sight of God for salvation. He first tells of his inherited privileges: Born a Hebrew of Hebrew parents, circumcised the eighth day rather than proselyte circumcision, of the tribe of Benjamin, and named after Israel's first king. Paul had once thought that all these inherited blessings would mean much in the sight of God. He also boasted of personal merit. By choice he was a Pharisee, a member of the orthodox party, and in his own eyes he was blameless. Moreover, as a religious zealot he persecuted what he sincerely thought was a false religion. He says to the Galatians: "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen"... (Gal. 1:13-16). In his own eyes, while in the state of nature, Paul had much to depend upon for salvation. But when his eyes were opened, the eyes of his understanding, he saw that none of these things had any value for salvation. He came to see that his box of jewels was only common glass. He discovered that his cable of hope was nothing but a rope of sand. He saw that his boasted self righteousness was only a filthy rag. When Paul discovered Jesus Christ as an adequate Saviour, he counted all things as loss. They no longer had any value in his own eyes. He binds all the things he had been trusting in up in a bundle and labels them dung. He gathers them up and throws them into the religious garbage can, where everything of human merit belongs so far as the price of salvation is concerned. And this is exactly what every other saved person has done. "For by grace are ye saved through

faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9).

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF GOD

Dr. Conner well says that in approaching Paul's theology we can do no better than to begin with his belief about God. What kind of a God did Paul believe in?

Paul believed in a sovereign God - a God Who is supreme. As a Sovereign, God does as He pleases, always as He pleases, and only as He pleases. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" (Rom. 11:34,35). The thought here is that nobody has discovered God or taught Him anything. Paul is saying, that if anybody has given God anything, if God is indebted to anybody, let him present his bill and God will reimburse him.

God is a universal Sovereign. His control extends, to all things, animate and inanimate. There is no realm in creation which is not subject to God's control. Dr. Conner thinks that some of Paul's statements are so strong that if there were no counteracting statements, we might think that man had no will and that God deals with men as if they were puppets. I concur in this word of caution.

God has a will and man has a will, but when man's rebellious will clashes with God's will of purpose, it is God's will that is supreme. God's will does not do away with man's will nor with man's responsibility. God's will of command, not His will of purpose, determines human responsibility. It was God's will of purpose that Jesus Christ should die on the cross, but He did not command men to crucify Him. God's will of command fixes missionary obligation. He has commanded us to go into all the world with the gospel, but He has not purposed to save every human being. His purpose is to save all those given by Him to the Son. Christ said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). And again He said in prayer to the Father: "As thou hast given him power"... (John 17:2). Those given to Christ by the Father are denominated sheep, elect, and the foreknown. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). The salvation of the sheep is assured for Christ says, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:26,27). Notice that it is the sheep who hear His voice in the gospel and follow Him and are saved. Christ told some Jews, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you" (John 10:26). The sheep are made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Christ was referring to Gentile sheep when He said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one

fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness" (Titus 1:1).

Let us remember that the gospel is to be preached to men as sinners, and not as sheep, or elect. The gospel is to be preached to all men everywhere. If we limit our preaching to the elect, we could not possibly preach to lost people, because we cannot know who the elect are until it is manifested in faith and good works. Paul tells the Thessalonians that he knew they were the elect of God because they had believed the gospel. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake" (I Thess. 1:4,5). Robert Hall was once charged with inconsistency for believing in preaching the gospel to all men and at the same time holding to election. He answered his critic by saying, that if he would put a chalk mark on the back of all the elect, he would limit his preaching to them. If one means to preach only to the elect, he will have to preach only to the saved, for the elect can only be found among those who give evidence of faith in Christ.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF THE

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

The expression, "The righteousness of God" is somewhat peculiar to Paul. He employs it both as an attribute and as a gift. As an attribute it means the justice of God, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:25,26). Righteousness is also a gift bestowed upon the unrighteous who believe on Christ. "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17). The very theme of Romans is this righteousness of God, right standing with God provided by God through the death of Christ, bestowed upon the believer. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:21-24). The natural Jew. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:3). The gospel is the power of God unto salvation because it reveals the way a sinner can become righteous before God; namely, by faith. "For

therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17); "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3:9); "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"... (I Cor. 1:30). The believer has Christ's righteousness imputed to him.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF "THE LOVE OF GOD"

Love belongs to God's essential nature; He is love. God is also light, which means that He is holy. John says that ..."God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5).

God's love is a gracious love, that is, it is unmerited. Grace is love for sinners. God's love is also a righteous love; it cannot be exercised at the expense of His justice. God cannot save sinners without punishing their sins. If He saves sinners he must punish their sins in a substitute. The sins of Old Testament believers were passed over through the forbearance of God, they were remitted because Christ would come and suffer for them. If God had remitted the sins of Old Testament saints, and Christ had never come and died for them, the righteousness of God, the justice of God could not be declared. Christ died on the cross to prove that God was righteous in remitting the sins of the past dispensation. Christ's atoning death enables God to be just and yet justify the ungodly.

God's love is a sovereign love. He consults His own pleasure as to the objects of His love. He is not obligated to love any sinner. He does not love the devil. He loved Jacob and hated Esau. We love Him because He first loved us. If one wants to be sure that God loves him he must make sure that he loves God. God takes the initiative in this loving business and His love, shed abroad in our hearts, procures our love for Him.

God's love is an efficacious love. His love guarantees eternal blessings for His people. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38,39). Darius loved Daniel and tried his best to save him from the lions den. But the law of the Medes and Persians could not be altered, and so the love of Darius was helpless to save Daniel. Law triumphed over love in that case. But God's love is not helpless before His law. His love gave up His Son in death to satisfy His law, thus providing deliverance from its curse. God's love does not triumph over His law; yea, the law is established in the laying of our sins on Christ. In view of all this one must

exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"... (Rom. 11:33).

XVI.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SIN

SIN is a most patent fact in human existence the reality of sin does not need to be argued. Sin is a fact of experience, of observation, and of revelation. Sin is something I feel in my own heart; it is something I observe in others, even in my own loved ones and best friends; and it is something revealed in the Bible. The policeman pursues it, the physician prescribes for it, the law discovers it, conscience condemns it, God controls and punishes it, and yet nobody likes to own it. But as a matter of fact sin is the only thing anybody really owns; he is a steward of everything else he may possess. "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). Obvious as sin is, there is a tendency in all of us to treat it like some folks treat their unworthy relatives: it is ignored and even denied.

SIN may be defined, but it cannot be explained. To explain sin is to explain it away. How sin got started in the universe is a profound mystery. It had no place in the original creation, which God pronounced good. Sin is a parasite, an interloper, an outlaw cell in the moral system, and a terrible monstrosity. After sin had defiled the heavens it made its appearance on earth in a garden of delights, turning this fair earth into a wilderness of woe. In the original creation we read only of heavens and earth, but later we are told of a place prepared for the devil and his angels.

SIN is a cheat, a deceiver, and destroyer. It promises pleasure and pays off in pain; it promises life and pays off in death. It promises good and rewards with bad; it promises prosperity and rewards with poverty. Every sin is committed for profit. Nobody would ever sin if he did not think it would profit in some form or other. There is profit in sin, but it is short lived. Moses took the long look and made the wise choice: he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproaches of Christ of greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;" (Heb. 11:24).

SIN is dangerous beyond words to express. Sin is violation of the moral law of God and violated law cries out for just retribution. Sin is against God the Judge of all the earth, and must be accounted for before His judgment bar. Crime is against human society; sin is against God. Human society may punish crime, but only God can punish sin. Society may fail to punish crime, but God will not fail to

punish sin. All crime against men is also sin against God, but all sin against God is not crime against man. Society punishes men for what they do; God punishes men for what they are and according to what they do. Every sin will be punished by God either in the sinner or in his Surety and Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ.

What did Paul think about sin? What is the doctrine of sin according to Paul?

SIN IS UNIVERSAL AND HEREDITARY

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:10,11,23). "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19).

Paul also taught that sin is hereditary. All are by nature (Gk. phusis) the children of wrath. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3). Dr. Conner does not think Eph. 2:3 refers to what one is by natural or physical birth, but I do. The Greek word phusis occurs in the New Testament eleven times. Ten times it is translated "nature", and one time "kind", meaning species. "For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind" (Jas. 3:7). Webster defines nature, Essential character or constitution. "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods" (Gal. 4:8), Paul tells the Galatians, that before their conversion, they served them which by nature are no gods; that is, they did not have the essential character of a true God. "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles" (Gal. 2:15), Paul employs the word nature (phusis) for those who are Jews by natural birth to distinguish them from the Gentiles. Webster defines nature, Innate or inherent character, disposition, or temperament. ... "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (**Eph. 2:3**). Paul is saying that all by inherent character are children of wrath rather than children of God.

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5), David confesses a sinful nature received at birth. Here David is not wasting reflection on his mother's virtue, but confession to a sinful nature received from his mother. The early appearance of sin in the child is proof of inherent depravity. The very first acts that discover reason in the child have sin in them. Watch the baby when reason begins to dawn, and it will express its nature by doing harm to others, by lying, by pride of apparel, or by inclination to

revenge, or by disobedience. Have not most parents pacified the baby by beating that which had hurt or offended it?

"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." (Ps. 58:3). In the diary of Andrew Fuller under date of January 8, 1785, are these words: "Much affected today hearing my little girl say, 'How soon Sabbath day comes again.' Felt grieved to see the native aversion of the carnal heart to God so soon discovering itself."

Let us consider what Paul taught about the extent of sin in the individual. He not only taught that sin had reached to every man, but that it had also reached to every part of every man. He is also in line with other writings which show that the sinner is totally depraved; that is, that all the faculties are affected by sin. Total depravity is often misunderstood. The doctrine does not mean that every man is as mean as the devil, or as mean as he can become. The word "total" is a word of extent, not of degree. Total depravity means that man in all his parts or faculties is ruined by sin. I recently heard a preacher decry and ridicule the doctrine of total depravity. He said if a man is totally depraved, he is as mean as he can be. He pointed to a baby and said how ridiculous to think that it could be as wicked as the devil. To illustrate the doctrine, drop a grain of arsenic in a glass of water, and all the water is poisoned. But put more drops in it, and it is more poisonous, not in extent but in degree.

Paul also, taught an inherited disability to do good. If man is totally (in all his faculties) depraved, there is no faculty that is capable of pleasing God. He says that to be carnally minded is death. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7,8). Our Lord's teaching was to the same effect. He said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). "And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John 6:65). These verses need little comment, their meaning is so plain. As an auxiliary verb "can" denotes ability to do a thing. Christ is saying that no man has the ability to come to Him except the ability be given him of God. This also explains what drawing to Christ is: it is giving ability to come to Him. Of course, this is not any physical ability, for coming to Christ is not a physical act. It is a mental and heart exercise produced by the Holy Spirit, and so our church covenant begins as follows: "Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour."

Dr. T. T. Shields tells of a ministers' meeting at which a self styled orthodox brother delivered a message on Total Depravity. After he had concluded and was about to leave, he was challenged by a liberal brother of keen mind, who asked

him if there was anything in the unregenerate sinner that could respond to the gospel. The orthodox answered that there was, that every man has a free will. He was then asked if that in the sinner that could respond to the gospel was good or bad. And of course the answer was that it had to be something good. "Then," said his critic, "Man is not totally depraved as you have just preached, for you now admit there is something good in the sinner that can respond to the gospel." The man who had preached the sermon neither understood the doctrine of Total Depravity nor the doctrine of Free Will. There is nothing good in a totally depraved man, and free will does not mean a will able to do good. A free agent is a person who is at liberty to act according to his choice, without compulsion or restraint. A free agent is at liberty both to keep the law and to believe the gospel, without compulsion; however, the liberty to do a thing and the ability to do it are not the same. The sinner is at liberty to trust the Lord, but he is not able to because his understanding is darkened and his heart is averse to God. Man wills according to his nature, and if his nature is bad, his will or choice will be bad. Everything and everybody acts according to their nature.

The view that many have of the unpardonable sin implies that every man can repent until he goes so far or so deep into sin as to render himself unable to repent. But the truth is that no sinner repents of himself. The Bible plainly teaches that both repentance and faith are Divine gifts. Paul says to the servant of the Lord "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (II Tim. 2:25). "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31). "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18). We are specifically told that repentance unto life is the gift of God. Moreover, the New Hampshire Confession says, in article VIII, that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God.

THE ORIGIN OF SIN

How did the human race get like it is and has always been since the day of Adam? We have been thinking of sin as a state of nature; we will now consider it as a condition of guilt. Is sin only a disease of nature or is it also a condition of guilt? Is sin something only to be treated or is it also something to be punished? Will the lost sinner wind up in a hospital or in hell? These are not idle questions.

How did sin get to be guilt rather than mere depravity of nature or moral disease? I would answer, that it is on the principle of imputation. Adam's sin was imputed or charged to all members of his race. All are agreed that Adam was the natural head of the race, every person was seminally in him. He begat children in

his own physical and moral likeness, and this was after he sinned. Adam's children became heir to all his ills of body and soul. They inherit moral depravity and physical weakness ending in death.

The race is not what it was in original creation. It is in a fallen state because of the sin of the first Adam. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.....The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven" (I Cor. 15:45,47), Christ is called the last Adam and the second man. This is because Adam and Christ are public or representative men. Considered as individuals, Christ was not the second man nor the last Adam, for there were many men both before and after Christ. Now we have these two representative men before us. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). What these two Adams did affected their respective races. The first Adam's sin brought the judgment of death to all his descendants; the last Adam's obedience brought life to all His people. And so there are two men, two acts, and two results. We are related to the first Adam by generation; we are related to the last Adam by regeneration. By nature we are in the first Adam; by grace we are in the last Adam. While in unbelief we are in the first Adam; by faith we are in the last Adam.

THE GUILT COMPLEX

Pelagius, in the 5th century, contended that Adam's sin affected nobody but himself. Arminians are semi-pelagians, and believe that while all men have a depraved nature, this depravity of nature is not condemnable guilty which means that we are not condemned for what we are, but only for what we do. If this is true, then how do we account for the universal guilt complex? Everybody has a religion because of this guilt complex. Any and every religion is for the purpose of getting rid of this guilty feeling. All people everywhere believe in a god or gods to which they are responsible. The religion of the Hindoos consists in the main of self torment in an effort to get rid of guilty feeling. The Romanist goes to confession for the same reason, to get rid of the feeling of guilt. A man may restore what he has stolen to get guilt off his conscience. Even Atheism is a sort of religion by which one escapes the feeling of guilt by denying that there is any God and eternal judgment. So called Christian Science attempts to escape the feeling of guilt by denying the reality of sin. Sin is only a mental disease for which Christian Science has the only cure. Modernism would still the cry of guilt by denying that there is any real danger from sin. It seeks to help men lead tranquil lives apart from the atoning death of Christ. To this strange religion, guilt is only a subjective feeling apart from any objective ground or cause. They would have us fill our minds with good thoughts, think well of ourselves, and forget all about any hell or place of eternal punishment. Besides all these religions, there are multitudes who try to find a measure of peace in thinking of

the general mercy of God, apart from Christ as the Mercy seat. I once belonged to this school of thought. When troubled about my sins, I would reason that God is merciful and that a merciful God would not send me to hell. And still others try to find rest of heart and peace of mind, they try to get rid of a guilt complex, by filling their minds with other things so that they will not be troubled with thoughts about God and the day of judgment. But blessed be God and glory to His Name, the Christian finds peace of soul by trusting Christ. "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself"... (Col. 1:20). The Christian expects to find mercy with God through faith in Christ, the true Mercy seat. Out of Christ God is not merciful, but is a consuming fire.

The guilt complex is the result of a legal union between Adam and his race. If the reader will prayerfully ponder and carefully consider "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Rom. 5:12-18), he will be impressed with the legal terms: condemnation, justification, righteousness, etc. The first Adam's disobedience brought condemnation; the last Adam's obedience brought the gift of righteousness. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19).

XVII.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

AND HIS CROSS

In his conversion experience Paul's opinion of Jesus was greatly changed. Before his Damascus road experience he had known Christ after the flesh; he had only human thoughts concerning the person of Jesus and also concerning the Messiah. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though

we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (II Cor. 5:16). It was the same with Peter when he confessed Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" Matt. 16:17). Peter's thinking about Jesus was not the result of human teaching, but of divine teaching. And it is the same with every saved person. In conversion we are all taught of God. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). Until the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of our understanding nobody sees in Jesus Christ any beauty so as to desire Him. "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa. 53:2). Paul had a heavenly revelation of Jesus as the Messiah. Prior to his conversion, Paul shared with other Jews the belief that Jesus was an impostor worthy of death. In his epistles Paul emphasizes the natural blindness of the human soul and the need of heavenly illumination. To the natural Jew the doctrine of salvation through a crucified Christ was a scandal, and to the natural Greek it was foolishness, while those who were divinely called saw in this plan of salvation both the power and wisdom of God. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:23,24). "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:3-6). Here is a truth largely lost sight of in modern preaching and even denied in many pulpits. Conversion to faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour is the result of divine illumination over and above human teaching.

Paul not only had false views, of Jesus; he also had wrong views concerning the Messiah or Christ. He thought the Christ would be a political King after the order of David, but in conversion he learned that the risen Christ was a spiritual King, in heaven. Paul thinks of his conversion as an arrest. He says that he was apprehended or laid hold of by Christ. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12). At the very moment he trusted Christ as Saviour he surrendered to Him as Lord. And it is always so when one is saved. Saving faith is trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. In saving faith

there is the spirit of obedience which asks, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Paul's doctrine of Christ includes both His humanity and His Deity. In His humanity He is the seed of David; in His Deity He is David's Lord. In His resurrection He was declared to be the Son of God. "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:3,4). Paul relates Christ's mediatorial work with His humanity. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). Paul did not dwell upon the humanity of Christ as John did. He does recognize His humanity, but his emphasis is on Jesus as the risen and glorified Lord.

Paul believed in the pre-existence of Christ. He speaks of His being rich and becoming poor. This can only mean that He was rich in heaven before He became poor on earth. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9). "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:15-17). In Philippians 2 he traces His descent from glory; from the form of God to that of man. He who was equal with God in every divine prerogative gave it up to become a man and die on a cross. Christ did not give up His Deity. He remained what He was, but gave up the prerogatives or rights of Deity, so that He did not act for His own glory. He made Himself of no reputation. He was not here to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. On earth Christ veiled the glory of Deity in human flesh. In the incarnation He did not empty Himself of Himself; He did not lose any divine attribute, but only used them for the blessing of others. And as a reward for His obedience unto death, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9). The once lowly man Christ Jesus is now enthroned in heaven, and all hearts will be subdued unto Him, either by terror or by love. "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11); "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28).

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

The Cross of Christ was the very heart and soul of Paul's theology. It was central in his preaching and in his living; he gloried in nothing save the Cross. "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2). Paul saw no hope for anybody apart from the death of Christ.

The Cross as Related to God

It was the manifestation of love. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). One cannot know why God loves sinners, but he can know how much He loves them; "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

It was a demonstration of righteousness. In the death of Christ God was giving proof of His righteousness in remitting the sins of His people in the period of time before Christ came. The sins of God's people under the Old Testament economy were passed by through the forbearance of God, looking to the time when Christ would come and atone for them. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25). If Christ had never died for the Old Testament saints, God would not have been righteous in saving them; and in this period of time, the death of Christ enables God to remain just and the justifier of believers. God must be propitiated if sin is to be expiated. To propitiate means to appease or satisfy.

Modern theology denies that there is anything in God that must be appeased or satisfied in order to provide the salvation of sinners. This theology does away with a God of wrath and makes Him only a God of love. It reduces the objective atonement to a subjective experience which they call atonement. The sinner becomes at one with God through his own repentance apart from any satisfaction to divine justice. The Cross was only meant to affect men, not God. It had no relation to God except to show His love. But if God were nothing but love, Christ need not have died. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). In other words, God would not be acting like a just God, if He should save sinners apart from a suffering Saviour.

It is true that Christ did not die in order to get God to love sinners. It was His love for sinners that led Him to give up His Son in death for them. Christ's death did not induce God to love us, but it did enable Him to justify us on righteous principles. God's justice would not allow Him to spare His own Son, Who was acting as the sinner's Surety. Job's question is the question of the ages: "How

then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" (Job 25:4). And Paul's answer serves for all time: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

The Cross as Related to Man

Christ died as a substitute for sinners. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor 5:21). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (I Peter 3:18).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). His death by crucifixion was in fulfilment of prophecy: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance" (Deut. 21:23).

Jesus Christ died as the Surety of the covenant of grace. "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament" (Heb. 7:22). A surety is responsible for the debts of the principal debtor, and so Jesus Christ paid our sin debt on the cross, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14).

Dr. Conner objects to the commercial theory of the atonement. I agree that the commercial notion can be stretched too far in regard to the quantity of the sufferings of Christ. But since commercial terms such as debt, ransom, bought, and redeem are used, there must be the commercial element in them. These commercial terms must be interpreted in the judicial sense, since man is related to God as a Lawgiver.

Dr. Conner also objects to the view that God punished Christ. He distinguishes between penal and redemptive sufferings. He thinks of Christ's suffering as redemptive, not penal. I think of His suffering as redemptive because it was penal. He truly says that "sin is followed by penalty, unless man is redeemed from the penalty." In this I concur, and ask, If Christ redeemed me from the penalty of my sin, how else could He have done it except by suffering the penalty? If He bare our sins in His own body, how else could He do it except to bear the penalty of them? "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4,5). It goes without saying, that Christ was not personally guilty, for He was the just suffering for the unjust. And of course, God was not personally displeased with

Christ when He punished our sins in Him. The Father was never so pleased with His Son as when He saw His obedience unto death. Dr. Conner well says that "An honest God cannot just pass up sin as if it did not exist. He does not just say to the sinner: 'Oh, forget it; I have'."

Salvation through the death of Christ humbles the pride of man. The Cross excludes all boasting, No saved man is a Pharisee at heart. Paul was once the proudest of Pharisees, but the Cross laid him low in the dust of humility. The Cross reveals that there is nothing in man of which he can boast, not even his humility. When humility is paraded it turns to pride of the worst kind. Brother Jeff Rogers, now gone to glory, was a country Baptist preacher in Mississippi. Tall and erect, he looked more like a Kentucky Colonel than a country preacher. One day while riding horseback he met a neighbour who was of a different church. After exchange of usual greetings, a little conversation followed. The neighbour remarked: "Brother Rogers, you are not very humble are you?" Rogers replied quite seriously: "No, I'm not half as humble as I ought to be, but I am sure you are a very humble man." To which his friend replied: "Yes I am, and I show it," alluding to his practice of washing his brother's feet as a church ordinance. But humility cannot be put on display.

Salvation by the Cross provides power and imposes obligation. Luther said that all of us should begin our thinking "at the wounds of Christ". Paul did this a long time before Luther had reached this conclusion: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Cor. 5:14,15). In the preceding verse, Paul alludes to those who had accused him of being "beside himself", that is, mad or crazy. And now he explains why he is so interested in Christ and His cause. He was under the control or constraint of Christ's love for him, having judged "that if one died for all, then all died." All died in their one substitute, Christ. And this being so, they which live should not live for themselves, but for Him Who died for them and rose again. Selfishness, is ruled out by our duty to live for Him Who died for us. Here is a new angle from which to view the death of Christ. We usually think of the Cross in terms of forgiveness, but here the Cross is a challenge to give up our self centered life and live for Christ. The death of Christ not only means that something amazing and wonderful has been done for us; it also means that something exacting and demanding is expected of us. "Must Jesus bear the cross alone, And all the world go free? No; there's a cross for every one, And there's a cross for me."

XVIII.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

Note: The reader will bear in mind that the students were currently reading *The Faith of the New Testament*, by Dr. W. T. Conner.

In Paul's theology salvation is of the Lord. It was something purposed and planned back in eternity, and not an afterthought to meet an unexpected emergency. Back there when there was nothing but God dwelling in the immensity of His own eternal essence, the creation of man and his fall into sin and death were anticipated, and the redemption of a new race, of which the eternal Son was to be the head, was planned. And the Divine motive in salvation was, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). The ultimate reason for salvation is "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). God's glory rather than man's good is the real reason for salvation. It is all in order, "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ" (Eph. 1:12).

All the blessings of salvation come from God as the meritorious ground and efficient cause. The believer spontaneously thanks God for all spiritual blessings. Spurgeon says that for every saved person God is to be thanked. Saved men are grace made and not self made. Paul says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" ... (I Cor. 15:10).

All the blessings of salvation are ours because God purposed that they should be ours. And this purpose was formed back in eternity. God is working in history what He purposed and planned in eternity past. God is not forming new purposes and making new plans to meet the needs of the hour. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11).

God's purpose to save was a purpose of grace. Salvation does not proceed from Divine Justice, but from Divine grace, which is undeserved love. Grace is the source and fountain from which all spiritual blessings come, and Christ is the channel through which they come to us. And so Paul breaks out in blessed doxology; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places 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 in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:3-6). Election is the choice of persons, and predestination determines their destiny as adopted sons to be conformed to the image of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. "For whom he did foreknow, he

also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). Let us remember that election and predestination are unto salvation and not unto damnation. These blessed doctrines harm nobody, but are the means of blessing to many. We recognize the Bible doctrine of reprobation, but do not associate it with election and predestination. We rather think of preterition, or the passing by, of those not elected. It is an obvious fact that in the history of mankind multitudes have been passed by in the providential dispensing of the blessings of grace. Whatever we may think about the Bible doctrine of reprobation, we may be sure that it is not an efficient act of God as predestination is. Predestination issues in glory, while reprobation leaves the sinner in his fallen and depraved state.

Several years ago the doctrine of election was being discussed in The West Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference at Henderson. Various views were being given and some of the brethren advised caution, insisting that it should not be preached in the presence of the lost. After free and brotherly discussion, Bro. A. R. McGehee, Earlington Pastor, now in glory, arose and said, "Brethren, I think it will be all right for it to get out anywhere." Spurgeon preached election, and sinners were aroused and saved under such preaching. Paul recognized the Thessalonians as the elect of God by the way they received the gospel. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake" (I Thess. 1:4,5). The elect of God are manifested in faith and good works.

Dr. Conner rings clear on election and predestination. He says, "God's purpose to save a particular man is a matter of grace." Let us take a whole paragraph from his book:

"The ground of salvation is thus in God, not man. There is nothing in man that constitutes the ground of salvation. It is all due to the unmerited grace of God. No man can say when he is saved that his salvation was due to something in him that made him better than other men. Such a claim would not be justified. Not even man's faith is the ground of his election. Grace is the basis of faith, not faith the basis of grace. Faith apprehends grace, responds to grace, rather than being the ground of grace. Grace works faith in man. Faith on man's part does not work grace in God. Grace precedes faith and works faith."

In the above Dr. Conner is in harmony with Baptist theologians of the past; such men as Bunyan, Fuller, Boyce, Broadus, Carroll, Mullins, and others too numerous to mention. And one can only hope that our present day theologians are as true to the doctrines of grace. Every teacher in Louisville Baptist Seminary

subscribes to the "Abstract of Principles", and Article V reads as follows: "Election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life, not because of foreseen merit in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ, in consequence of which choice they are called, justified, and glorified."

Some years ago a woman said to a Baptist pastor: "I would apply for membership in your church if you did not preach election." The pastor asked if she was saved, and she answered that she was. He then asked her if God saved her or did she save herself. She replied that God saved her. And then he inquired whether God saved her by accident or because He purposed to save her. She had never looked at it this way, but could only reply that God must have purposed to save her. "And this," said the pastor, "is election". "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

The natural man never objects to a doctrine of eternal election based upon man's foreseen faith. Paul knew that his doctrine of election would give rise to objections, such as making God unrighteous, and as asking, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" (Rom. 9:19). And so one may be sure that if his view of election does not raise objections, it is not according to Paul's doctrine of election.

THE NATURE OF SALVATION

Salvation is a comprehensive term to include all spiritual and eternal blessings one has in Christ. The word salvation means deliverance, and Bible salvation is deliverance from sin. And since sin consists both of guilt and defilement, salvation must deliver from a position of guilt and a state of defilement. To be saved the sinner must have guilt and penalty removed to give him the right to go to heaven; and he must have the defiled nature removed to fit him for heaven. There are two phases of salvation: safety and soundness. The act of making a man safe is done once for all in justification; the work of making the sinner sound is a process completed in glorification.

There are three tenses of our salvation: past, present, and future. We have been saved from the guilt of sin through faith in Christ; we are being saved from the damning power of present sin because we are not under law as a way of life; and we will yet be saved when we are glorified at the return of Christ. Writing to the Roman saints Paul said, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13:11). In one sense the believer is already saved, in another sense he is being saved, and in still another sense he will be saved. The work that makes the believer safe was done by Christ when He redeemed us from the curse of the law; the work of making the believer sound is a progressive work beginning in

regeneration and ending in glorification. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). Paul is so sure of this that he puts all the phases of salvation in the past tense. Writing from the standpoint of God's eternal purpose he says, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:30). This is not difficult to understand, if we believe God is a mighty and successful Saviour. If salvation were a human project, nothing could be certain, and the future would be dark indeed for all men. The three persons in the Godhead perform distinct but harmonious offices in the work of human salvation. The Father purposed our salvation, the Son purchased our salvation, and the Spirit promotes our salvation.

THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SALVATION DIFFERENTIATED

Sin has done so much damage to man, and salvation is such a wonderful recovery from sin's ruin, that it takes many terms to express it all. If the sinner be viewed as in a state of death, then regeneration or the new birth is the Bible word to denote the impartation of life. If the sinner is considered as a child of the devil, then adoption is the Bible term to denote the judicial act of God in placing him as a son of God. If we think of the sinner from the standpoint of his body, being mortal and having in it the germs of death which will turn it into a dust heap, then glorification is that aspect of salvation when his resurrected body will be fashioned like unto the body of the glorified Christ. If the lost person is considered in his state of moral defilement, then sanctification is the word that speaks of his being made holy before God. If we think of the sinner as in a state of spiritual darkness, to whom the things of God are foolishness, and unable to understand the gospel, then calling is the Bible word to express the act of God in giving light by which the sinner can see or understand that Christ crucified is the wisdom and power of God in the plan of salvation. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:23,24). "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6). If salvation be approached from the standpoint of the eternal purpose of grace, then election and predestination are the terms which denote the choice and destiny of God's people. And if the lost person be viewed as in a state of condemnation - cursed by the law - then justification is that aspect of salvation by which the believer is declared righteous, having a perfect standing before God in Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ

Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1). We shall now amplify upon some of these aspects of salvation.

Justification is the Divine acquittal of one charged with and found guilty of sin. It is not an efficient act of God by which the sinner is made better, but a declarative act by which the believer is declared to be perfect. Justification is on the ground of the blood of Christ. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). God declares the believer to be righteous with the righteousness Christ provided by His obedience unto the death of the cross. The Jews for whom Paul prayed. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:1-4).

Reconciliation is the basis or ground of justification. Reconciliation is therefore the removal of God's wrath toward the sinner. It is the efficient act of God by which He removes the cause of condemnation. "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:19). At Calvary God was not charging sin to men, but providing reconciliation by charging sin to Christ. Reconciliation is Godward, being the removal of His wrath: justification is manward, being the removal of condemnation. Reconciliation is to be accepted as God's gift through Christ. "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Rom. 5:11). Here the word translated "atonement" should be "reconciliation".

Adoption means the placing as a son. It is the legal procedure of bringing into the family one who was not born into the family. Adoption is closely related to regeneration, but expresses an idea not expressed in regeneration. The new birth gives one the nature of God, but not the legal right to be in the family. Adoption is also closely related to justification, but expresses something more than justification. Justification does away with guilt and condemnation, but it does not make the person the son of the judge.

There are five references to adoption in the New Testament with a threefold application. "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises" (Rom. 9:4). The application is to national Israel. The nation had been brought into the peculiar relation to God as a son. "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"

(Rom. 8:23). Adoption is used with respect to the believer's body, and is called the redemption of the body. When the bodies of believers are redeemed from the grave they will then be adopted, publicly manifested as sons of God. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19). In the other three references the application seems to be to the believer as a person without distinction between soul and body. As persons, believers are the adopted sons of God, and have the spirit of adoption by which they cry, "Abba, Father".

Sanctification, so far as the word itself is concerned, has no moral or ethical connotation. As a verb the word means to consecrate or set apart. "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.... That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S" (Ex. 13:2,12). Moses is told to sanctify unto the Lord all the first born, and in repeating the commandment he is told to set apart all the first born. The word is used of things which have no moral or ethical qualities, such as vessels, buildings, and a mountain. Of course when used of persons, the word takes on ethical meaning. But the basic idea expressed by the word sanctify is that of being separated from and set apart to sacred use.

This blessed doctrine has been terribly perverted. The Roman Catholic Church makes saints of people after they die, but Paul wrote to living people and addressed them as saints. Others miss the truth by identifying sainthood with sinlessness. Paul addresses the Corinthians as saints and then rebukes them for their carnality. Our New Hampshire Confession has an adequate definition of sanctification in that it makes it progressive as a growth in grace. And Dr. Conner speaks to the point when he says that Protestant theology was not following Paul when it made the idea of Christian development the main idea in sanctification.

In Paul's writings every saved person is a saint. In their conversion by the power of the Spirit they were separated from the world and set apart as belonging to God. And being sanctified or set apart in Christ, they have His holiness imputed to them. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). This is imputed sanctification or holiness. And this is absolute and forever, for Christ is our holiness. Now sanctification by the word is progressive. Christ prayed that His people might be sanctified by the truth. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). As the believer feeds on the word of God he will be more and more separated from the world and set apart to the service of God. It has been truly said that sin will keep us from the word, or the word will keep us from sin. Feeding on the word will have a sanctifying influence in our lives.

Finally, as conclusive proof that sanctification is not the eradication of the sinful nature, we may point out that Christ was sanctified by the Father, and that He sanctified himself. "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world" (John 10:36); "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (Jno 17:19). But Christ had no sin to be eradicated, for He was holy, and undefiled, and separate from sinners in His essential nature. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1:5). Jeremiah was sanctified before he was born, before he had any actual existence, Christ was set apart to be the one and only Saviour of sinners, and Jeremiah, in the purpose of God, was set apart to the office of prophet before birth.

XIX.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Paul's teaching on the subject of the Holy Spirit is found at length "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest

expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:1-27); "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:10-16); "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16-25).

We are wont to say that the Son is the second person and the Holy Spirit is the third person in the trinity. But the Bible never so designates them; and we only make the distinction for sake of order in expression, and not to indicate order of importance. The three persons are one in essence, but three in their relations

and work. There is no earthly analogy by which we can represent the divine trinity. God exists as Spirit and cannot be divided or compounded. One cannot say that the Father is a part of the divine nature, the Son another part, and the Spirit still a third part. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9), which means that He was the whole of the divine nature. He said of Himself, "I and the Father are one," one in essence.

Daniel Webster and a friend once heard a sermon on the subject of the trinity. On leaving the church, the friend remarked that what the preacher said was a mathematical absurdity. Mr. Webster replied that it seemed so according to earthly mathematics, but that he was not very well acquainted with heavenly mathematics. The doctrine of the trinity rests upon the special revelation we have in the Bible; it cannot be discovered by unaided reason or scientific investigation.

THE SPIRIT'S RELATION TO GOD AND CHRIST

The Holy Spirit has been defined as the personal power of God. He was the personal power of God in creation; He is also the personal power of God in revelation. The human spirit enables man to know the things of man, and the Spirit makes known the things of God, both objectively in the Bible and subjectively by an internal revelation to the human soul. Things man cannot discover are revealed by the Spirit, and revealed truth the natural man cannot understand is made known internally by the Spirit. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:10-16).

The Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of Christ. At times Paul seems, to identify Christ and the Spirit, just as he does God and the Spirit. But at other times he clearly distinguishes them as three persons. To quote Dr. Conner: "Christ mediates the presence of God, and the Spirit mediates to us the presence of Christ. Christ reveals God and the Spirit reveals Christ."

THE PERSONALITY OF THE SPIRIT

Paul does not think of the Holy Spirit either as an impersonal force or as a divine influence, but as a person. Personal attributes are attributed to Him. He knows and is therefore an intelligent Being. He can be grieved and only a person can be grieved. You cannot grieve an impersonal force or an influence. The Holy Spirit performs acts of a person. He guides in prayer. He distributes gifts. He is the Author of spiritual life in the Christian. He effects the new birth.

Paul recognizes the Holy Spirit as a person in his benediction upon the Corinthians: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (II Cor. 13:14).

Moreover, the baptismal formula which Paul must have used calls for "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). Here is a trinity of persons.

THE SPIRIT AND THE CHRISTIAN

The Holy Spirit makes real to us through faith what Christ did for us on the cross. He makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus. To the natural man salvation by the cross is foolishness, for this truth is spiritually discerned, and only by the Spirit can the message of the cross be understood. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor 1:18-21). The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Here is joint testimony: our spirit and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us a filial spirit by which we call God our Father.

The Holy Spirit indwells the believer as the seal and guarantee of safe delivery in heaven. A seal speaks of ownership; and protection. The Spirit in the believer guarantees his eternal glory in heaven. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption of our bodies.

The Holy Spirit helps in prayer. We know not what to pray for as we ought, but He knows the mind of God and makes intercession for us according to the will of God. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:26,27). What we cannot interpret to God

the Holy Spirit can, and thus makes intercession for us with groanings which we cannot utter or interpret.

The Holy Spirit makes our witnessing to Christ effective. Paul did not depend upon human eloquence or his powers of persuasion, but on the Spirit of God for results in his preaching. When Paul had results it was a demonstration of the Spirit's power, and not his own power.

The Holy Spirit will finally fit us for heavenly glory. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). The Holy Spirit in us is the earnest or pledge money of our inheritance. Pledge money is the down payment on a purchase, and so the Spirit is God's pledge that He will do all that is needed to get us to glory. He is also called the firstfruits as the promise of the full harvest of salvation. "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23).

THE SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

We have already noted that the Holy Spirit indwells the individual believer. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8:9). He also inhabits the church as a collection of individual believers. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16).

In the early church there seems to be a distinction between regeneration by the Spirit and baptism in the Spirit, and a filling of the Spirit. At Pentecost the 120 who must have already been regenerated by the Spirit were baptized in the Spirit. The Samaritans who had believed Philip's preaching and who were baptized in water, must have had some experience of the Spirit, they must have been regenerated, and then later Peter and John prayed for them, laid their hands upon them, and then the Holy Spirit fell upon them in miraculous power. However, this was not the uniform order in that day and does not seem to be the order today. When the Spirit makes alive, He becomes the present possession of the believer. The baptism in the Spirit was a sign of the Spirit's presence in the early church, and we do not have the miraculous signs of the Spirit's presence that were given in that day. These signs were to attest the Spirit's presence at a time when they were needed. When Peter preached to Cornelius and his household, the Spirit fell upon them which heard the word and believed. And when Peter saw this evidence of the Spirit's presence (for they spake in tongues and magnified God) he said to the men with him, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the

Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts 10:47). And in explaining his action to his critics in Jerusalem, Peter said, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:17). Cornelius and his party gave the same evidence of the Spirit's presence as was given to Peter and other believers at Pentecost. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days. And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me: Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house: And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 10:43-11:18). "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he

was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen" (Mark 16:17-20). This passage is sometimes quoted as a promise of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit throughout the gospel dispensation. But a careful reading of the passage will show that this was a prophecy which received immediate fulfilment. "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen" (Mk. 16:19,20).

THE CHURCH

It is the Holy Spirit dwelling in individual believers in a given community that brings them into fellowship with one another, and this fellowship constitutes these individual believers into a church for the making of other believers through gospel preaching and witnessing. The Holy Spirit is the source of unity, and baptism symbolizes this unity. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:13). Wherever you have a group of believers, people regenerated by the Spirit and indwelt by the Spirit, you have a church. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (I Cor. 12:27). Just as a man's body is the visible manifestation of his invisible spirit, so the church makes manifest the invisible Spirit of Christ. Paul also speaks of the church as a temple indwelt by the Spirit. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16); "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Cor. 6:16); "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:21, 22).

In defining the church Christ used the Greek word *ekklesia*, the word that was used as the name of a Greek political assembly. He distinguished His *ekklesia* from the Greek political *ekklesia* and the Jewish synagogue, the religious assembly, by the personal pronoun "My". Here the term is used abstractly of His church as an institution. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:17). After telling the procedure to follow for the settlement of personal differences, as a last resort they were to tell it to the church. Here the abstract becomes concrete and refers to a particular body or congregation, which is visible. You cannot tell anything to a big invisible church nor to a big visible church made up of all the saints.

The Greek word translated "church" means "the called out" for the purpose of forming an assembly. There seems to be a threefold use of the word in the New Testament.

1. The abstract or institutional sense just as we speak of the American boy or the American home or some other American institution. When we employ such terms abstractly nobody thinks of one big boy composed of all American boys, nor of one big home made up of all American homes.

2. In the sense of a particular congregation, as the church in Smyrna, etc. When the abstract or institutional church becomes concrete and operational, when the church is located and begins to function - it is to be found in a particular body of baptized believers organized for promoting the gospel of Jesus Christ. And so throughout the New Testament when something bigger than a local assembly is meant, the word "church" is always plural. The New Testament never uses the word "church" in a provincial or national sense. There is no English or American church in the New Testament sense of the word. We never read of the church of Judea, nor, the church of Asia, but of the churches of Judea, and the churches of Asia.

3. The third use of the word church" is prophetic and looks to the time when all the saints are in one big assembly in heaven. "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23). We read of the general assembly and church of the firstborn ones, which are written in heaven. This takes in the elect of all time. They are enrolled in heaven, but they are not all there yet. Some are on earth, some are in heaven, and some have not yet been born.

The writer of Hebrews, whether Paul or not, is distinguishing between the law covenant and the grace covenant. He designates the two covenants as two mountains: Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. Sinai is the law covenant, while Zion is the grace covenant. He says we are not come to the law covenant represented by Sinai, but to the grace covenant represented by Zion. As believers in Christ we are not associated with people under law as a way of life, but our fellowship is with those under the covenant of grace. We are associated with the heavenly Jerusalem, with a great company of angels, with the general assembly and church of the firstborn, written in heaven, and with the spirits of just men made perfect. These last are the ones already in heaven; the rest are on the way. And best of all Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, is there.

Dr. Conner rightly distinguishes between unity and uniformity. The Spirit produces unity; ecclesiastics promote uniformity by a small creed and a big organization. They would swallow up the bodies of Christ with one giant

organization. Romanists and other ecumenists are striving for a world-wide organization, a world church. But the Holy Spirit builds Christ's institution out of local, spiritual democracies.

Paul knew nothing of a whole church beyond the particular congregation in a given locality. In warning the Corinthians against over emphasis on the gift of tongues, he says, "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?" (I Cor. 14:23). And so with Paul a whole church is a group of believers that can come together into one place.

Paul makes in his discussion of spiritual gifts, love the greatest of Christian virtues. The acid test of spirituality is not in something spectacular, like speaking in tongues, but in Christian character. The real test of spirituality is obedience to the word of God. "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (I Sam. 15:22).

XX.

JOHANNINE THEOLOGY

We are reminded once more that in the study of Biblical Theology we are occupied with the Bible in its historically progressive aspect according to periods and persons; that is, in the light of the writer and the time of writing. In the study of the writings of John we reach the very pinnacle of Divine revelation, both as to time and content. We usually think of Paul as the greatest theologian, but in John we find even deeper things of God and Christ; and of sin and salvation.

Every book of the Bible has its own prominent and dominant theme. In Romans we have justification by faith based upon the redemptive death of Christ; in Peter it is the doctrine of hope concerning future good also based upon the death of Christ; in James it is the nature of faith which makes it more than mere profession in talk, and more than mere belief there is a God. James makes saving faith a loving trust in Christ as Lord and Saviour which is evidenced in good works. In Hebrews we have the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old Covenant given at Sinai. In Galatians we are occupied with the liberty we have in Christ, or deliverance from the curse of the moral law and from the ceremonial precepts of the law of Moses. And now in John we are occupied with Jesus Christ in the flesh as the eternal Word.

THE LIFE OF JOHN

The sources for the life of John are of various kinds, and of different degrees of trustworthiness. All that we know about his birth is that he was a son of Zebedee and Salome. He had a younger brother named James. He must have been from a well to do family. His father had servants. "And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him" (Mk. 1:20), and his mother was one of a number of women who followed and supported Jesus. "There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem" (Mk. 15:40,41). Further evidence of wealth is that John was acquainted with the high priest who was of the upper and wealthy class. "And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest" (John 18:15).

As to education, it seems that John never attended the Rabbinical schools; however, he must have had some academic and religious training at home. " Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). As to personal character, John was a typical Galilean, industrious, hardy and stern. He and James were nicknamed "sons of thunder" "And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder" (Mk. 3:17). He is seen acting as a bigot. "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us" (Mk. 9:38) ; as vindictive. " And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" (Lk. 9:54); as ambitious and scheming. "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him" (Matt. 20:20). Christ made John over and transformed him into the apostle of love.

John and other apostles were forced to leave Jerusalem because of the wars that ended in the destruction of the city and nation. He made Ephesus his headquarters until he died about the year 100 A.D. He was buried at Ephesus. His chief opponent was Cerinthus who taught that Jesus was the natural son of Joseph, and that the "eon" or spirit of Christ came on Him at baptism and left Him before His death.

There is much extra biblical literature about John. There is the story of his leaving the bathhouse in fear of its falling on him when he found Cerinthus in it. Another tradition is that in his last days, days of increasing infirmity, he had only

one brief message in which he exhorted believers, saying, "Little children, love one another." We know from the Bible about his exile on Patmos where he wrote the book of Revelation. His character might be summed up in the one word "intense". His love for Christ was intense, and his abhorrence of false teachers was intense. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (II John 1:10); "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God" (III John 1:9-11). There was nothing flabby about John. Morally he stood straight with no string for a backbone.

This lecture will emphasize the doctrine of the eternal Word. John's gospel has an evangelistic purpose and was written to tell the story of Jesus so that men might have life through believing in Him. "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). John's first epistle was written to believers to give them assurance of salvation. This epistle is a book of evidences, written to show how one may know he has been born again. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13). As evidence of salvation, John emphasizes three things: righteous living, "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (I John 2:29) ; love for God and His people, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7); "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14); and perseverance in faith, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (I John 5:1; "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19). We will next consider three of the above verses more particularly.

"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (I John 2:29). Salvation or the new birth results in a changed life. A saved man is a righteous person although not in the absolute sense of sinlessness. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:8,9).

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7). The same perfect tense as in 2:29.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is (has been-perfect tense) born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him" (I John 5:1).

THE PREINCARNATE CHRIST

John writes about a person whom he calls the Logos or Word. And John describes Him as an eternal Person. "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1). The verb here denotes eternal existence, and describes the Word in relation to time. Whatever beginning is meant, the Word was in the beginning and before the beginning; therefore, the Word had no beginning. In speaking of John the Baptist, the evangelist John uses another word. "There was (Gk. *egeneto*, came into being) a man sent from God whose name was John" (John 1:6). And in speaking of the Word as flesh, John says, "And the Word was made (*egeneto*, became) flesh and dwelt among us"... (John 1:14).

John describes the Word in relation to God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). The preposition means that the Word was in personal intercourse with God. The Word is also described in relation to creation. "All things were made (*egeneto*, came into being) by Him" (John 1:3). Creation implies and involves a Creator. Dr. Conner points out that Christ was not the independent but mediate Agent in creation. "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2).

John writes in refutation of a form of Gnosticism that was growing up in his day. This was a mixture of Greek and Oriental philosophy which sought to account for existence or being. According to their dualistic conception of existence there are two eternal, independent, and antagonistic principles of being from which come all the good and all the evil which exist. To them matter is essentially evil, and since Jesus was a physical being it was held inconceivable that the Divine nature should have immediate contact with the material side of existence; therefore, a real incarnation was unthinkable. The Docetics denied the humanity of the Word; that is, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. His humanity was not real but only a phantom or illusion. John did not hesitate to call these Gnostics liars and antichrists. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (I John 4:2,3).

THE PURPOSE OF THE INCARNATION

Why did the eternal Logos become a human Person? John gives two reasons.

1. To reveal God. "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18). This means more than that man cannot see God with the physical eyes. It means that man cannot discover God by reason or anything else at his command. Paul says that the world by wisdom cannot know God. God must reveal Himself, for man cannot discover Him. This is why Jesus Christ is called the Word of God. A word is a means of revelation, we show what we are by our words. A word is a means of communication, vehicle of thought. Jesus Christ has declared or spelled out God to us.

2. Another reason for the incarnation is the salvation of sinners. The incarnation was essential to redemption. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17). The salvation of sinners poses a moral problem, the problem of the just God receiving sinful men. Salvation could only be righteously and fittingly done by One Who is both God and man.

THE INCARNATION ATTESTED

John gives testimony to prove that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; that He was a real human being, a person.

1. There is the testimony of His disciples. John says they had seen, heard, and handled the word of life. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:1-3). He was revealed to their physical senses.

2. Speaking of John the Baptist "The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe....The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.....And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John 1:7,29,34).

3. John's disciples confessed Jesus as the Christ. Andrew, "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:41). "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45).

4. The Samaritan woman told her neighbours "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4:29). And many of the Samaritans confessed Jesus as the Christ. "And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42). The blind man witnessed to Him as the Son of God. "And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him" (John 9:38). Martha acknowledged Him as the Son of God. "She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (John 11:27).

5. There is the testimony of Jesus Himself. He veiled the Messianic title under the name of the "son of man". In John's gospel Jesus does not directly call Himself the Christ, but He makes the claim in an indirect way. "And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (John 1:51); "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19); "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" (John 3:12); "Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (John 4:26). On many occasions Jesus claimed to be God, and the Jews would charge Him with blasphemy. "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (John 5:18). "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (John 5:26).

6. The testimony of His miracles. In all four gospels the miracles of Christ are mentioned as proof of His Divine character. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house" (Mk. 2:10,11). Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said that God had approved Jesus by miracles and wonders and signs. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know" (Acts 2:22). His miracles proved all His claims to be the Christ and Son of God. John calls these miracles signs so that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

Nicodemus thought of His miracles as signs of His Divine mission. When He fed the five thousand He spoke of Himself as the bread of life. When He opened the eyes of the blind He reminds them that He is the light of the world. When He raised Lazarus from the dead, He tells Martha that He is the resurrection and the life.

The chief sign to accredit His Person and mission was His resurrection. When He had cleansed the temple the Jews demanded a sign as proof of His right to do what He had done. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). And John says that He was speaking of the temple of the body which He would raise up from the dead. On another occasion when the people were gathered together, Jesus said, "For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation" (Lk. 11:30).

That empty tomb of Joseph, in which our Lord was buried, ought to convince every man that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ and Son of God. A Moslem once said to the Christian missionary, "We have one thing you Christians do not have; we have a grave to which we can go in our religious devotions." Exactly so, said the missionary, "we too have a tomb but it is empty, for we worship and serve a living Redeemer." He is able to save unto the uttermost because He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

XXI.

JOHN'S DOCTRINE OF GOD

John speaks of the nature of God in three statements: God is Spirit, God is light, and God is love. He also speaks of God as Father, but the word "Father" expresses relation rather than nature.

GOD IS SPIRIT

This refers to His metaphysical nature, and distinguishes Him from all that is material. This does not mean that God is a Spirit among other spirits. God's essential nature is Spirit, and as such He can not be divided or compounded as matter can. This explains how God can be one in essence, and three in personal relationships: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If God were a physical being, He could not exist as three persons without being made up of three parts, each person being only a part of God. There is no human analogy of the Divine Trinity. Father, mother, and child are three persons in one family, but each is only a part of the family; while in the Trinity there are no parts because Spirit is indivisible and uncompounded. It is said of Christ. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). When Scripture ascribes to God bodily

parts, as eyes and hand, such language is to be regarded as anthropomorphic and symbolic, and as an aid to our finite minds. God can see and work without physical eyes and hands. As Spirit, God can do all and more than can be done by a mere physical being.

As Spirit, God cannot be limited to space, for spirit cannot be confined to a place. God does not dwell in man made temples. The Samaritan woman was concerned about a place of worship, but God is not confined to any certain place. Solomon saw this truth and in his prayer of dedicating the temple he had built said, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" (I Kings 8:27).

As Spirit, God is not limited as to time. All matter had a beginning, but God exists in one eternal now. We must, of necessity, postulate the eternity of something: impersonal matter or personal Spirit. The Bible postulates the eternity of God, Who is Spirit in His essential nature.

God, as Spirit, cannot be discovered. If He is known He must reveal Himself. God is not revealed in anything He has made, for He is distinct from all that He has made. Man by searching cannot find God; therefore, he can make nothing that truly represents God. Every effort to make an image of God is a caricature and is sinful. If God is to be seen, He must reveal Himself in a person and only in a person. And that Person is Jesus Christ, Who reflects the glory of God and bears the stamp of His nature. Jesus Christ is called the image of the invisible God. God became the object of worship in the person of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ is not God incarnate, He is a sinner because He accepted worship. And if He is not God, we sin when we adore and worship Him. The wise men from the East fell down and worshipped Him when He was but a baby. "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11). A leper worshipped Him. "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matt. 8:2). A certain ruler came and worshipped Him. "While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live" (Matt. 9:18). After His resurrection His disciples held Him by the feet and worshipped Him. "And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him" (Matt. 28:9).

The worship of God is not essentially a matter of time nor place nor ceremony. We can and should practice the presence of God. We can be conscious of His presence any time and anywhere. Worship is not putting something into the

heart; it is something coming out of the heart. It is the heart, blessed of God through Christ, giving itself in adoration and praise to the all lovely One.

GOD IS LIGHT

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). This is a description of God's moral nature and stands for His holiness. Light in the Old Testament and in all literature is a symbol of truth and moral goodness. John the evangelist says that John the Baptist came to bear witness of that Light which is Jesus Christ.

To say that God is light with no mixture of darkness is to say that He is absolutely holy. Holiness explains the wrath of God, for wrath is the holiness of God in opposition to sin. "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job 36:18). The Bible says much about the wrath of God. We read of a day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2:5). We read of children of wrath. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3) ; and of vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" (Rom. 9:22). Believers in Christ shall be saved from wrath in the day of future wrath. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:9).

The God of the Bible is the only true God, and the only holy God. Heathen nations have their gods, but according to their own confessions, their gods are wicked. Their gods are inventions of their own darkened minds and are like themselves.

The human heart, even the heart of fallen man, thirsts for God. But in his darkened understanding man misinterprets this thirst and tries to satisfy it with false gods. There is, in the very nature of man, something which makes it necessary for him to have a god. If the true and living God does not reveal Himself to him, man will invent a god with his hands, or spin a god out of his imagination. Man is a religious being, he will worship something. Another thing: man will become like the object he worships.

GOD IS LOVE

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (I John 4:8). Light and love balance each other, and the two should be properly balanced in our thinking. If God were nothing but love, sin would be sanctioned and the sinner would be in no danger of being punished. If God were all light, nothing but holiness, no sinner would be tolerated, and there would be no redemption. Holiness calls for wrath to fall on the sinner; love provides salvation for sinners. It was not holiness and righteousness, but love and wisdom that found a way to save rebellious man. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10). I cannot go along with Dr. Conner's idea that God saves because of His righteousness. In support of his view he quotes I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." John is not here telling how sinners are saved but how believers, out of fellowship, might be restored to fellowship. The apostle is not dealing with salvation of sinners, but with forgiveness of children. Confession of sin is not the way to be saved. Jews who hate and reject Jesus as the Christ confess their sins, but this does not save them. The way to be saved is to trust the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. Of course this will not be done by any who do not confess and realize that they are sinners.

Dr. Conner mentions the two opposing tendencies in theology and attempts to steer clear of both. One is the thought that there is something in God that must be satisfied; that God's holiness and righteousness must be propitiated. The other view is that since God is love, He is, favorable to man and no propitiation is necessary. There is in fact no middle ground between these two positions, and Dr. Conner has to come back to the position that propitiation is necessary in human salvation. This propitiation is required by God's holiness and is provided by His love manifested in the gift of His Son. I heartily agree that Christ did not die to win for man the love of God. Christ died because God loved men. But His death was necessary for the satisfaction of divine justice: "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). When John says, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1), he is plainly referring to children of God, and not to unbelievers. Advocacy with the Father is a family blessing, and is not for unbelievers. And in His advocacy, Christ pleads His propitiating blood, which must be trusted before He can be our advocate. In His advocacy He can say nothing good of us; however, He can say much good for us: He can plead His redeeming blood on our behalf.

One can only wonder what the esteemed author of our text book means when, in speaking of the death of Christ, he says, "He did not die to satisfy an infinite Shylock who must have his pound of flesh before he would forgive." Does he mean to say that the death of Christ was not necessary to forgiveness? He can

hardly mean this in the light of what follows when he says, "He died as a revelation of the love of God toward sinful men, but also as a propitiation to a holy God for sinful men." This can only mean that God's moral nature, His holiness and righteousness, must be satisfied in order to forgive the sinner. John is in agreement with Paul when he bases forgiveness upon redemption in Eph. 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." The justice of God demands something from the sinner's Surety the Lord Jesus Christ, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25). And it seems to be poor taste (to say the least) to compare God in His just demands to a greedy moneylender in Shakespeare's comedy "The Merchant of Venice".

GOD AS FATHER

Father is John's favorite term for God, a term that does not describe an attribute but expresses a relation. In the Godhead there are three persons in their relations, but only one nature or essence of being. Father implies a Son. God is the eternal Father because Christ the Word is the eternal Son. In human relations the father is older than the son. But this is not so in divine and eternal relations. Theologians have given us a puzzling expression: The eternal generation of the Son. We cannot conceive of an eternal birth, for birth implies a beginning. Calvin rejected eternal generation as absurd fiction. Strong says that the Scripture terms "generation" and "procession" as applied to the Son and the Holy Spirit, are only approximate expressions of the truth and any imperfect impressions derived from them are corrected by other declarations of Scripture. John does speak of Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God. "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18); "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life...He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:16,18); "We love him, because he first loved us" (I John 4:19). I have thought that this might be applied to His physical birth of the virgin Mary, who was told by the angel that the holy thing which should be born of her should be called the Son of God. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk: 1:35). However, in I John 4:9 we are told that "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him", thus implying that He was the only begotten Son before He was sent into the world. There is difficulty here, but we can be sure from Scripture

that the Word which became flesh was the eternal Son of God. The Nicene Fathers were in error in explaining Sonship as derivation of essence. The Son was not derived from the Father; He eternally existed as Son with the Father. With adoring wonder we can say with Paul, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Tim. 3:16).

XXII.

JOHN'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

John did not make much use of the word "salvation", but spoke of the blessings we have in Christ under the terms of "life" and "eternal life". He emphasized the subjective aspect of salvation, setting forth the nature, the necessity, and the evidences of the new birth. The gospel of John was written so that men might have life through believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

The first epistle of John was written to believers so that they might know they have eternal life. This is the best book of the Bible on the evidences of salvation as it describes the born again person in his attitude both towards God and men. If one wishes to be assured of his salvation, let him read and meet the test as given in this first epistle of John.

The Bible is primarily a moral Book, interested in man as a moral being accountable to God. It does not diagnose man's physical condition except to say that his body is mortal and corruptible, but it gives a thorough diagnosis of his moral condition as a sinner against the moral law of God. John says that sin is lawlessness. The Bible does not prescribe for man as a physical being but as a moral being. As moral beings, the Bible declares that all men are by nature dead, dead in trespasses and sins. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death, and that all have sinned. Physical death is the result of separation between the body and spirit. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). Moral death is the result of separation between God and man. When the prodigal returned to his father's house, the father said, ..."This my son was dead, and is alive again"... (Lk. 15:24). He had been alive physically all the time he was away from the father' but he was dead morally. And so men away from God are dead as moral beings, and the way to live is to come to Him through faith in Christ who said, ..."I am the way, the truth, and the life"... (John 14:6). Apart from the Lord Jesus Christ there is no way to God the Father, there is no truth about God the Father, and there is no life with God the Father.

WHAT IS ETERNAL LIFE?

The doctrine of eternal life is central in the teaching of John. What is eternal life?

NEGATIVELY:

1. It is not eternal existence, for everybody will exist forever. But everybody does not and will not have eternal life. "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15). Life and death of men considered as moral beings are not antonyms of existence and nonexistence, but of conditions of existence. Those who teach the doctrine of conditional immortality believe that only the saved will exist forever; the rest will be annihilated. But immortality is not merely eternal existence of the body, but a blessed state of existence. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (I Cor. 15:53). In the Bible the words "mortal" and "immortal" are used only of the human body and never of the human soul. An advertisement once appeared offering a large reward to anyone who could produce a Scripture which speaks of the immortality of the soul. No such Scripture could be produced, but the advertisement was answered by another advertisement which offered a like reward to anyone who would produce a Scripture which speaks of the mortality of the soul. And no such Scripture could be produced.

2. Eternal life is not something we wait to get after we die physically and pass into eternity; it is the present and eternal possession of the believer. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

POSITIVELY:

1. Eternal life is opposed to condemnation, to wrath, and to perishing. Those who now have eternal life will never be condemned. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24) ; never face the wrath of God. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36), and will never perish. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

The Bible speaks of a second death, which implies the first, but it never speaks of a third death. This is because man is considered as a moral being. As a physical being man is subject to only one death. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). But morally speaking, there are two deaths: the first and the second. All men in a state of nature are dead in trespasses and sins, the sentence of death (condemnation) has passed

upon all. But the second death will have no power over believers. Both saved and lost will experience physical death, for in Adam all die, the saved as well as the lost. And in Adam both saved and lost were under the sentence of condemnation, which is the first death. But the second death, the sentence of condemnation, will not be executed upon believers, upon those who have eternal life, because the sentence was executed against Christ their Surety and substitute.

There is another aspect of moral death which we call depravity or defilement of nature. This is death subjectively in which there is no activity towards God and holiness. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8). The death of Christ takes care of this also through regeneration, sanctification, and glorification. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

2. By a figure of speech eternal life is called water that lasts. To the woman at Jacob's well our Lord said, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

HOW IS ETERNAL LIFE RECEIVED?

The Bible says that eternal life is received by faith, that is, by trusting Christ. "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

We trust what Christ did on the cross to save us from the penalty of sin and also from the defilement of our moral nature. Deliverance from moral death objectively is accomplished once for all at the moment of faith. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). Subjectively, the believer still has the sinful nature within him. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). There is sin in us, but no sin on us, no guilt and no charge against us. On the cross there was sin on Christ, but no sin in Him. He was charged with our guilt, but He was not tainted with our sinful nature.

EVIDENCES OF THE NEW BIRTH

John tells us how one may know that he has been born of God. Assurance of salvation is much desired by every Christian. The unregenerate do not bother themselves about the matter, but saved people want to know that they have eternal life. God anticipated this desire for assurance and gave us one book of the Bible for the specific purpose of telling us how we may know that we have

been born of God. And this book is the first epistle of John. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13). John gives three evidences of one's being born of God: what one does, what he loves, and what he believes. One who is born of God will practice righteousness, his affections will be properly placed, and he will believe in the right person as Saviour and Lord.

"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (I John 2:29). The verb here is in the perfect tense in the Greek and should read, "has been born of Him". Right here we must be careful to distinguish between cause and effect. The question to settle is this: Is doing righteousness the cause or the effect of the new birth? Does practical righteousness logically follow or precede the birth of the Spirit? Does a man live a good life in order to be born of God, or does being born of God lead to a good life? John says that the doer of righteousness has been born of God. He is in agreement with Paul who says that they who are in the flesh cannot please God. And so a good life is an evidence rather than the cause of the new birth.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7). And again it is the perfect tense and should read "has been born of God". One's moral condition is seen or evidenced in the things he loves. One born of God loves God and His word and His people. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14). Love for God and His people is not the cause but the effect of the new birth. We love, not in order to be born of God, but because we are born of Him. Spiritual birth must precede spiritual love. Spiritual being must be the cause of spiritual loving. Let both writer and reader apply this test of the new birth to their own experience. Do I love God and the things of God and the people of God? The writer cannot boast of any great love, but he can and does claim that he loves God and the brethren. And this is all that Peter would claim. "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17). Peter no longer boasted of any great love.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (I John 5:1). And

once more it is the perfect tense, "has been born of God". To believe in Jesus as the Christ, the anointed Saviour, is evidence that one has been born of God. And so faith and love and good works are evidences of the work of God in the human souls, and are not products of the will of the flesh. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John. 1:12,13). And the apostle James writes to the same effect: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). And the apostle Paul is in agreement with James and John when he says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). Salvation is God's business and for every Christian God is to be thanked. In blessed doxology John says, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:5,6).

XXIII.

JOHN'S DOCTRINE OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

John lays great stress on the necessity, the nature, and the evidences of the new birth. He makes it clear that one who has been born of God will persevere in faith, while mere professors, with no root of the matter in them, will apostatize. He speaks of those who having forsaken the Christian fellowship did not really belong to them, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19). "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31). And again Jesus says, "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8:47). One's attitude towards God's word is the acid test of discipleship and the new birth.

EVIDENCES OF BEING BORN OF GOD

John wrote his first epistle so that the saved might have assurance of their salvation. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13). If one wishes to know whether he

has eternal life let him read John's first epistle to see whether he has the proper marks of a born again person. John gives three characteristics of those who have been born of God.

1. One who has been born of God will live a righteous life. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (I John 2:29). A more literal rendering of the latter part of this verse would read, "Ye know that every one that practices righteousness has been born of God." It is the perfect tense of the verb and denotes that which is continuous to the present. The first verb is the perfect participle and means "having done and doing righteousness" and the second verb is the perfect tense, which denotes that which is continuous to the present and means, "has been and still is born of God. The man born of or sprung from God, is deeply concerned about living a righteous life. It will not be an absolutely sinless life, but it will be a life progressively righteous and striving for perfection. A righteous life is a life that seeks to please God. Many church members today, as in John's day, when weighed in these balances are found wanting.

2. One who has been born of God will have the mark of love; his affections will be properly placed; he will have conscious love for God and for the people of God. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7). Here again we have the perfect tense of the verbs and should read, "having loved and loving, has been born of God." To hypocritical Jews, "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (John 8:42). And John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14). One who loves God may be assured that he has been born of God. And love is manifested in what we do for the one we love. If we love God we will seek to please Him by a life of obedience. Christ said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). If we love our brother we will seek to do him good. "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification" (Rom. 15:2). Every man knows what he loves, and his neighbors know what he loves. Love blows no trumpet; it is manifest in what it does. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (I John 3:18). Let the reader weigh himself in these balances; then his feeling of assurance will not be presumptuous.

3. Another evidence of being born of God is one's faith. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (I John 5:1). And once more the tense of the verbs is the perfect, and might be translated, "Everyone having, believed and believing that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God." One who has been born of God is still born of Him and keeps on believing. The new birth is once for all

and fruits in a permanent faith. Christ says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). There is a kind of faith which is temporary, but faith as the fruit of the Spirit in regeneration is abiding. The poor sinner when evangelically convicted by the Holy Spirit, and led by the Spirit to trust Jesus as the Christ (the anointed Saviour) will never turn from Him to any other Saviour. There may be an assent of the mind to the historical truth that Jesus is the Christ without the new birth. But saving faith is a matter of the heart and works by love. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

THE IMPECCABILITY OF ONE BORN OF GOD

John unmistakably teaches that the person who has been born of God cannot sin. He says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:9). Let us give a more liberal rendering: "Everyone that has been begotten of God does not sin, because His seed (life principle) abides in him, and he is not able to sin, because of God he has been begotten." Notice first of all, that this verse does not say that a person may be able not to sin; it says that he is not able to sin. It is one thing to be able not to sin, and quite another thing not to be able to sin. Notice again, that the inability to sin is predicated upon the new birth and not upon sanctification. It is because one has been born of God that he cannot sin. Self-styled sinless people do not claim that anybody is unable to sin, for that would be inconsistent with their doctrine of apostasy. It seems obvious that if one cannot sin he cannot lose his salvation. There are those who teach that when a person has been born of God and is subsequently sanctified, he may be able to live without sin; but they also deny that such a person cannot sin. Our text does not speak of sanctification, but of regeneration. And it plainly says that a regenerated person is not able to sin. So much for what the text says.

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

This text refutes several well-known and prevalent errors in present day preaching.

1. It refutes the doctrine of the apostasy of a saved person, the teaching that one born of God may sin and be lost. To quote this text in any translation is sufficient to disprove that a born again person can ever be lost.
2. It refutes the doctrine that any blessing subsequent to regeneration as enabling one to live above sin. The text does not speak of any second or any other blessing after regeneration. The inability to sin is not the result of any

second or third or fourth work of grace, but solely because of the initial work of the Spirit in the new birth.

3. This text is against the idea that faith precedes and causes the new birth. The new birth is the work of God, and the Holy Spirit is the whole agent. There is no such thing as self-birth, either in the physical or spiritual sense. James says, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (Jas. 1:18). And John, speaking of believers, says, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). Faith is not the cause of the new birth, but the effect. Paul makes faith the fruit of the Spirit. "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal. 3:22). And so John teaches that the person who practices righteousness, who has his affections placed upon God and holy things, and Who has his trust in Jesus as the Christ, may know that he has been born of God. And again we ask,

WHAT DOES THIS TEXT MEAN?

Let us proceed cautiously and carefully as we try to get at the real meaning of this much controverted text. Does it mean that a born again person cannot sin in any sense whatsoever? To give it such a meaning is to make it mean too much and turns Scripture against Scripture. Moreover, it makes John contradict himself. In writing to believers, John says "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:8,9). But if we are not able to sin in some sense, there could be no sins to confess. Moreover, John says there is provision made for sinning saints. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1). "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it" (I John 5:16), we are told to pray for a sinning brother.

It would contradict every book of the Bible and the experience of every Christian to affirm that no born again person ever sins in any sense whatsoever. And yet our text does teach that the one who has been born of God cannot sin in some sense. And so our task is to discover in what sense the born again person is impeccable.

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS CONSIDERED

There are various interpretations of "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:9), and something can be said in favor of most of them. There is truth in these interpretations, but whether it is the particular truth of this particular text is another question. I will give you some of these interpretations and then give, what in my judgment, is the proper meaning of the text.

1. By some the text is thought to mean, that since the born again person the believer in Christ is not under law for salvation, but under grace, and since there can be no sin where there is no law, it logically follows, that if one is not under law, he cannot sin. It is blessedly true that the believer is not under law for salvation, but being under grace, sin cannot have dominion over him. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14); but this can hardly be the meaning of what John says in our text. It does not say that sin is not charged, but that it is not committed. According to the text itself, it is not because of our position in Christ but because of God's seed (the life-principle) abiding in us, that one cannot sin. It is not where he is positionally, but what he is conditionally, that keeps the born again from sinning.

2. Another interpretation is that the new nature in the born again person cannot sin. There is truth in this, but John is not speaking of the new nature but of a new person. It is "whosoever is born of God."

3. A more likely interpretation is, that according, to the tense of the verb the born again person cannot sin habitually, he cannot practice sin as he once did, he cannot roll sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue. This was the view of Dr. Robertson, who insisted that the tense of the verb demands this interpretation. This is also the view of Dr. C. B. Williams in his translation of the New Testament. He points out that the verb is the present of continuous action. It is true that the person born of God cannot practice sin. The divine life principle remains, in him and he cannot live as an unregenerate. This interpretation is also favored by the context. John says that he that practices sin is of the devil, for the devil practices sin from the beginning. The devil takes no vacation from his career of sinning.

4. I have come to regard the view held by Andrew Fuller as the most probable interpretation. He thought that sin in "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:8, 9), is taken properly for any wrongdoing, and if any man says he never does wrong in any sense, he is self-deceived. But in "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:9), it seems to be the sin of apostasy (unbelief) that is in view, according to Fuller. There is much in the context to favor this view. John

says that some had apostatized, they had renounced their once professed faith in Christ, and had ceased to meet with the believers. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19). "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it" (I John 5:16). This also seems to refer to apostasy. It is not any particular act of sin, but a course that leads to apostasy and death. John does not encourage us to pray for those who once professed faith in Christ and then place themselves in the way of unbelief. He does not prohibit our praying for such, but does not command us to do so. John must have had in mind those who had abandoned their profession of faith and had gone out from the believers. Those born of God never give up their faith in Jesus as the Christ and their Lord. They may commit other sins, but they never apostatize, they never lose their faith in Christ. And so persevering attachment to Jesus Christ is the grand mark of a saved person. Peter says that the born again person "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Peter 1:5). Consider "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not" (I John 5:18). This text, like the one we have been dwelling upon, affirms that the person born of God does not sin, and that the devil does not touch him. To make this mean that he never commits sin in any sense and that the devil never bothers him is to make it contradict other Scriptures. Some scholars think that the "begotten of God" refers to Jesus Christ who keeps the one born of God. This is the truth, for the believer has no strength of his own, and Christ said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Others think John is referring to the seed (life-principle) of God in the born again person that enables him to keep himself. The born again person does not keep himself from every kind of sin, but the devil is not able to make him renounce his faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour. The devil is not able to make one born of God practice a life of sin, nor can he rob him of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us next consider I John 5:4: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." All who are born of God have a faith in Christ that the world cannot take from them. Faith in the victory because it cannot be lost. The one born of God does not have a faith today that may be lost tomorrow. No born again person ever thinks of renouncing his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for faith in some other so called saviour.

God never saves a sinner and then abandon him to the devil, the flesh, and the world. Christ says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow

me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:27-29). The child of God has many foes, but his faith will hold fast to Christ unto the end, and plead nothing before God save the blood of His Son. Concerning the martyrs, accused by the devil before God day and night, John says, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12:11).

The one who is really sprung from God, born of His Spirit, is secure from within and from without. God's seed (the life-principle or divine nature) abides within and he is also held in the grip of God's hand. In the Memorial Supper we declare that we are feeding on Christ by faith and have Him in us as the hope of glory. In baptism we declare that we are in Christ by faith: dead to the guilt of sin and alive to walk in a new life. The ordinances symbolize both the believer's state and standing. As to our state Christ is in us; as to standing we are in Christ.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?
In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth;
At home and abroad, on land, on the sea,
As your days may demand, shall your strength ever be.
When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.
E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;

And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.
The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, tho' all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no never forsake.

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