

He giveth goodly words  
*Genesis 49:21*

Hear ... the words of my mouth  
*Deuteronomy 32:1*

The Lord ... let none of his words fall to the ground  
*1 Samuel 3:19*

Stand thou still a while, that I may show thee the word of God  
*1 Samuel 9:27*

The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth,  
purified seven times – *Psalms 12:6*

The entrance of Thy words giveth light – *Psalms 119:130*

## WORDS OF PEACE & TRUTH

No. 84: October – December 2011

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Thou hast the words of eternal life  
*John 6:68*

Hear these words  
*Acts 2:22*

Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved –  
*Acts 11:14*

The washing of water by the word – *Ephesians 5:26*

**WORDS OF PEACE & TRUTH**  
*(Esther 9:30 – see also Zechariah 8:19)*  
**NO. 84: OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2011**

**Editorial**

Much of the content of the last issue was of a doctrinal nature. It is important that our doctrine should be right. J.B. Stoney (1814-1897) said “without correct doctrine you will never have correct practice.” We “should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.”

But many of the saints are passing through real trials and pastoral ministry is also necessary; this features more prominently in the current issue. It is my prayer that readers who are afflicted in mind or body, or feeling the weight of years, or being financially squeezed, or distressed at the present state of Christendom – whatever may be the nature of the trial – will find comfort and healing as they read through this number.

At a more mundane level, postage costs here in the U.K. have risen substantially over the past few years and, according to reports, are likely to escalate further in the next year or two. I think, therefore, that it would be prudent to reduce the frequency of this magazine to three numbers annually but to increase the content of each number slightly so that the same amount of reading is available in the course of a year.

Finally, it is in mind to establish a website for the magazine so that it may reach a wider readership. This would also promote associated publications and perhaps offer messages in audio form. Your prayers for guidance in this project would be greatly valued.

*G.S.B.*

**Editor:** *Geoffrey S. Bacon, 58 Byron Avenue, Coulsdon, Surrey, England CR5 2JR.*

**Telephone:** *020-8660.2915*

**E-Mail:** [bacon707@btinternet.com](mailto:bacon707@btinternet.com)

## REST

(*Zephaniah 3:17; Matthew 11:16-30; Hebrews 4:1-3, 9-11.*)

IT is a wonderful thing that we should be able to speak of rest on our way through such a world. But there is something more wonderful still in the first passage before us (*Zeph. 3:17*), that God should speak of finding rest for Himself in the thoughts and ways of His love as to us. Yet so it is. It is not merely that God has been seeking rest for *us* in the revelation He has given us of Himself in the gospel. He had been satisfying *Himself*. He *saves*, but it is to “rejoice over thee with joy.” And this is the great leading thought of that parable of His heart in Luke 15. He was reserved, we cannot but feel, in the Pharisee’s house (Luke 14); but now in the company of *sinners* He throws off all reserve, and reveals that it is the perfect blessed joy of God, not only to receive and eat with such, as the Pharisee said, but deliberately to *seek* that He might have them to receive, and that to eat with Him. Nor will He rest until the poor convicted prodigal, now kissed, embraced, and clothed with the best robe, sits at His table – “and they began to be merry.” “He will joy over thee with singing.” He rests in His love. It satisfies Himself, or, as the beautiful word of the original expresses it (see margin), “He will be silent in his love” – silent because He has no more to do, no more to reveal of what He has done, and of the place into which He has brought us before Him. He has us out before His gaze in the perfection of Christ and is *satisfied*. What amazing blessedness for us! But the first-fruit of it is for Him. And this gives us the *source* of all rest for us; it is found in the rest there is for *God*, in the thoughts of His love, and in their accomplishment. Primarily, the passage belongs to the yet future of Israel, but much more fully to us.

But if He rests in His love, (in Matt. 11) He brings *us* to rest in it. But mark the way it is introduced, for it is this that gives it its full character. (Read vv. 16-24.) The Lord Jesus had been

through this world and found no one – no thing to rest in. He had proved it thoroughly. Did He feel His rejection by the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done? He felt it keenly, as no other heart could. There was nothing but sorrow and trial in His *circumstances*, but He had a secret of rest: “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” He knew the Father. They were the Father’s ways with Him. The trial that pressed upon Him was the ordering of infinite wisdom, and of a Father’s love. He takes it from His Father’s hand. He answered the rejection of the cities with – “I thank *thee*, O Father ... even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.” Thus was He tested; and proved perfect in confidence and in obedience, He sees clearly as with an eye ever single, to discern the place given Him of the Father. The deeper glory of His person comes before Him, and the work He had come to do in connection with it: “All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” Rejected when presented as Messiah to Israel, He reveals *the Father* to whomsoever He wills.

But now comes the anxious question, To whom does He will to reveal Him? “Come unto *me*, all *ye that labour and are heavy laden*, and I will give you rest.” Are there troubled hearts who have found nothing to satisfy, no source of rest in this poor world? He bids us come to Him that He may reveal the Father to us, and thus bring us into the secret of His own perfect rest, so that where He laid His head, who had nowhere to lay it in this world, we can lay ours now, even on the bosom of a Father’s love.

The immediate connection of the verses is to be maintained, for this gives both the aspects of rest He speaks of their full character and preciousness. This first rest is not rest of conscience

merely in the forgiveness of sins, as it is commonly taken, by not observing the deep connection of thought in the passage; though surely this must be first and may be included in it. But it is nothing short of the revelation of the Father to our souls.

Forgiveness of sins will not carry us far for rest in going through such a world. The heart wants relationship; nothing but divine relationships will satisfy it, and this is what He brings us into. It is an entirely distinct thing and found such practically in souls. It is not all at once, when born of God, with most of us, that we enter into the knowledge of the *Father*, and yet in 1 John 3 the *babes* in the family of God are addressed because they know the Father. Thus it is the *privilege* of all. When we come to Jesus He would have us know that it is to the Father we have come: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). What blessed rest it is! Blessed Lord, Thou hast made good Thy word to us: we did labour and were heavy laden, and Thou hast drawn us to Thyself, and revealed to us the Father, and *it is rest*. Our hearts delight to own it.

This brings us to the source of all the trial that comes, whatever may be the character of it. *A Father’s* love has put us into it, whatever may seem directly or indirectly to have brought it on. How remote the trial in His case might have seemed from the Father’s dealings with Him; but it is faith’s title to take *nothing* any lower down than from a *Father’s known love*. Then there will be something more present and real to the heart than the circumstances of the trial, namely, the One who puts us into them and the certainty of His wisdom and love in doing so – “I thank thee, O Father ... even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.”

But this leads us simply and naturally to the next character of rest, and this too was illustrated in the path of the Lord Jesus. “Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and

lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” It is the rest we enter into by submission and obedience to the Father’s will. For what was the yoke of Jesus that He bids us take upon us? It was what we have just seen in Him – that perfect obedience that submitted itself in everything to the Father’s will. It is wonderfully brought before us in the words of Isaiah 50:3-6. He who was Jehovah (v. 3) has taken in grace the path of the learner (as the last word of verse 4 ought to be). “Yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb. 5:8). “Morning by morning he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the *learner*.” Thus He can say, “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.” What a word in season it was to each of us, beloved brethren, when He called us to Himself to reveal to us the Father! How deeply it enhances its preciousness that He spoke it out of the experience that He had gained in His own path in the world we have to go through. Now He calls us to learn from Him, to take His yoke upon us. He, ever meek and lowly, bowed implicitly to the Father’s hand in all that came upon Him. This is the one necessary condition for our enjoyment of maintained rest of soul. His rest was perfect in His path through circumstances of unparalleled trial, because His submission was perfect; and He would have us know the same perfect rest in whatever we may have to pass through, making proof that “his yoke is easy and his burden light.”

To have no will of our own is the only perfect liberty. It is the working of *will* in the trial that gives it its bitterness; God has to set Himself against any working of it in us, to smash it, for our blessing. Our wilfulness has increased the trial, but at last the will is broken, and we surrender to God. The instant we take God’s part thus against ourselves, in submitting ourselves absolutely to Him, the sting is gone out of the trial. We are brought into the path of Christ, and there is the full comfort of the sympathy of

Him who knew no will of His own. We could not have or expect to have His sympathy in wilfulness. We have been sanctified to the *obedience* of Christ. It is often a long and painful process in us to reduce us to it, but when once we are brought to submit to His yoke, the sense of crushing and bitterness is gone. It was the knowledge of the Father that He brought us into first, and the title we have thus to take all from *His* heart, that makes it possible and easy now to submit ourselves under His hand – “Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.”

One more character of *rest* remains. It is that presented to us in Hebrews 4. The various characters of rest we have been looking at are *present*. This is future – “There remaineth a rest to the people of God” (v. 9). We are on our way to it. Believers enter into it (v. 8), but what gives it its character is that it is “*His rest.*” It is the rest of God; and it is thus developed – “He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his” (v. 10). It is not the rest a soul enters into now by believing the gospel. It *remaineth* to the people of God. It is rest at the end of the path, when the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, are over. The works from which God rested were not bad works. He saw that they were “very good.” He rested when His work was done, and into His rest the people of God will enter when their works are done. Not the works of vainly seeking to establish our own righteousness, but the work and toil and energy of faith that is needed now for every step of the path of our heavenly calling. There is a sphere of rest God has; it is His own rest, where these will have place no longer.

They little knew the heart of God, who sought to bind the Lord Jesus to rest in a scene where a man was afflicted with disease for thirty-eight years (John 5). When all was yet as fair as He made it, “He rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made;” but when sin came in with its attendant train of misery and death, all this was broken up, “My Father *worketh* hitherto, and I

work” – till that wonderful work was accomplished, on the ground of which we might be introduced out of all the unrest here, into the rest of God. The rest of God is a scene suited to the heart of God for the blessing of His own, where no trace of sin or its consequences can ever be found, where no tear or breath of trial shall ever come. The danger is lest any of us should seem to come short of it, that is, by thinking of finding rest anywhere short of that of the counsels of God for us – the rest of God that remaineth for us.

The path of faith has now to be made good, step by step, with girded loin and earnest diligence of heart, through a scene every principle of which rises up to oppose us. When we are come to the rest of God, we may ungird the loin and let the heart go out upon everything. All there will only be the reflection of His glory and beauty. In the rest of God, “they rest from their labours”; but now we have to labour (or “use diligence”) to enter into that rest. And we have the word of God to be our most powerful and needed guard to detect for us, as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, all that would slacken our pace in pressing on through everything here, to reach the blessed scene that opens before our hearts – the bright vista of an eternal rest, the rest of God. Where God shall stand, as it were, on the threshold of a new heaven and a new earth, to wipe away all tears and every trace of the sorrow that came in by sin in the old creation. But it was in this ruined world and by the very ruin, that we have been brought to know Him who has revealed to us the Father; and where the trials and exercises of our way through it are made to yield fruit so rich in blessing for our souls. Learning then from the meek and lowly One who has trodden the path before us, laying our heads on the bosom of the Father’s love, may we submit ourselves absolutely to Him, till the scene of His *ways* with us, closes for us in that of His rest and glory for ever.

*J.A. Trench (1839-1922).*



## THE MYSTERY OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS

*"I am glad for your sakes that I was not there" (John 11:15)*

Jesus Christ has always the best interest of His people at His heart; His people lie very near to Him. He can neither do, nor permit to be done, anything to their real injury. Pained, grieved, burdened, perpetually killed, "killed all the day long" they may be; but all shall turn to the furtherance of the gospel in them. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).

On the face of it, His not attending to the implied urgent call from the sisters of the dying, then dead, Lazarus, would argue against His care, His love, His wisdom; as said the Jews, 'Why could not this Man have prevented the death of His friend Lazarus?' He said here, 'I am glad for your sakes, for I love you, I intend your good in all that I do. I am glad that I did not go. I let him die for your profit.'

You are all acquainted with the pathetic story of this interesting family – the man Lazarus and two attached sisters, all of them loved by Jesus Christ. When Christ's friend Lazarus was sick, then sent the sisters to Him that message, 'Lazarus is sick.' I said it was a sort of summons. Perhaps they did not doubt that Christ would go instantly to heal their brother; but He abode two days after hearing of this sickness in the place where He was. He let His friend die. He did it wisely. He did it lovingly. He did it for His glory. He did it for the good of those whose sorrow was great at the death of Lazarus. And Jesus was glad to let this circumstance go to an extremity; glad that a death should come where it would have been absolutely easy for Him to have preserved life. He had but to send, as it were, a word without any utterance; a look, a command; and the disease would have left Lazarus. But no, that was not the Lord's way of glorifying Himself in this case; so He lets His friend die.

According to the Scripture it is no uncommon thing for the Lord to let things go to extremes, to permit death to go here and there, to decree a consumption upon things, upon businesses, upon lives, upon experiences, upon hope; to let a death come. Instances are numerous in this in the blessed Word of God, which was “written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4). We will look at one or two instances of this dealing of God with His people.

Take, first of all, Abraham’s case. He receives a promise of a son; and what more natural than for him to expect that son to follow at once? The promise was given, but God lets death come, permits it to be an impossibility on natural grounds that this son should come as promised. Twenty years killing a promise – solemn naturally, killing a promise. Twenty years of a blight on a promise full of life, full of myriads of people, nations and kings, and above all others, of Christ, who should come in the promised line; and all, all dead, naturally dead (*see Rom. 4:19 and Hebrews 11:11,12 – Editor*).

Take Jacob’s case, “Go,” said his God to him, “Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee” (Genesis 32:9). What more natural than for Jacob to think that the way would be cast up, not a dog to stand in the way to hinder him from obeying God’s commandment? But 400 men following an injured brother stand in the way, and Jacob’s fears stood in the way; his apprehensions, his perturbation stood in the way; death had come, 400 swords to prevent a promise being fulfilled; a brother’s injured spirit, hatred rising up and standing between Jacob and the country to which he was told to return. God allowed it to come.

Take the case of Saul of Tarsus. Who would have thought that he, this enemy, this injurious person, persecutor, consenting to the murder of Stephen, was a vessel of mercy and an ordained

minister and an apostle? Why did not the Lord stop him before? Why was he permitted to hale to prison men and women, and to endeavour to cause many to blaspheme the Holy Name by which they were called? Nay, He lets the murderer go on, He lets him get his hands full of authority, as full of authority as his heart was of enmity, and go boldly and madly toward Damascus, reach its gates, and all but lay his hand on these poor saints; then comes the moment.

And why did not Christ prevent Peter's sad fall? He, who prayed that Peter's faith should not fail, could have prevented the trial, or permitting the trial, have prevented the fall. We see by these instances, and they could be easily multiplied, that Christ does not always stop evil when it would seem to His interest, and to the interest of His dear people, that He should do so.

Now come to your cases, to my case. Why does not the Lord put the hand of His power on our sins, our lusts, our wicked hearts, to prevent the outburst, never seen perhaps, never heard by men, blessed be God, but heard and felt by ourselves? Why does He let these things occur? – bring us into an acquaintance with that that the apostle sets out for himself in the Romans, a conflict in which he was for a time defeated: “When I would do good, evil is present with me”; and “how to perform that which is good I find not” (Rom. 7:18, 21). When I would do good, I cannot do it; evil prevents me. And “the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do.” And this may go on for such a time as to make the subject of the conflict think that he will die by the hand of his sins; think that his blood will be spilled on the battlefield and the prize he set out to win, the conquest he hoped to gain, the crown he looked forward to wearing, and the harp he hoped to harp to God's praise in glory, now he may think he shall miss all. And the Lord does not step in powerfully to stop it.

Do you know this conflict – this bitter disappointment? Look back upon ten, thirty and forty years and more – I can go back to fifty years and rather more, of conflict, and yet there it is, a conflict. Shameful defeats are sustained. People cry out and shout to Christ, but He seems to shut out their prayers – as He seemed to shut out Jeremiah’s. Why? And why this trouble in providence? Why an affliction that irritates you, delay that wears you as the waters wear the stones, that makes you feel, and say perhaps sometimes to the Lord, that He knows you would honour Him, and how can you with this irritation always present? How can you with this annoyance to your eyes, this thorn in your flesh, this weakness, this crookedness, this difficulty, how can you? You would fain worship Him in quietness, and you are always more or less perturbed, disturbed, distraught. Why this straitness? And why does that mighty Conqueror who led captivity captive and received gifts for men, and who by a look could chain Satan and prevent his assaults and his subtlety, permit him to come, and deal you deadly blows, or work such foul deceitfulness in your mind, and whisper such terrible things concerning that God you would fain love and serve, to your utter distraction and dismay?

What is the reason? We do not well to ask of some things, why? There are things we may not enquire into concerning God, who giveth not any account of His matters. When you would pry into God’s reasons, then you need faith and reverence and patience and the fear of God; but when Christ does reveal a reason, then we may seek, we may look into that reason, and seek to have it realised in our own soul. I say, when He does reveal a reason, we may enquire into it. There is a reason here which Himself gives. Peter expresses the same truth when he says to the saints that the trial of their faith, which was “much more precious than of gold that perisheth,” was to this end – that it “might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:7).

And so here, this trial to Martha and Mary, this that brought the question in the minds of the Jews, ‘Why could not this Man have prevented the death of His friend?’ – this that would be a trial to the disciples – had for it a reason, and one very near to them; a reason expressed to them very soon, namely, “To the intent that ye may believe.” But they did believe already, did they not? Had they not said by Peter, “We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God?” Yes, but no matter how much we believe, there is yet more in God to be believed; how much soever of Christ we believe, there is infinitely more in Him to be believed; and however much we have received there is infinitely more to be received from Him.

And His dealings strange and cross, contrary to reason, destructive to natural possibilities, we have here in death. ‘To the intent – for this end; this is My reason, My purpose. I purpose this, I intend it always, that when dispensations speak, when they reveal My mind, when the cloud is dispersed, when appearances of unkindness, of neglect, of impotence are passed away, you shall believe more than you believed before.’ And what are you to believe? ‘To the intent you may believe more fully that I am your Head, your Saviour, and Friend. To the intent that ye may know that I who am the Life speak to death, and death is nothing to Me; that I speak to corruption.’ “Lord,” said Martha, when Christ commanded that the stone be rolled away, “Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days.” In that climate, corruption was soon manifest. O, but what is this to Him who is Purity? What is death to Him who is Life?

*Extracted from a discourse by J.K. Popham (1847-1937) given in 1919; reproduced from Christian Watch Newsletter by kind permission.*

## WORSHIP

Love seeks worshippers, but it seeks them under the gentle name of “Father.” It places them in a position of freedom before Him as the children of His love. The Spirit, who acts in them and produces worship, is the “spirit of adoption,” which cries “Abba Father.” It is not that God has lost His majesty, but that He, whose majesty is far better known, is known also under the more tender and loving character of Father. The Spirit, who leads to worship the Father, leads us also into the knowledge and enjoyment of all the love of God, who would have us to worship Him as His children.

The enjoyment of this love and of these privileges, God be thanked, belongs to the most simple and the most ignorant among Christians. The Christian, when once he has understood what the grace of God is, and has received the spirit of adoption, is entitled to enjoy them without any reasoning; as a child enjoys his father before he can give any account of that which he enjoys. “I write these things unto you,” says St. John, addressing himself to the little children in Christ, “because ye have known the Father.” (1 John 2:13) The feeblest Christian is therefore perfectly competent for worship. At the same time, it is sweet to be able to estimate and explain this relationship with God. The more we think of it, the more we examine the word on the subject, the more we shall see the import, the deep blessedness of it. The simple fact that God is our Father, and that we possess the enjoyment of such a relationship with Him by the Spirit, is in itself an immeasurable privilege for creatures such as we are. Every child of God has this privilege in unquestioned right; but it is in Christ, and with Christ, that we possess it. He is “the first-born among many brethren.” He is gone to His Father, and our Father, to His God and our God. What a sweet and blessed relationship! What a family is that into which we are introduced! And how are we, who were formerly strangers to these affections and to this love – how are we to learn

these things? How are we to learn what the Father is, the knowledge of whom gives birth to these affections in our hearts? It is the only-begotten Son, the firstborn in this new relationship, who reveals Him unto us. Eternal Son of the Father, enjoying the infinite love of Him in whose bosom He dwelt, it is He who reveals Him as He Himself has known Him.

Become man upon this earth, Jesus ceased not to be the object of the same affection – affection which, when challenged, could not remain silent. “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Nor did Christ in anything put Himself at a distance from this love. Upon earth, from the cradle to the cross, He was the object of it in all its fulness and He revealed Him in whom it was found. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who *is* in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18). Jesus, a man, but also the Son of God, in the enjoyment of the fulness of this affection, dwells, even whilst upon earth, in the bosom of the Father, to originate and make known here below all the beauty – all the force – of that affection. As man, He was the object of this infinite love, in order that we might understand it in its application to men. So He associates us with Himself in the joy of this love, and He reveals it to us as He Himself knows it.

What grace in Him! and what a position for us! How does Jesus Himself, who by His death and resurrection has planted us in this blessedness, become to us an object of love, of adoration, of devotedness of heart! The very glory which is given to us is presented to us by the Saviour as a proof of this love. “The glory,” said He, in John 17, “which thou hast given unto me, I have given unto them . . . that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” Such is His affection towards us, that He desires that we may enjoy the Father’s love. So He renders us capable of this enjoyment by revealing to us the Father’s name. ‘I have declared,’ says He in the same chapter, ‘*thy name* unto the

men thou gavest me out of the world; and I will declare it, in order that the love, wherewith thou lovedst me, may be in them, and I in them.' Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus. This fellowship expresses itself in adoration towards Him who is revealed, and towards Him who reveals.

It will be easily seen how the work of Christ is the foundation of all this blessedness, whether in order to introduce us without spot and without fear into the presence of the God whom we adore, or in order to place us in the relationship of children towards the Father. It was after His resurrection that Christ could say, "I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God." Then it was that He could say, "Go to my brethren." Now the Spirit which He gives from on high answers to this blessing. He is "the Spirit of adoption," as He is the Spirit of liberty; because we are "accepted in the beloved," and we enjoy a redemption which has made us "the righteousness of God in him," and therefore placed us in God's presence without a spot or stain of defilement.

Thus we have reviewed, at least in principle, the great foundation truths of Christian worship. Perfect in Christ, united to Him, brought into the presence of God, whose love and holiness are manifested without a veil; as children beloved of the Father, and objects of the same love with Christ the first-born, we worship together, according to the power and affections which the Spirit, who has been given to us, inspires. We worship the God of Glory, whose presence is the stay, instead of being the terror, of our souls. We worship the God of love, whose will it is that we should be perfectly happy in Him, that He Himself might enjoy our happiness, Himself finding more joy in it than even we ourselves. We adore our Father with endearing confidence in His kindness, which blesses us with all spiritual blessings, and counts the very hairs of our head, while thoughtful of all our present need. We adore Him for all that which He is in Himself. We adore



Him for all that which He is to us, the children of His house for eternity. We thus present ourselves in sweet communion before the same Father – our common Father – as His beloved children; so that brotherly affections are developed, and the joy of each being reciprocally the joy of all, multiplied praises ascend to God. Hence we see, in the New Testament, that, while indeed the consciousness of this relationship must necessarily be individually realised, in order that we may enjoy it together; yet, at the same time, the Spirit constantly associates us, and uses the words “we” and “us” when speaking of Christian affections and feelings. The Holy Spirit shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts, it could not be otherwise.

But the effect of the presence of this “one Spirit” goes yet much further. Not only does He give us the consciousness of being in Christ – of being perfect before God, according to the efficacy of the redemption which Christ has accomplished; not only does He witness with our spirits that we are the adopted children of the Father, but He gives us also the consciousness of being but “one body” – “the body of Christ,” and the “members one of another.” The Church, which God has newly-created in Christ – that “one new man” – the redeemed who have been “all baptised into one body,” offering worship in the “unity of the Spirit,” necessarily offer it as but “one body,” and that “with all the saints.” They are the “habitation of God through the Spirit;” and, that Spirit, uniting them all in the body of Christ, adoration ascends on high towards God, who formed them to be but “one new man” in Christ. If Israel, as a whole, was represented by the priests who officiated in the tabernacle, the faithful now, who render direct worship to God, do it in the unity in which they are all “one body in Christ.” In this worship there is more than brotherhood. There is unity, not of nation, and not only of family, but of the members of one body formed as such, and indwelt by one Spirit. This is the endowment, privilege, and position of the

Church, which is baptised into “one body in Christ,” the Head being ascended up on high, in order that the members of the body may render worship freely and with joy before God, by that unction which descends from Him.

Let us state some of the practical effects which flow from these truths:-

First, it is evident that worship is the privilege only of the children of God. Being offered “in spirit and in truth,” and being offered to Him who cannot admit sin into His presence, they, and they alone, who are washed in the blood of the Lamb, and who have received the Spirit, can draw near to God and adore Him. That a man who is unconverted should render worship to God is simply impossible; for “without faith it is impossible to please God.” Such a one may be blessed in temporal things. He may, perhaps, ask such a blessing, and be heard. God may have tender compassion for him, as a poor sinner; but, as yet, he knows not God, as yet he has not the Spirit, as yet he is not washed in the blood of Christ; and therefore it is utterly impossible for him to worship God. That he thinks he can draw nigh to God is but the proof that he is ignorant of what he is in himself, and what the God is whom he thinks to serve. Who can enter into the sanctuary, save he who is sanctified? Who can address himself to a father, as such, save as a child? Worship, moreover, being offered in the unity of the body of Christ, and by the Spirit who has formed this unity, and who dwells in the body as in a temple, he who is not of the body is necessarily excluded. To suppose that a person who has not the Spirit can be a member of this body is to deny its existence, its end, and its nature; for, if a man who is not converted can enter into the presence of God, and worship there, there is no need that there should be either a body in which God dwells as in a temple, nor is there need of redemption, which is the basis of everything. Why should there be a redeemed people, if the worldling can serve God in His presence? Wherefore adore

God by the Spirit, if he who has not the Spirit can adore God just as well? Worshipping in common supposes persons united in one body by the same Spirit, and that can say, “We,” in sincerity, when addressing God. A hypocrite may be present; he will be a hindrance in the worship; but its validity will not be thereby destroyed, when the worshipper says, “We,” in truth in the name of all. It is believers who worship God.

To render true worship to God supposes that a soul is set at liberty, and is free to draw near to God, in virtue of the efficacy of the work of Christ. If a person who loves God, and has no other hope than the work of Christ, is timid in drawing near, it is right to encourage him; but if such a one has no real knowledge of the efficacy of the work of Christ, he will be ill at ease even in drawing near to God, because God’s presence will communicate to him rather the conscience of sin, rather than of the joy which that presence inspires to him who enjoys it in the peace which Christ confers. Nevertheless, in such cases of doubting and trembling, right affections often precede the being set free, and are more true to Christ than the reasoning of the mind; but this state of soul is not the normal state of worship. To be consciously in the presence of God, purified from all sin by the blood of Christ – in the light as He is in the light – such is the true worshipper. This is the standing of the believer in Christ; and, in order to worship truly, this standing must be known and enjoyed. Sometimes bad teaching neutralises this liberty, although the soul all the while, in its secret communings with God, cries, “Abba, Father!” As a principle, however, whatever allowance be made by charity for these cases of ignorance, true worship supposes that we can draw near to God without fear. This freedom of access is a necessary and absolute effect of the complete and triumphant work of Christ, of which every true believer has the benefit; but it is the presence of the Spirit which enables us to realise it.

How delightful to be able thus to adore God! What a source of joy is He whom we adore! How great the blessedness of finding oneself in His presence, no cloud between Him and us, no tinge of fear, because no vestige of sin! Being made “the righteousness of God in Christ” the presence of God becomes but an inexhaustible spring of happiness for that new nature which He has given us, and which finds its enjoyment in Himself. What joy to be able to express one’s acknowledgements, to render to Him one’s thanksgivings, knowing that they are acceptable to Him! What a blessing to have His very Spirit, the Spirit of liberty and of adoption, as our power of worship, as the inspirer of praise, of confidence, and of adoration! What joy thus to worship in unity, as members of the same family and of the same body, sensible that this joy is a joy common to all; knowing that those whom we love are infinitely precious and acceptable to the Lord, and that they all find their pleasure in praising Him who is worthy – the God who is the source of all our happiness – the Lord who gave Himself for us, in order that He might be our eternal portion!

*Extracted From “On Worship” by J.N. Darby (1800-82)*

### **Real Worship**

*(Please read 2 Chronicles 20:18)*

There is a distinct step here. God’s testimony leads now not to praying and fasting, but to worship. Jehoshaphat is a worshipper, and all Judah with him. The sense of God’s gracious answer to their cry brings about a worship-meeting. You cannot manufacture that; you cannot get that up. Worship is the overflowing of a heart filled with what God is. You never can get it save by the power of the Spirit of God, and you cannot have it apart from the delight of the soul in Christ. When He fills the vision of our souls there is real worship.

*Extracted from “Handfuls of Purpose” by Dr. W.T.P. Wolston.*

## The Present Effects of the Prospect of the Lord's Coming

The return of our Lord Jesus as an immediate prospect before us, and as a bright hope within our hearts, is essential if our present conduct is to yield, firstly, that pleasure to our God and Father which He seeks from us and, secondly, a right witness to Christ toward the men and women around us. Look at the deplorable behaviour of the servant who thought that his lord delayed his coming (Luke 12:45) or at the idolatry into which the children fell when they “saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount” (Exodus 32:1)!

In contrast, until the very end of his life (2 Timothy 4:6) the apostle Paul counted himself among the “we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:15).

In that same epistle we see the positive effects on our present Christian life of having the Lord's coming imminently before us. In chapter 1 we see how occupation with God's Son who was soon to emerge from heaven replaced idolatry for the new Thessalonian believers. It was not just an *event* that was before their hearts, but a wonderful *Person* – “Jesus, our Deliverer from the coming wrath.” Let us be so occupied with our coming Lord that we too may be detached from the idols of this world.

What has stripped the seeming beauty

From the idols of the earth?

Not the sense of right or duty,

But the sight of peerless worth.

*(Miss Ora Rowan, 1834-1879)*

At the end of the second chapter we read how Paul's *service* to those believers was affected by the prospect of the Lord's coming; he desired that its result should be a “crown of rejoicing” to him and his fellow-workers in that day. Hence his concern in the next chapter that the tempter might have overcome them and his work

be in vain. We are not apostles, but do we accept accountability for others in the light of the judgment seat of Christ?

In chapter 3 the apostle brings “the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints” to bear on the character of the *fellowship* which the saints enjoyed together, with the particular objective that holiness might increase through their love for each other. May the holy love of God so flow through our hearts, and out of them to other believers, that conditions of holiness are promoted among us.

Then in chapters 4 and 5 Paul brings the manner of the Lord’s return before the saints as a powerful *encouragement* (see ch. 4, v. 18 and ch. 5, v. 11). In chapter 4 he writes to counteract their fear that those who fell asleep would fail to participate in Christ’s glorious appearing. How typical of the Holy Scriptures it is that in addressing a question that had arisen the opportunity is taken to open up further wonderful truth! So here the occasion is taken to show how when Christ appears “God will bring with Him” both those who had died in Christ and those who were alive until His call; all such will have previously been caught up to be with Him.

Alas, many Christians today are reluctant to speak of these things for fear of stirring up controversy, but we are told them for our encouragement!

In chapter 5 the notion that the church will have to endure a time of wrath is firmly rejected (see verse 9) and we are to be encouraged by the prospect of our soon obtaining our full salvation. In the meantime, we are to behave as watchful and sober children of light, donning the defensive armour that we need while in this world and preserved in practical sanctification.

May the imminence of our Lord’s return be such a bright reality to all our hearts that these effects will be more clearly demonstrated in and among us!

*The Editor.*

## POETIC PAGE

Oh, let thy faith repose  
On Jesus' love divine;  
The heart that all our sorrow knows,  
Is feeling *now* for *thine*.

Tell to His listening ear  
The anxious thoughts that rise;  
He's moved by every falling tear;  
He echoes all thy sighs.

Purer than aught below  
The heart that bled for thee;  
Not like the mingled love *we* show  
His *perfect* sympathy.

Well may'st thou then confide  
Each interest to His care;  
Since He has power and skill to guide  
His loved ones everywhere.

If slow to understand  
When clouds thy pathway dim,  
The *way* is still in Jesus' hand,  
The *end* is safe with Him.

See where He sits on high  
In calm, unclouded *peace!*  
Dwell there beneath His watchful eye,  
And every fear shall cease.

So holy is His love,  
So wise are all His ways,  
That did we always dwell above  
Our hearts would only praise.

*Extracted from the "Christian's Helper" (1908); author unknown.*

## **NOTE**

The Editor trusts that the selection and composition of material for this magazine has been undertaken with the Lord's guidance and that the contents are of moral and spiritual value and appropriate to present needs. The only infallible statement of truth, however, is found in the Holy Bible and the reader is, therefore, urged to follow the practice of the Bereans, who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). The Editor is always happy to receive comments and inquiries, and to consider suggested articles for inclusion in future issues.