

# THE ONE; LOST IN MAN'S GLORY.

A LETTER  
ON RECENT DOCTRINES.

"If therefore thine eye be SINGLE, thy whole body shall be full of light."—MATT. vi. 22.

"To give the light of the *knowledge* of the glory of God in the FACE of Jesus Christ."—2 COR. iv. 6.

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[This letter, in substance, is a private print of one sent to England. By an oversight the letter was mailed before a complete copy had been taken, and hence the latter portion has been entirely re-written, while throughout it has been revised and much added to, to meet questions which have since arisen.]

## TO MY BRETHREN IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Though in sending forth this letter I am fully *assured* before my Lord, (which suffices), yet naturally I feel diffidence, towards brethren who are tens of years my seniors in Christ, who have passed through sorrow, conflict and separation for the love they have to Him, who have ministered Christ to souls, and been themselves watered in doing so, but who now see no danger in the recent doctrines. I cannot understand it, and to them may I submit what I have written. All I can think is that they themselves having been kept of the Lord in walking simply with Him, have never known the bitterness and misery of soul to which they tend. I would intreat them in the Lord. I would ask for consideration—(leniency I can hardly expect because I have shown none towards what I attack) in any defective and faulty expressions which will be found, wherever self has intruded, by those who know truth far better than I do. If Christ is imperfectly apprehended in *His* glory, there will always be error or defect in truth. I am not attacking Mr. R's. "obscure or defective expressions," but the whole foundation of his teaching and the effect produced upon the soul. I only ask that this same consideration may be given to mine. While, at the same time, that they would not forget I have now been separated for two years from almost all fellowship, ministry, and counsel of my brethren. I have had with me only my Bible (the need of precious souls, who have been plucked from Satan's darkness, of *real* establishment in the presence of God) and whenever leisure was allowed me, the valued ministry of the late honoured and beloved servant of the Lord, J. N. D., from which to learn God's Truth, in absolute dependence alone upon the Spirit of God for teaching; and a living loving Saviour in the glory. I have found Him sufficient for all. Can I now deny Him?

Revelation is conveyed through the medium of human language. Man, in his cleverness, thus seeing his own language, the very words he uses, and the meaning of which he perhaps can nicely define, attempts to trade with these in the thoughts of God. This is theology and a principle too sadly evident throughout Mr. R.'s writings.

He forgets that the *meaning* the words convey is of a different character, divine and not human. Foolish and incomprehensible to *his* mind (1 Cor. ii.), the Holy Ghost alone can in-

terpret and He must give every thought. Thus, in ministry, the omission to define human words, *according to* GOD'S *thoughts* is the surest sign of being ignorant of them, and of the human mind unjudged.

To give one instance, we have "Responsibility," as also the Christian's Responsibility because redeemed by GOD'S own blessed act, used to DISOWN *his* responsibility and CONFESS the grace and faithfulness of God unto the end.

And I solemnly press this. For in Mr. R.'s teaching *this* responsibility is NOT maintained, but a substitute provided in the resuscitation of man's responsibility. May our souls indeed give heed, at this time, to the "ifs" in God's word. "IF ye continue in the *faith* grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the GOSPEL." (Col. i. 23; 1 Pet. i. 5; Heb. iii.12; etc.)

Our responsibility *is* to confide in what God has done, and has shown himself to be *for us* in His Son, having full assurance in His immutable fidelity: it is not what we are, and ought to be for God, which is, "responsibility" in another sense.

The failure, by a hair's breadth, of my responsibility incurs eternal damnation. The Blood of Jesus, God's Son, alone could blot it out. And sin is EVER sin. Its guilt is measured by the majesty and holiness of God. (Are we not all liable to palliate our will and smooth over our sins by a horrible perversion of the liberty of the Spirit of adoption?) Whereas the responsibility *of faith* is just as different and divine in its contrast to man's responsibility as the Righteousness *of God* is to human righteousness. With J. N. D. (in all that I have ever read) you will find the word instantly defined in the context, because a servant of Christ, who knows himself, is at all times apprehensive of the flesh perverting everything of God. Thus in the *Synopsis Romans* p. 150, he writes, "For now he is free, is he going to give himself to sin? It is a noble appeal," or again in '*Notes and Comments*' vol. 2. p. 200. (I copy this from the letter of a beloved brother whose ministry I have only known to be blessed and would refer to the whole quotation), "My responsible course . . . on the blessed GROUND of redemption. . . ."

We turn to Mr. R.'s writings: "In Romans it is the life of responsibility here, though carried out in divine power." (Letter. March 21. p. 4.) Mr. R. just as significantly stops short at "responsibility." We come, as it were, to the brink

of its awful precipice, and then what? Are our feet of faith established in peace on the Blessed Rock of Ages. Follow Mr. R.'s path and try: if true, you *sink*—FOR THERE IS NO FOUNDATION. One unwary or careless about his relations with a living God thinks the difference small and ought to be overlooked—the appearance is the same—so might be the houses in Matt. vii. 24—29, while the practical effect of such teaching is that the soul is altogether taken off thoughts of God, and His Redemption, thrown in upon itself and its responsibility and then puffed up, by divine power being brought in as the means wherein it is carried out! (1 Cor. iii. 10.)

In the wilderness as a redeemed people we are under God's resources in His own Grace. If HE fail us, we perish. Have *you*, my brother, fulfilled your responsibility? or did the Israelites? Read Ex. xv. 23—xvii. 16, where ALL is Grace—God's own grace—and ALL *failure* in the responsibility of having redemption, and then turn to chap. xxxii. 35.—Num. xi. 1. and onwards to chap. xxxii. 13, where their "*life of responsibility IS carried out in divine power*" or righteousness. And yet we are told these truths are *fundamentally* (!) the same; and so throughout.

But again since Mr. R. puts the Christian in his communion with God on the ground of responsibility, it follows as a necessity he has to rob him of the ground God has placed him on (Rom. v. 8) that of grace as free and full as God's own heart. One would think that the most superficial reader of the word of God would be astonished beyond measure to find in an epitome of the Christian's position as in Romans the word "GRACE" not even once mentioned. But he will find it so in Mr. R.'s remarks. Why is this? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

If in the place of of writing theology, and turning in our *minds*, the various positions in which our "ideal" Christian may be found, our *hearts* were filled in the fulness of the grace of God, which had brought us to *Himself*, in His beloved Son, in the liberty, joy, and blessedness of His own act of Redemption for us—we *are* before Him and this overfills the soul—could we when joying in this infinite rest forget the tie of His own grace by which our hearts are bound to Himself? The thing is impossible. God Himself *must* be our theme when walking in *that* sphere where all is of HIM. But in these doctrines, a living God is, *not* found but, lost, and "CHRIST

in His own Perfectness, objectively is gone and thereby what judges Self. (J. N. D. Letters vol. ii. 576). Their character may be summed up in a few words. Man, first ; GOD, second. The CHRISTIAN the object, the new and heavenly being ; and CHRIST the Agent, man's servant ; or in other words it is Truth applied *subjectively*.

Thus though a Christian may not be able to discern where the error in such teaching lies, he *does* feel the falseness of their application. He is conscious that SELF is being flattered and this, alas, is fatally attractive.

Nothing could give stronger evidence of this than the remarkable fact that of all the letters and even pamphlets I have received from brethren, at present, owning fellowship with Mr. R. in ONE ONLY has confidence in his teaching being expressed without qualification. Does not this betray absence of fellowship, which is "community of thought, joy and feeling" IN HEART with these doctrines (thank God! it unmistakably does) and reduce fellowship one with another to the outward agreement of truth ?

Would not much perplexing controversy have been avoided if when fundamental truth is called in question we judged all by the only foundation of everything, *i.e.* the Precious blood-shedding of our Blessed Lord? And I feel assured that if beloved brethren had tested these doctrines, not by their minds or argument, but in the simple light of the fulness of the soul's communion with God, they themselves would have found no words too hard for them.

TOKYO, JAPAN,

September 23, 1890.

My Dearest Brother,

I believe you honestly desire to follow the Lord wholly and to know His will, but to do so we must walk very closely in separation unto Him. Unless *with Him* we soon grow weary and harassed with conflict, and would seek to avoid it—a thing very easy to do—while we are careless about the glory of His Blessed Person because we know so little of Him. Doctrines then become mere party questions to us. *With Him* only can we feel what is directed against Him. How sad the number of God's dear children whose consciences are now hardened by reasoning and argument for the sake of the persons involved, and who have got accustomed to terms and phrases horribly degrading to the Person of the Lord, which at the first they instinctively shrank from in horror!

This is a deeply sorrowful and humiliating chastening which the Lord has had to lay upon us. But His honour is the only one thing we would seek to keep intact till He comes. I have not scrupled to use strong terms in dealing with these doctrines. To me they are abhorrent—robbing our blessed Lord of His glory, and His beloved people of Him.

The one thing we are responsible to our Lord for is to judge *what is taught*; the *person* is nothing (save that he is responsible for his teaching), though he be an angel from heaven.

I would also remark that, to judge of Mr. R.'s, or of any other teaching, we have to divest our minds of all our thoughts and ideas, and simply take what is conveyed *alone through what is written*. For instance, Mr. R.'s use of "in Christ" shows a totally different meaning to that which I have had ever since God showed me in His word I *was* "in CHRIST." But the words are the same. The same applies to his use of the words "faith and grace" (see Letter, March 21) in the Romans, which is much the same as I used to find in my theological books. The truth is, there will always be the meaning both of words and things as far as man's mind understands it, but this conception (however divinely lofty the truth it seeks to grasp) can never rise

beyond its own capacity. And all is but opposition to God. God must teach—He only can—and He reveals to “babes,” so that no flesh may glory in His Presence. Many simple Christians put their own meaning into Mr. R.’s words, and then, passing over all the objectionable phrases, do not see much harm in his writings. But, dear brother, we should always remember that, were we walking in simplicity and dependence with the Lord, we should neither deceive, nor be deceived, with false teaching.

May you and I be found before Him in joy and peace when he comes.

### IN CHRIST.

Where is Jesus your Lord to-day? Is He not sitting at God’s right hand? THE ONE who has taken up every relationship between God and man, and glorified it in His own Person, while the ineffable blessedness of that Life, which was with the Father, and eternally in His Bosom, is now enjoyed in the Risen Man, whose heart is ever actively engaged with those who are His own members, quickened together in the same life, from whom every fruit of grace and display of love, by the Holy Ghost, is but the expression of something of what He *is*. Thus God’s word absolutely states that every spiritual blessing is in Him, and Jesus lives. HE knows them in His own ever-blessed and glorious Person. None are elsewhere. He has them all, and these are ours to enjoy in HIM, for that is where I am. Have you never yet done so? HIS nearness to the Father. HIS fellowship with Him. HIS right in the power of His risen life to the Presence of God. HIS joy and peace, who once as Man of Sorrows took that one lonely path, ever yearning for the blessing of man, but, as the will of God took Him through each fresh circumstance of the way, only to find there some deeper expression of man’s hatred of God to sadden His loving heart, but to know thus some fresh joy in the sufficiency of His Father’s love to fill every desire of a human heart. HIS love, which clung to, cherished, cared for, those the Father had given Him, through all their waywardness and faithlessness, getting but little return, but ever seeking to lead them into sympathy and fellowship with Himself that they might be blessed, and for whom He laid down His life, but has taken it again, and lives the SAME Jesus. Yes!



All is treasured up IN HIM. And the Holy Ghost has come down, to reveal to and display, through the saints, this priceless wealth, and to glorify the Head, Who possesses all, in that unclouded place of blessing and rest on the throne of God, but whose heart still enters into every circumstance of His poor weak saints, who stumble along the way, but who are the redeemed of His love. He lives in them. "Saul Saul! why persecutest thou ME? . . . I am Jesus."

Who could display the wondrous fulness of these words but God Himself? And thus the Spirit of God has come down to manifest "the one heart and the one soul." But men have sought their own things and not the things of Jesus Christ, and a worse ruin has come in than has ever been witnessed in those things which God set up perfect in the beginning, but left to the responsibility of man; the last position in which man has been tested resulting in utter failure. Faith, no longer to be exercised with regard to the promises yet to come, as with the Old Testament saints, but, working by love, to lay hold of what is real, so that the Assembly might manifest the blessings already given to her in a living Head. The sufficiency was of God, but the responsibility the Assembly's; and we see around us what has been the result, so that in brokenness of soul we can but wait for that time when the Lord will take the Church to Himself, and by the power of the same Spirit, display through it in glory the same blessings that are ours to-day in Him, our glorified Head. Now we see the failure of man, then the glory of God. But God will allow no plea for the divisions in the Assembly of God now, because there IS one Body, neither will He listen to an excuse in our individual walk for a single "idle thought," because we ARE in Christ, and Christ in us, and we have the Spirit for its display.

If we plead but 'sin is in us—it is a fact; God's answer is, IT HAS NO RIGHT TO BE KNOWN AS A FACT, for we are dead and Christ is our life. (Col. iii. 3, 4.)

"If we held ourselves always absolutely dead, Satan would not touch us; he has nothing for the new man. But all this "Holiness through faith," is vague, and mischievous, as confounding inward temptation and lust with outward, and tending to that abominable doctrine that lust is not sin if we do not listen to it. Does it come from the life and Spirit of Christ within us?" (Coll. Writ. 23, p. 287) "For we all often offend" (James iii. 2), but this gives no excuse

for doing so, or for being conscious of any activity of sin within us. Christ living is now always our life, and we ought always by the Spirit to display Him in every detail of our walk,—to walk even as He did. (1 Jno. ii. 6.)

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“ The key to almost all that I have said lies in my objection to apply in an absolute way to the believer in his mixed condition down here statements in Scripture which refer to what he is and what is true of him viewed as in Christ. Such a practice results in the statements becoming mere dogmas conveying little sense of reality.”

“ I may add a word of explanation as to the use of the word ‘state.’ I have commonly used it as indicating that which is true of us as created in Christ, (as seen in the new man) apart from any question of the Christian’s walk here.”

Again on p. 4. “ For I say the Christian is in Christ and Christ in him, but then of course, that is abstract, as Scripture recognizes other things (sin and flesh) as being still in the believer.

“ . . . statements which are true of the believer abstractedly as in Christ.” (Letter of Dec. 6, 1889 )

Thus, in doctrine, “ IN CHRIST ” does not mean what it says,—in Him, who is living at God’s Right Hand, the same Person who is coming for us—but it means blessing, now abstract, to be made good in US when He comes. But we are now VIEWED by God as in Christ! Which is according to His word? Mr. R’s. conclusion comes to the exact opposite of what is stated in Scripture: compare what he says of “ created in Christ Jesus,” “ our state in Christ ” with Eph. ii. 10.

The Person of Christ is thus so woefully lost as “ IN HIM ” to be declared “ abstract,” and such doctrines have alas, been accepted as truth by numbers!

## THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

What has God wrought for you? When? and in whom? To learn what the Righteousness of God is we must first go back to the Cross, and with bowed heart there see the salvation of God. What God has HIMSELF wrought! That same Jesus now at God’s Right Hand—who is a living bright

reality to many of His loved people—WAS once on the Cross. Have you, then, with Him, meditated, fed upon, and pondered over what He suffered there? For it was very real to Him. He Himself the sacrifice for sin, but of sweetest fragrance and acceptability. But at what a cost to Himself! Who but God knows what Jesus suffered when given up altogether to the wrath of God against sin, and having substantiated God's Glory under it, His own Precious Blood was shed. All is finished, "Christ had no associate, no companion—but once, alone, and for ever, the thing was done." **THE BLOOD OF JESUS WAS SHED ONCE AND FOR EVER,** never again taken up in His Blessed Person, and He was laid in the grave. Thus the Righteousness of God is wrought out, and eternally subsists, but He who had accomplished it is Himself in death. All that the glory of God required had been magnified by that One Death which took place now over 1800 years ago. (Rom. iii., Heb. x.)

Dear Brother, do get before your heart and soul the Person of Jesus, and all these vain doctrines go to the winds. Go through what passed between God and Him alone—His history with God; so far as anyone is permitted to enter into it. It is real, and something right outside self; and your eyes will be opened immediately. Christ is God's Centre, not you. "Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a sepulchre wherein was never man yet laid, there laid they Jesus." (Jno. xix. 41.) His work accomplished, the full price paid, and man has now a right to a garden but it is in a sepulchre, in DEATH.

But on the third morn, God declares His answer to all this.

GOD, who found His delight in that life which man had hated, who treasured the preciousness of those sufferings which man had only despised, who knew the efficacy of that sacrifice, which, shrouded in darkness, had been offered to Him alone—God Himself now comes forth to tell out His thoughts of that one Treasure, His own Christ. The glory of God had been magnified by one Man who had given up all, even to His own precious life for it. And now the glory of God was to be found with Him alone. He must be glorified—all must be brought into subjection to Him.

And thus, God takes from among the dead that one Man raised in the power of a life according to the virtue of the work accomplished in His own Person. It is God's Righteousness to glorify HIM and Him only. And now He is sitting

at the Right Hand of God till that glory shall be displayed. (Heb. xiii. 20; 2 Cor. i. 19, 20; iv. 4.)

But what of me, do you ask? Oh! self is it? Thank God, judged, condemned, blotted out for ever in the Blood once shed. Now the Righteousness of God in HIM, and as in Him found in God's glory. He my Life. Paradoxical to the blind reasonings of the mind, but blessedly simple and known to the one who knows Him. I am in Him, and thus the one absorbing object, to learn what He is, the prize for which the Christian runs as if but one received it.

Paul had seen Jesus in the glory that witnessed the power of His resurrection in a brightness above the noon-day Sun. What a vision is thus laid open to us as we feast our eyes upon the glory and honour with which God has invested Jesus, and read in it God's thoughts of the worth of that one Name which is above every other name! WORTHY of every ray of that glory of God in which He is so soon to be manifested! This is the power of HIS Resurrection which Paul would know, not know it in himself, but know it where it is real, as it ever will be, in Jesus. He looked to be found in Him. What glories are revealed in God's word as we search it to find what God has done for the Man who has glorified Him! And as we do so, we continually find in it some new declaration of the preciousness of His Sufferings which God has not forgotten. Yes, but in all that glory it is the same Jesus who suffered, the Man of Sorrows who has known every grief and sorrow even unto death, now the Comforted One in the presence of God, who would, with the very joys in which He now rests, comfort and strengthen and encourage by His Spirit the oft-times weary hearts of His much-loved people, that they may learn the fellowship of His sufferings in the comfort of His present joy.

But we can only know Him as we are made conformable to His death. It is Jesus alone who, having died actually, was raised by the power of God and ever lives. But He and "I" cannot be living at the same time, each with our own lives. The reality of one has to go, and self thus makes "in Christ" abstract. God recognizes only the life of Christ. He lives, and to know Him I know my own life, for He lives in me. What a precious truth which will fill, with praise, our souls throughout eternity! But to enjoy it now I must count myself dead, in order to know Him livingly.

Thus Righteousness between God and man, which is

essential to relationship, is no longer found on the side of man. It is on the side of God for man. A new and independent revelation of righteousness. The only one Man who had a right to live before God shed His precious blood, gave up His life, thereby closing all that man was or could ever be for God. And God in this act has Himself put away sin (not yet, of course, manifestly). It was His own act of infinite grace once accomplished FOR MAN. And because His act, and His alone, Righteousness for man must EVER belong to God,—the revealed basis of all God's dealings with man. Rom. iii.) It is the Righteousness of God declared in the Blood of Jesus.

We will now read what Mr. R. says.

"This may be seen in regard to divine righteousness as "spoken of in 2 Cor. v., 21. The believer is in Christ, and "as there is become God's Righteousness in Christ; but "besides this, he still is in a condition here in which the "existence of sin and the flesh are taken account of (the "Spirit lusts against the flesh), and this is wholly distinct "from our state in Christ to which divine righteousness in "its fullest sense applies. Christ in glory is the full expression of divine righteousness, and to be there as He is, is "that into which grace introduces us in Christ. Hence Paul "looked to be found in Him, having the righteousness which "is of God by faith." (Letter of March 21). Mr. R. thus maintains the exact reverse of what we have been looking at. For him, it is a divine righteousness which, in the end, attaches itself to our state which it cannot do now while we are in a "mixed condition."

Moreover, God's Righteousness was accomplished once in the shedding of the blood of Jesus, and is for ever subsisting. GOD has declared it so, seeing that He has raised Him from the dead. All is accomplished in the Person of His Beloved Son. Hence all God's actings are now through and for Him. Thus in Romans, where it is God acting for man, we read *glorified*—"those He justified them He also glorified." God has finished His work for man in placing all power and glory in His Son as Man—while, in Phil. iii. 20, 21, "we await the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, who shall transform our body of humiliation into conformity to His body of glory, according to the working of the power which He has even to subdue all things to Himself."

But Mr. R. denies, virtually, the Righteousness of God is

an accomplished fact now. For it has yet to "display us in glory in the life and state of Christ" and to attach itself to our state; a thing very assuredly not to be seen yet!

God's righteousness is Christ; it is Jesus alone who was made sin on that Cross, Jesus who alone knew the glory of God, or who could make it good, and Jesus who alone, because of the glory of His own Person, could be a sacrifice for sin, and it is the efficacy of His shed Blood alone that God has acknowledged.

And it is Jesus, the Lord of Glory, ALONE, who is worthy of all, and to whom God has committed it to be displayed.

And we, precious grace, are in HIM. Whether it be the weakest trembling believer, or the Apostle who stands alone in his devotedness, all must find their righteousness before God by being in the blessed Person of His Son. May we know Him *now*.

But Mr. R.'s theory quite excludes all this. To say the Righteousness of God is Christ makes nonsense of it. There is a sad and solemn consistency, found in all his writings, of degrading almost to rationalism the Person of Jesus, who is God blessed for ever.

## REDEMPTION AND RECONCILIATION.

Redeemed! How divinely precious a word, because of the One who has bought us, and the price He has paid for us! God's love that could not keep back His Son, for the blessing of those who knew not their own wretchedness, and who loved their own selves and sin; and the love of Jesus, His Son, who came to give Himself to redeem such as you and me.

Dearest brother, if you get tired of the simple Glad-tidings of God concerning His Son, you have lost His heart, and if you grow weary and vexed with the Lord's people you have forgotten the love of Jesus. If God had got tired of His gospel these 1800 years you and I could never have rejoiced in His love. But where is Redemption? We find an answer in that Name, which is the key to all God has said. It is in the PERSON of His Beloved Son, Him who on Calvary's tree gave up the precious link He had with this world—His own life—in which, while lasting, God's relationships could alone be found, with Him who was the Rejected One. But if the world, thus condemns itself by rejecting

Him, He will pay the ransom in His own Person. He Himself will pass under the judgment, and bondage of death that He may reconcile all to God by tasting death for everything. Redemption is accomplished at the cost of His own precious Blood—wondrous and solemn FACT!

Does God despise that Ransom which He paid? We have seen God's answer when He raised Him from the dead and gave the Power of Redemption into His Hands who had paid the price. The only One who has prevailed to open the book: "In the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as slain,"—He is the One who brings all into blessing and joy. Have you never yet rejoiced at it? God would tell us even now of the glories of His Son. When this lost world, helplessly fettered by sin, misery and death, will be brought into the liberty of the sons of God, and the glory of HIS power in creation will declare the virtue of that *One Death*; all will rejoice together in the liberty which the power of Jesus has called forth. When the proud scourge of God, with all His glory shall sweep with the besom of destruction the lands through which he passes, as he hastens in his rage, to utterly destroy the one city of God's own choice; and there only to have all his pride contemned, "burnt and devoured" in one day as He who is Faithful and True comes forth with his armies to smite him with the sword of His Mouth. He who before opened not His mouth, but committed Himself to God, is righteously the One to have all redemption in the glory of His own Blest Person. The words of His lips are their own power.

And when, in that apostate city, headed by him who would dethrone God, and around whose walls the armies of "the Assyrian" have been gathered, while within, tribulation, distress, and anguish, such as have never before been, shall have reached their awful crisis, then shall the feet of Jehovah stand upon the Mount of Olives, before whose Presence it shall be cleft in the midst, and that One be owned as the same Jesus of Nazareth. Immediately to be seen in all His heavenly glory and Majesty, coming to defend His city, and to redeem those for whom His heart yearns, His people chosen in the furnace of affliction—precious everlasting grace, which confounds their poor hearts as they have to seek from Him the meaning of those wounds in His hands—HE their Saviour! Yes it is even so, peace and everlasting joy in Him their Righteousness.

When, too, the feet of the messengers—blessed, too, o Him, as indeed He does also now a thousandfold—hasten upon the Mountains in their joy to bring glad tidings and publish peace, and that say unto Zion, “Thy God reigneth” and the Lord sets up His ensign for the nations sending forth those that are escaped (Isa. xi. lii. lxvi.) to tell the poor captive, degraded Israelites scattered amongst their Gentile oppressors that Jehovah reigns, and many shall arise, as it were, from the dust of the earth and put on strength rejoicing that “He hath covered me with the garment of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,” while Jesus their Saviour shall Himself open a highway for them in the desert; waters shall break out in the wilderness, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the Ransomed of the Lord shall return with joy, “kings shall be their nursing fathers and queens their nursing mothers,” then do they find their joyful redemption in the power of Jesus the Lord.

Then, too, when He commands the nations before the throne of His glory to give judgment among them, oh! what redemption and joy is found in Him by those poor trembling fearful ones as they stand before His dread Majesty, knowing that they have nought to expect from that unknown Man of Glory but judgment and condemnation, but hear from His blessed lips the grace of their salvation!

All creation now finds its note of gladness in Him. \*Each tells his own special story of His everlasting grace, each has a new song in his mouth. “The whole earth is at rest and is quiet; they break forth into singing.” He has become their song. Is it EXCEPT ONE MISERABLE COMPANY OF PEOPLE, who have themselves at last become the gold of the tabernacle? Unhappy people! Is all this glory of the Lord nothing but prophecy or rapidly approaching events to you? I feel, if so, you cannot know much of the joy of His presence. What a different book God’s word becomes when reading about Him *with Him!* It is this which brings life into every word.

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\* This we know is when Righteousness reigns. After which, power being withdrawn that man may be tried once again only to manifest his final apostasy, and the heaven and earth that are now shall be burned up (ii. Pet. 3), there is the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Creation according to the efficacy of redemption. We *are* in HIM now, and so a new creation.



But do you ask, what of my glory? Does not God display me in glory in the life and state of Christ? What is my portion? Oh! Is it self again? Then it is well to learn the "beginning of the Gospel" first, and find sweetness and power in the old Gospel story that He has given "HIMSELF for me." And the charm of it will be according to what you know of Himself.

God has displayed you once, absolutely, and for ever, in the place of the Curse, your rightful place. Go back to the Cross when Jesus actually hung there, and see that "man" on the cross with Him, reviling, cursing and denying Him, blaspheming and persecuting Him, determining to blot out His name from the earth, the man who had put Him there, and moreover in himself a lover of sin and self, and despiser of others, proud, heartless and cold, boastful, weak, and foolish, irritable and despicable, but LOVED by the Son of God, and with Him. Marvellous unsearchable truth! Jesus loved *me*. And there in that awful solemn darkness in the depths of untold agony of soul bearing Himself God's wrath against me, He still owned that He loved me, confessed these very sins as His own, and having borne their judgment in His own Body on the tree, shed His precious Blood to blot out for ever such a man. But, thank God, the Righteousness of God and the love of the Son of God have covered him—God's burial of him.

But does not God raise him again or pass him through moral death. Never. (Gal. ii. 20 see Gk.) If you want to learn the end of the old man you must go to the Cross, and see the work of God finished for you between Him and Jesus alone, and the Blood shed; and if you wish to know of the New Man you must go to the empty tomb of Christ, and see but one Man raised from amongst the dead, and you in Him. God has taken no one else from among the dead; the bodies of saints still wait for the coming of Christ. But Jesus lives. And He is mine.

But each must dig for himself to get his treasure. Knowledge "about Him" is very easily gained. We hear some new idea, and are satisfied with the nice thought, and then go home, perhaps, pleased with our feelings of the sentiment. This only makes us desirous to hear another "new idea" to please our curiosity; but I ask you **WHAT OF YOUR SECRET COMMUNION ALONE WITH THE LORD AS HE KNOWS IT?** Alas! the present state of things among us is HIS answer by the Spirit of Truth. Jesus has

given Himself for you because God knew nothing but He could ever fill, satisfy, or delight our souls with true joy, and He Himself is my eternal portion in the Glory. All that He is the Treasure of my heart, and all that He has done the object of my adoring wonder both now, and, when He comes,

“What but one loud eternal burst of praise?”

I now copy from Mr. R.'s letter to C. S. Dec. 24, 1889.

“Further, as to divine righteousness, it is reasoned that “because it is maintained that divine righteousness in its “fullest sense sets and displays us in glory in the life and state “of Christ, that therefore that life and state are held to constitute our righteousness before God. This latter idea is, I “believe, Cluffism, but never had place in my thoughts. The “former I have no doubt is the truth, and gives the fullest “place to redemption. The Righteousness of God which is “upon us (Rom. 3.) has reference to our responsibility. We “are freely justified in His grace through redemption; but “this is not beyond the brass of the tabernacle. The glad “tidings of God's glory are far beyond the question of our “responsibility, and, through righteousness, sets us in a “wholly new state and place for man. And here we come to “the gold of the tabernacle. It is the fruit of Christ having “been made sin for us. This is 2 Cor. v. 21. We have a “place and a state in Him who is righteous and holy in the “Holiest of all.”

Thus, in doctrine, Mr. Raven separates both the efficacy and the value of the blood from the Person of Christ who shed it. For the result of Redemption, according to his theory is that divine righteousness displays *us* in glory in the life and state of Christ. The glory would then be ours. God's word gives precisely the reverse. Christ is displayed in us. The glory is Christ's. (2 Thes. i.)

Also with Mr. R. the value of the Blood becomes according to the blessing received by it. One thing is brass and another gold. His Person is lost to the heart; we rejoice in blessing not in Him, and the accomplishment of Redemption becomes *future*, since we have not yet reached “our state in Christ.” The only answer to this is, “WHAT IS WRITTEN.” Redemption which IS in Christ Jesus (Rom. iii. 24.) In whom we HAVE redemption (Eph. i. 7.; Col. i. 13.) But this is only one more instance of Mr. R.'s system, in which a meaning is provided according to the ingenuity of the mind, because unable to understand God's simple words *as they stand*. The

redemption of the body which is future is plainly said to be so in God's Word. Notice, too, how this system invariably stops short at the idea, and never brings a living Person before the soul. In the word of God we have "Redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Mr. R. ends at Redemption, while his following words explain it to be, "which is in us!" We have in 2 Cor. iv. "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," or "the glad tidings of the glory of Christ," or in Romans, the glory of God revealed in His glad tidings concerning His Son but not once "the glad tidings of God's glory" as Mr. R. has used it here. (See 1 Tim. i. 11, and cf. iii. 16.)

I only mention this to show how the Person of Christ never seems before the heart of Mr. R. in his "habit of thought." Redemption takes us out of one place and puts us into another out of *self* into CHRIST. Blessed exchange! Mr. R.'s theory says into *blessing*; and foundations are gone. Redemption becomes a sort of door by means of which we are passed through dying morally, into a sphere of blessing (which may fairly represent what he writes with respect to Eternal life) while He who is God Blessed for ever becomes a mere instrument for man's blessing "what we may call the Agent, the One who effects all. If He is to give effect to them He must be glorified." (*The knowledge of the Father and the Son* p. 11.) To read such indignities to our Lord Jesus, when walking with Him, is like a knife's stab to the heart; we shrink, in horror, from them; and Mr. R.'s writings are sadly full of them. What can be the state of our soul if we cannot feel it? (Read Jno. xiii. 31, 32: v. 23.)

## RELATIONSHIP.

In whom are our relationships with God?

The Father before the foundation of the world chose us in the One who was ALONE with Him in all the ineffable blessedness of His divine and eternal relationship as the Son who is ever in the Father's bosom. But the relationship in which we were found was one of judgment because of our disobedience and guilt; and that One leaves the glory to glorify His Father in His counsels, wipes out all our sins by giving Himself as our redemption, and then carries us back IN HIMSELF, to His Father, and that there, resting in the overflowing fulness of the peace, love and joy of that relationship

lost in adoration and worship of the Father's love, we may be ever learning the unspeakable blessedness of His own cry: Abba Father (Mark xiv. 36.) For it is the Spirit of God's Son who dwells in our hearts. (Gal. iv. 6.)

But, again, as children of Adam we had responsibility towards God in which, having sinned, our relationships with Him were everlastingly and irrevocably broken. But in the glad tidings concerning His Son is declared what God has done *in Him* FOR US. "By His own efficient act has put away by the shedding of the blood of Jesus that which God testifies against." (See Coll. Writ. 21. p. 572). It was God's own act. He has glorified Himself in it, and the glory is God's. He says "and my glory will I NOT give to another," but in His unsearchable riches of grace, He has effected it *for us*, so that being justified by faith we wait, with peace and joy before God, for the glory of His own work.

But the work, through which God has glorified Himself in our redemption, was wrought out by Jesus, and God's answer to it is, of course, the glory of His own Son.

And thus the one act of God's grace, in which He Himself settled the demand of our responsibility, was but the means of fulfilling His purposes of glory for His Son and infinite grace for poor sinners. He would have His Son the Head of a Race, the First-born of many brethren. For it was His own Son who had glorified Him under the sinner's responsibility, and who had borne the sins of many. All is laid upon Him, and thus by His accomplished work all are glorified of God. And what a glory! A poor sinner with no relationships but of eternal wrath from God, just picked up and moulded after the image of God's Son, (and we have the Spirit of adoption now,) heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ!

"All like Thee, for THY Glory like Thee Lord!"

God neither robs His Son of that glory which is His by right, nor sinners of His God-like purposes of grace and blessing for them. And while we wait for God's glory we are under grace. All, all is grace. Blessed be God, we do indeed "joy in Him." We know *such* a God.

But again, if God has thus taken up our broken relationships in which we had everlastingly dishonoured Him, and glorified Himself in them, and given us part, in His grace, in His *own* glory, we have also NEW RELATIONSHIPS created by Him.

God takes up the scene of death in order that He may fill

it with a glory that is found in HIM alone. Jesus alone can say, I am the Resurrection. God may in His power call things that are not as though they were and they exist, or He may redeem a groaning creation at His own cost, or create a new heaven and a new earth in virtue of redemption and in the power of resurrection, but the *glory* of Resurrection belongs to God alone in the blessedness of what He is. In it is brought to light His Own Glory; to shine forth in its Majesty when the Effulgence of God's glory is displayed, and the Son of Man has all things put under His feet, and is Head of all things, but, to the Assembly which is His Body, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all. (Eph. i.) The one thing of which He Himself has need, His own Body quickened, raised, and then seated together with Him in heavenly places, which was taken out of death by the power of the SAME life.

But the Head is already living at the right hand of God and in glory; the Holder in His own Person, as true to-day as for ever, of the Assembly's Blessings. But who is to tell us of them and fill us with them? Who can know them save the Spirit of God? and He dwells in the Assembly. There IS one Body and one Spirit. (Eph. iv.) A living Body NOW on earth, seeing that there is a living Head in glory, whose heart should be expressed by His dearly loved people, though in *their* day of universal lukewarmness and ungratefulness towards Him the light of His never tiring love shines, alas! not through the Assembly, but in Himself, and yet with a still brighter and tenderer glow because divine in grace, comfort, and warmth. It is then we find attraction in the ministry of the glory of HIS Person who alone changes not, and we return to the Gospels, not now to find relief to our own distress, nor even for *our* comfort and blessing, but in the spirit of worship to learn what *He* is while we have the gift of His company, as looking up into the face of Him who, though in glory, we know, now even as of old, bears upon His heart every need of His people, which is met by the grace that is *in Him*. What joy, too, is ours to see the expression of His love manifested in blessing, so that we can joy in the joy of our brother as *ours* because we know it comes straight down from Him; while in sorrow, when His chastening hand is upon us, we may find comfort and assurance from Him, in prayer, as we do but recognize His hand in bringing into the light the state of things as *He* knew them, and learn that He would have us feel them and bring them in acknow-

ledgment, and faith in Him, to His God and ours. However much it may humble and crush us, we may plead that it is His work—never ours—to make things manifest, and that, though He can only bless in truth, all His works must be *glorious*.

Then, again, how enraptured do our eyes become as they endeavour to take in God's scene. (Num. xxiii. 14, 24.) When He stretches out His Hand and commands blessings to hundreds, or, as with the woman of Samaria, He stoops to give peace to one poor lost soul; when, by His servants, the glad tidings run to the remotest corner of the earth, or when He unfolds the riches found in Himself to those gathered in. All tells of what He is and what He is doing, and how our poor hearts covet to take it all in. And, oh! what living grace! It is by the joints and bands of His own body He would convey His love.

Dear brother, may you and I learn to know Him. How much He has need of those who know His Heart and are able to express it! He has given us the Spirit for this. And did we remember that where two or three are gathered to His Name, there is more than the name, He Himself is in our midst—would there not be in our gatherings far more reality, power, and joy, as all looked to *Him*, to whom every desire was known, even of the very feeblest, who was yearning to let His beloved people depart in joy, carrying away with them full and abundant portions of blessing? But where is His servant whose ear is able to catch His voice, and whose heart is living in His, and in fellowship with Him entering into His own thoughts of compassion towards the little company around Him so as to be able to minister them? Happy servant that! One whom the Lord Himself serves.

Would not the prayers of the Assembly become very different, if it were remembered we were but expressing the needs which He was waiting to supply, but of which God must have the expression of dependence before blessing can be bestowed? Prayer then for one another becomes very real—not a mere expression of our sympathy for a friend, but—the opening of a door of blessing for another by taking upon ourselves his burden before the Lord. Might we know the deep mystery that there *is* one body as a living reality, not a mere accepted truth!

Then, too, in our wondrous privilege of coming in worship before His presence, and bringing to our God an offering of

priceless value and sweetest fragrance—the offering which He has provided at His own cost, but given to us that we may have fellowship and delight together with Him. He has given to us His Son. Exhaustless theme of praise! While God Himself bends His ear to listen to the feeblest utterance of joy in that Name which is ever *His* delight.

Thus, in all, Christ Himself is my Eternal Relationship with God. Yes! I may look up to Jesus in the Glory and say all that He has done and ALL that He is, is mine, because God *has* put me in HIM, and I may look down and see all that His heart, affections, and interests embrace, and know that He calls me to have fellowship with Himself in all. Oh! dear brother, how this has been lost amongst us! Indeed, the cry should go forth again. Awake! awake! Behold the BRIDEGROOM. He Himself is about to come.

We will again turn to see what Mr. R. writes:

“As the fruit of redemption he finds himself in a new and “blessed order of things with a new and suited being, and “an energy within given of Christ.” P. 5.

“It is a life which has its source, and spring, and seat in “Christ, and in which the believer, in the power of the “Spirit, realises by faith the new and heavenly being which “he is in Christ for God, in which he grows from the babe “to the man. . .” p. 4 (A life in which we are occupied with what we are! and in this we grow! Can there be conceived a more miserable “state” for a Christian to be in?)

“The new and heavenly man with which Eternal life is “connected is distinct and apart from the life and circum- “stances of men down here,” ‘*Eternal life.*’ p. 3. (I may ask you here to refer to Coll. Writ 10, pp. 532, 533, where J. N. D. states precisely the reverse of this).

Then again, in ‘*The knowledge of the Father and Son,*’ p. 19, “because the grace of God has set me in a heavenly place “and relationship before Him.” Also, p. 17, “You have to “go in the power of the Holy Spirit by faith outside this “world altogether.”

Thus, in Mr. R.'s system of relationship with God, is found, as will always be the case with false doctrine, the key to all. I have had difficulty in selecting passages from his writings to show in a few words the direction of his teaching, because it is found alike in all. His error throughout consists in substituting the work of the Holy Ghost in the soul for Christ Himself as the basis of relationship.

And thus the full fruit of redemption, when accomplished, practically places man in the glory independent of the Person of the Son who was the "agent" to "effect all." This is his full growth! The structure of Mr. R's. theology has the appearance of the Truth God has recovered to us, but I ask you solemnly, as in the presence of the Lord, upon what FOUNDATION is it all erected? Man, ignorant of God's Righteousness for him, has ever vainly sought to procure some fig-leaves, and they suffice till God's voice is heard.

In short, Redemption is reduced to the application of the Gospel morally to man. Hence the efficacy of the work itself is forgotten, the facts of the Gospel of Christ are slurred over, and the Person of the Lord Jesus Himself, who alone has accomplished all, is lost to the soul, all in order that "I" having died morally, may enter a sphere of blessing as a new and heavenly man. No one could state Mr. R's. meaning clearer than he does himself, *e.g.*, "In Jno. iii. we have the statement that the Son of man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, pointing to the judgment in the cross of man's moral condition in the flesh, and the removal thus of the distance that stood between God and man by reason of sin, so that man might be in the presence of God, revealed in the Son, consistently with Divine Righteousness." (*'Eternal Life,'* p. 4.) But it is still "I" who thus through redemption have come into the presence of God. (2 Cor. v.) "If any man be in CHRIST there is a new creation. . . all things have become new" is a thing unknown in this theology.

I would take the opportunity here of again repeating that I am not attacking Mr. R's. person, but his doctrines. I respect conscience, and I believe many simple Christians who professedly do not understand these doctrines have been stumbled by the "violent terms" used in condemning them. I feel I cannot use too strong ones. But I would reply that had you been truly "simple" your conscience would *at the first* have been awakened to what was dishonouring to the Person of the LORD. For is this the Gospel of John iii. 16? Did we receive everlasting life through this new gospel? If so "truth" was our Saviour, and not Jesus Himself. And our persons, as sinners, were saved; for it is only our condition in flesh which was judged and is to be apprehended morally, and thus renders valueless in itself the ACTUAL death and resurrection of the One ever blessed Person of



the Son of God, whose sufferings, infinite in their preciousness, of perfect and exquisite expression in His pure humanity: divine and priceless in their value, and consummate in their sweetness and fragrance; whose death final in its absolute surrender of life, eternal in its efficacy; whose resurrection, God's righteous act in life, and complete in all power, and whose glory everlasting in its strength, countless in the variety of its wealth, adorable in the richness of its grace and blessing, one and all, alone derive their perfection from what He is who has accomplished all, who is Himself thus made known and glorified in their display, and we in Him. Does not this satisfy you? It never will "self"—which ever seeks its own exaltation alone. Blessing would be nothing to us unless found in the Person of Jesus. We ought to have refused these teachings at the first; if we "listen" to them, our fall is on the same day. And afterwards it is easy to outreason our conscience, but we cannot satisfy it, when awakened by the Spirit of Truth; we may quench it. But as for Mr. R. personally, I can only feel sorrow, and I can truly say love in the Lord (see 1 Jno. v. 2.) My proof, I give, in refusing all fellowship whatsoever with his teaching, and seeking according to my little measure to raise my voice for the glory of my Saviour Jesus. I can quite believe the statement that he does not profess to have found "new" light, because from his writings it would appear he has never yet had the "old." But it is a sad thing for those who have confessed the truth to renounce it for novelties, and more sorrowful still to be the instrument of effecting this; while how many appear indifferent as to what is taught!

Mr. R. grants that our being justified from guilt and accounted righteous is absolute enough, and that having received the Holy Ghost we know the Father—the knowledge of the "babe in Christ," and also that the Christian is *viewed* as in Christ before God. Thus far is his positive teaching, and we may thank God, for even this. Were it preached, souls, who did not even know these things, would be blessed. It is the measure of sound teaching current in Christendom. But that which was acknowledged "absolute enough" has been left, to go forward and build the whole truth which God has in His grace recovered and given to us to hold fast until Jesus comes, of the blessed Name of God's Son as our Lord and Head, not even upon sand, but upon ABSTRACTION; and this is the principle of the mysterious delusion which is now

darkening the whole face of forsaken Christendom with such extraordinary rapidity.

God's truth is divested of its life, savour and power, and reduced to theory and dogma, until it is scorned, rejected and trodden under foot of men. (Rev. xvii. 16.) There is nothing we all have to guard against more than the lusts and workings of our mind (Eph. ii. 3), every thought of which is replete with enmity against God (1 Cor. ii. 14); for the mind in its operation and capacity abstracts circumstances and acts from their occurrence and reality, and reduces them to ideas which form the premises of thoughts and conclusions. And I would again press upon you, dear brother, truth is only of nourishment to your soul as far as found real and livingly in Jesus Himself making known that which He is, and has in His Blessed Person actually suffered, accomplished, received, and will carry into effect according to the grace and power that is in Him. And this is above the education of the mind.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

In the word of God we read that the Spirit of Truth shall not speak of Himself. He receives of Christ's things (Jno. xvi). His witness is ever to the glory of Christ, I would notice His testimony only on two points, that is the gift of everlasting life, and the power of it which is Himself. The poor sinner, through grace, believes in Jesus, the despised and rejected One of the world, receives everlasting life, and is born of God because of the glory of the One in whom he confided. The Spirit does not testify to the kind of hearing, nor to our faith at all, His operation is *according* to the glory of the quickening Son of God, whose voice is heard; and to take from the value of the grace received detracts from the glory of the Giver who is Jesus.

Then, being sealed, does the Holy Ghost witness to His own power? "By faith in Jesus Christ," Paul lived indeed. The Christ who was the Source of his life, who was his Life, was its Object also. It is this which always characterizes the life of Christ in us; He Himself is its object—He ALONE." (*Synopsis—Galatians* p. 349). Beloved brother, may we never forget the living activities of the heart of Christ, it is the power of this, *His* love that draws us to HIMSELF, and the

only Voice which *can* recall our backsliding hearts. We are dearer to Him than the wealth of His own Person. Such is His love which is unceasingly occupied with us. He *ever* lives to serve (Luke xii. 37). From morning to night, and from night to morning His ministry continues. HIS heart is never vexed or weary, though often grieved. Never let our coldness, insensibility and indifference to Him deny what He is *to* us. Unbelief and rationalism would do so. He Himself is the Author and Source of every fruit of grace seen in me. He is the Giver of the food with which my soul is nourished through the fellowship, ministry, and admonition of my brother, which in a special way feeds my soul. For I see Christ in my brother, and that, too, in a grace that is His, not mine. It is the expression of Christ as *his* life, and we may thus learn from it as we might from every Christian, and it yields abounding joy while the independency and sufficiency of self is checked and silenced. The Lord makes me feel my need of, union with, and joy in the other members of His Body. Would that we saw more of Christ in each other, and had deeper communion together in owning it.

Again it is the Lord whose watchful care not only knows my sins of ignorance, wilful transgressions and manifest faults but who meets them all by the grace that is in Him, and cleanses me through the application of His word. Are the ministries of the Lord's love abstract? Is my life abstract? It is if He is unknown as the OBJECT of the soul. For God has put me in Him, and He undertakes all for me. If He neglected me, or ceased His ministry to me for ONE moment—and may we ponder the thought in the heart—I should die; or were I out of Him at any time I should be eternally lost, for God's work would have failed who has put me in Him. (1 Cor. i. 32.)

No, He is my life, and He Himself enters into every exigency and circumstance of my pilgrim way, and glorifies Himself in all, so that as with Israel, on that blessed day when I see Him face to face, there will be nothing seen of me or my glory—all will be of Him. Then and then alone shall I be satisfied.

"Christ in us," is as divine a fact as that we are in Christ, unless we be reprobates (2 Cor. xiii. 5). The display and enjoyment of it is very different, which is according to our walk, and reckoning ourselves dead. "The woman that liveth in pleasure is dead while she so liveth." But if man measures God's Truth by his apprehension and realization of it, he soon reduces it to his own dead level.

But the Effectuator of Christ's ministries is equally One, who is the Holy Ghost, through Him alone do I know that I am in Christ, and enjoy it. He conveys and distributes all blessing and gift, ever in acknowledgment of the LORDSHIP of Christ, and is Himself the power and animating energy in the accomplishment of all. (1 Cor. xii.)

Mr. R. writes—"we are in Him, though not yet out of the old condition here save morally by His Death and we live by Him, in the power of the Holy Ghost," p. 5.

"The ministry is now of the Spirit, and righteousness in the light of the glory of Christ &c." 'Eternal Life,' p. 8. There can be no two meanings to what Mr. R. writes. He says we are in Him, and then denies it is actualized, because we are not yet out of the old condition; we can not be in two places at once, as a fact, we are either in Christ or we are not. Which is it? Moral apprehension cannot affect or annul a divine verity.

Christ is put away in the glory, and in place of actually being in Him, we have the Spirit who is power in us to lift us *up* into moral apprehension of our blessings. Thus a Christian has no *life* but the power of the Spirit in Him! Now the very simplest Christian can understand that if Christ is our life, and the Holy Ghost the power of it, Christ being displayed is glorified; whereas if only the power of the Holy Ghost as life is in us, we are empowered, lifted up; and self judgment, which reckons us in the place of death, may be abandoned—which is certainly acceptable to the old man. We thus approach God pleased with ourselves and the heavenly being we have become, and COMMUNION IS FALSE: it is this which makes these doctrines so solemn in their responsibility.

Mr. R.'s allusion to 2 Cor. iii. is an unhappy one, because Scripture states, the "Lord is that Spirit," which directly contradicts Mr. R.'s application. It is a beautiful argument of the Spirit on the glory of Christ as the Mediator of life. The face of Moses shone with glory, though transient, when he became the mediator of the ministration of death; much more must glory shine from the FACE of Jesus, and eternally subsist, because of His Mediatorship of life (v. 17, 8. and v. 11 cf. ch. iv. vi., see Gk. or New Trans.).

Have you received life? Then look up; the glory of that ministration *must* be found to-day in the *face* of Jesus. Look, dear brother, look. Before He could give life He must accomplish all in His own Person, and is thus Lord of all,

which is ever the witness of the Spirit of Truth; we never accomplish the work of Redemption; by it we are in Him. But the Mediatorship and Lordship of Christ inseparable from the Glory of His Person is nowhere found in this system of teaching.

Thus, in Mr. R.'s doctrines, Christ as the living Head of the Body in which HE lives (Acts ix. 5) is reduced to a thing of nought. THE BODY is SEVERED from the HEAD; and, thus severed, supposed to be indwelt by the Spirit to *lift it up* into the atmosphere of its prospective blessings. How prevalent is this doctrine of the Holy Ghost! Through it the Body is resolved into so many individuals each reaching after his own blessings. A more selfish, delusive, or conceited error, it is difficult to imagine, and it is precisely the danger God has solemnly warned us against in giving heavenly truth. God's Word is unequivocal. Christ is the Head and Life of the Assembly (Eph. iv. 14, 15. Col. ii. 18, 19). OF HIM the Body is formed, fitly joined together, and compacted. FROM HIM all nourishment comes, and BY HIM it is cherished, as a man does his own flesh.

In the Assembly there are distinctions of gifts but the same Spirit, distinctions of services and the same LORD, "But all these things worketh that one and selfsame Spirit dividing to every man severally as He will" (1 Cor. xii).

The Holy Ghost is NOT a power in *us*, He is the Displayer of Christ the NEW MAN. We are dead. I know man, disliking his own strengthlessness, lusts for power which belongs to God. Christ is the power of God. But how sad the downgrade which is ever the same! First, the attraction, glory and authority of the Person of the Son of God, of Jesus Himself, lost to the Heart—the foundation of all; and the foundation upon which God graciously recovered to us His truth through His honoured servants who walked with Him, delighted in Him, had fellowship with Him and one with another, treasuring up every thought, word, and action, or even look of His, pondering over, with full hearts, His sufferings, losing themselves in the joy of that wondrous search of what HE IS, knowing Him as Jesus their Saviour who had given His heart's blood for them, living at God's right hand, and for whom they waited with longing eyes and heart—to see Him in His glory. But soon the first love wanes, though the works and patience linger on for a little (Rev. iii. 3. cf. 1 Thes. ii. 3.) until the low state of things can be disguised

no longer, and Satan approaches with the truth which is retained in the mind as a means to *exalt* man and cover his nakedness.

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Before closing, I would submit to your faith, plainly and shortly, the FACTS of the Gospel of our LORD Jesus Christ, and ask you to go back, NOT in your mind, but in FAITH, to the wondrous and solemn moments in which they took place.

The mind, which is a faculty of self, cannot apprehend the intrinsic value of circumstances. Its apprehension is based on reasoning *about* them, and the more it does so, SELF is strengthened and developed. Faith makes NOTHING of self, and lives in what is OF GOD. The value of the facts of the Gospel are subverted by the doctrines. Do you believe that the Precious Blood of Jesus was shed once and NEVER *assumed again* in His Holy Person? (Jno. xix. 34; Heb. ix. 22; Rom. v. 9.)

If so, we have the END OF MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY, and God's Righteousness declared *in the place of* it, which has been closed for ever by that one precious Life being surrendered up. God's Righteousness and man's responsibility cannot subsist at the same time. Man's responsibility is the required fulfilment of his obligation to God as a living man. Jesus gave up His life and died, and God's Righteousness is declared in the death, not in the life, of that one perfect Man. If the efficacy of the shed blood is eternal, so is the end of man's responsibility (Rom. iii. 20).

Again, in the shedding of the blood of Jesus we see GOD'S OWN ACT, by which He Himself has put away all that was contrary to Him. It was accomplished by a work in which we had no part, incontrovertibly outside us, and long before we were born, and righteousness is found by *faith* in God, as has ever been the only ground upon which responsible creatures could have relationship with Him, that is, *denying* the whole ground of man's responsibility, to count upon Him to act according to His own grace *outside* it (Rom. iv.).

Justification before God, is in no way either by what we do, or by what can be done in or with us. We submit to what God has wrought in the Person of our LORD Jesus Christ (Rom. iv. 24). In HIM we see a perfect and accomplished work of God for us. Man in the PERSON OF

JESUS has done all for the glory of God, even unto His death, while in the resurrection we see what God has done for man in the Person of Jesus His Son.

“Resurrection is not looked at as victor-strength in man but as a divine act towards man.” J. N. D. “Letters,” vol. 2, p. 571. God has thus clothed us with His own Handiwork for His presence. He must ever take delight in this. We approach Him in Christ, the best robe of heaven.

Beloved Brother, have you tasted of that unspeakable rest, joy and peace in the Presence of God *Himself* as we come before a living God who has Himself accomplished all, and accepted all for us in the One who now sits at His Right Hand? Have you tasted in your soul that it is God’s Righteousness to receive, in eternal acceptance, the very weakest who trusts in Jesus. HIS righteousness, not ours. What peace, what fulness of soul! We are drawn to His Presence continually with the joy found in it, we rest in His Presence with singing.

Do you believe that GOD has raised Jesus up, and quickened on the third morn His Sacred Body, flesh and bones, and in whose Person alone, as in Himself, *all* life and power is now found?

Even as the risen Jesus Himself, when He stood in the midst of His doubting disciples, says, Behold my hands and feet that it is I myself, handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. While having thus been received up from them, it is promised them that in like manner He shall so come again. (Luke xxiv. 36-53; Acts i. 10, 11). God, too, has sworn with an oath to David that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before. spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades neither His flesh did see corruption. (Acts ii. 30, 31.) And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in our sins. 1 Cor. xv. 17.

Moreover, do you believe in the POWER of His resurrection, that the shedding of His own life blood for the reconciling of all things unto God, through which He lay in death, was answered of God by raising HIM in life according to the power in which HE should accomplish all? God’s power is now in HIM, as the Risen man (1 Cor. i. 24; 2 Cor. xiii. 4; Col. i. 20, 18; Rev. i. 18.)

And the whole Assembly of Christ, which was “a thing

which was not " (1 Cor. i. 28) lying lifeless, was quickened in HIM in the working of the might of God's strength in which He wrought in the Christ in raising Him from among the dead. (Eph. i. 20, 23.)

Do you believe that God *has* glorified Him at whose right hand He is sitting as Head of the Assembly and Lord of each and all? You have rejoiced thousands of days in the light of this world's sun, but in how many of them have you walked in that Glory brighter than the Eastern midday sun (Acts xxvi. 13) that IS *ever* shining from the FACE of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 3.) Are you walking by faith or by sight? (2 Cor. iv. 18; v. 7.) For the glory subsists; the Apostle says, we see Jesus crowned with Glory and honour. (Heb. ii. 9; xii. 2.)

I would ask you now to turn to Mr. R.'s writings (Letter March 21, note on p. 2) and read his remarks on Romans. But, before attempting to consider the two aspects of the Christian let me ask you again, "Have you weighed in your soul the wondrous FACT that the Blood of the Son of God has been shed" (1 Jno. i. 7) and learned in that the eternal and absolute condemnation of all your life. You have no right to allow one single activity of your "life in the blood" and without your blood what life have you? The ONLY life that you have is Christ HIMSELF (Col. iii. 4), and if He is not IN YOU—your Life—you have no hope of glory. (Ch. i. 27.) All else has been closed in His death.

With Mr. R. "a Christian is of God in Christ, &c. . . . but the truth which describes him in that aspect does not describe what he is in himself." Thank God. It does NOT. But do you ask what is a Christian in himself? The very same man who put Christ on the Cross, whose only rights are to the torments of hell. It is him SELF. Rom. iii. describes him, Rom. vi. buries him, and, mark, it is the old MAN, *not* "his moral condition" that was crucified with Christ. Were it his moral condition, the same *man* passes into a "sphere and order of blessing." In Gal. ii. 20, Do "I" pass through death into life? "I" have been crucified with Christ. This is final death not life, but CHRIST lives *in me*—the New Man. In the place of *my* living, Christ lives in me, and I live—the only ground of life; but it is also justification of life. Once more, lest the Christian might still mistake, and think himself something, the Spirit of God has given us to know what the ensample for Christians was in himself; he says, I



*am* (not was) the chief of sinners. (1 Tim. i. 13.) "Our" persons are invariable in *their* value, and so is the ever blessed and infinitely glorious PERSON of the Son of God, and I in Him. The great "I AM." He *cannot* deny Himself. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And oh! wondrous story—He is Jesus!

Thus under the guise of heavenly truth, these doctrines are but a miserable apology for the life of the "old man," and offer to the Christian an easy and flattering means of escape from self-judgment; and it has become necessary to contend for Jesus our LORD (2 Tim. i. 8), against *ourselves*. The result of having the care of HIS NAME given to us!

The word of God, and also beloved J. N. D. (who expected Christians to know "the beginning of the Gospel") always uses the truth of Christ our life for the most UNQUALIFIED JUDGMENT OF SELF AND ITS LIFE. But in the place of judgment, we have here the different aspects *compared*, and the subjective side developed. Is this the same in foundation? The only Blood which the word of God calls Precious is that of Jesus, the Son of God. It was given as an atonement for our souls.

May God give us to cover our faces with shame before Him as we realize what is the character of this teaching which has been tolerated and developed amongst us of late years. Truth and blessing in the place of CHRIST HIMSELF being used as the ground of approach to, and of liberty before God, and thus the weakest believer, ever so ignorant of "truth," who comes to God pleading only the Name of Jesus is accepted—it is GOD'S Righteousness to do so—and we refused.

I have purposely omitted the whole subject of Eternal Life, and New Birth. These, gifted brethren have fully entered into. Though it is well to notice that by Mr. R.'s doctrine, Christ being taken away from the soul as its object, Life is put in His place.

"In Christ" is made to be a "state in Him" which, though ours now, has not yet been actualized *in us* but "for faith positively true" (?); if we use the word, it is subjective.

Life in us, Christ, and thus the full capacity of enjoying *Him*—Precious Gift—becomes "Objective and Practical." And so the Christian's heavenly blessing is, to be pleased with His own life! And the glory OF CHRIST annulled and supplanted in either.

I have sought only to press GOSPEL FACTS, with the prayer that the Lord may graciously use them to deliver many from the helpless uncertainty and bewilderment into which they seem to have been entrapped through analysing their own life, and blessing, and their progressive stages.

If we reckoned ourselves *dead*, as God tells us to, all is simple. There is no such thing, properly speaking, as Subjective Truth (unless Rom. vii. be so called); for Jesus says, I am THE TRUTH as also *the way* and *the life*, and He is now, as ever, the Object of the soul's adoration; AND ALL TRUTH HAS BEEN VERIFIED IN HIS BLESSED PERSON (11 Cor. i. 20.). A soul is not blessed, but, on the contrary, stumbled by "truth" being presented to it, and it is good for us who minister the word to be constantly reminded of this (1 Cor. viii. 1.). I have amongst the papers sent me a printed extract of J. N. D. which well illustrates the distinction. It is headed, "The Difference between Quickening, *i.e.*, New Birth and Quickened together with Him," and is plainly the *application* of Truth to the soul. The italics leave little doubt for whose cause it is being circulated. For all the "SELFS" and "SPHERES," as far as possible, are brought prominently forward, and Christ and His work—the foundation—left in the background, which thus renders it of quite a different effect upon the soul in its application.

For in the place of Christ Himself, truth or the idea about Him is presented, and the believer trusts a false object. For instance, if I were merely a quickened soul, how do I get deliverance? Is it by an effort to pass through death morally, or to grasp heavenly truth? Is death a special effort of *life*? For by faith I must cease from all effort and renounce everything that is in or from me, and reckon myself no longer amongst the living but the dead of this earth, buried and gone from its face, and then look back over 1800 years to Christ, and from that one tomb see the record of man's sad and monotonous history of death for ever abolished, and the glory and light of life and immortality found in Jesus who is risen and (blessed Grace of God!) know myself in *Him*. All else but Him is death. And, so with the paper above referred to, Christ Himself and His work is presented to faith leading the believer right away from himself and his efforts; but, by the italics, Christ Himself is put *behind* the truth about Him and His own work. And thus truth abstractedly is brought before the mind as

something to be grasped and realized, and the soul, if earnest enough, only led into deeper bondage; as many of us have had to learn at sad cost. To learn what He is we must cease from ourSELVES.

Beloved Brother, Jesus Himself, our Master, is coming quickly. Does not this thrill your soul with joy unspeakable? Then, at last, to see and adore Him from whose Face now radiates the glory of that light which shines about our path more and more unto the perfect day; then at last to be forever with Him whose love—Ah! none but we ourselves know how precious He is to us, we feel as if He has singled us out as the one object of His Heart upon whom to lavish the whole wealth of His love: but it is even so, He has called each by his name—has been the “tree of life” to our souls in the barren wilderness where no water is; and then, too, from the lips of the blessed Man in the glory to hear the same well-known voice which has been the living delight and unfailing comfort of our souls throughout our pilgrimage: that voice of His, which in reading His word has caused our hearts to burn within us, as He told us, they were words about *Himself*, and which has ever assured us, when guided by His word, of His own approval, and garrisoned our hearts and minds with the peace of God which none else can give or take away. We know His voice. He ever answers in living power to the truth of His word, and we want no more. He will confess us at His Coming, and we, with expectant hope, await the glorious time when we shall meet Him in the air, desiring only one thing in this day of His rejection,—that we may be faithful to our precious Lord, and hold fast to the Name of His most blessed and adorable Person.

May this be His Grace to you and me, beloved brother.

Your brother in the love of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

H. G. BRAND.