

# **The Secret of True Peace and Power.**

BY

**WM. BURBIDGE.**



LONDON :

ALFRED HOLNESS, 14 PATERNOSTER ROW.

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R. L. ALLAN & SON, 143 SAUCHIEHALL STREET.

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# The Love of Christ for “His Own.”

John xiii.



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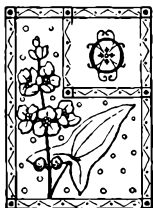
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# The Love of Christ for “His Own.”

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JOHN XIII.



UR theme to-night is the love of Christ for “His Own,” what it is to be the accepted objects of a love that, from its very nature, is infinite, and must, however truly enjoyed, surpass knowledge.

It is only as our souls are strengthened by the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we can at all enter into this subject, and I do pray, with the apostle, that He will move the affections of us all, that we may enter upon it with prepared hearts (Eph. iii.). At the very beginning of these four connected chapters (John xiii. to xvi.) the Lord in a sentence lights up the past, the present and the future. “*Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end.*” Our need at first, as of the world and as subject to its ruler, He met by the total surrender of Himself to the death of the cross (John xii. 31-32). Greater love

than this is impossible, and the result is, that He makes all who believe in Him "His own" by it. "His own" is a most affectionate word from His lips. The world loves "his own" (xv. 19), and we were of it. Now we are Christ's who has made us "His own" at the cost of His blood. It is indeed a little word, but it embraces every relationship into which we have been brought by that supreme act of love, His death at Calvary. Whatever we were before we believed is all changed by the cross. Therefore He can thus speak of us—"My brethren," "My lambs," "My sheep," "My friends," and collectively, "My Church:" remembering always that when interceding for us with the Father, He says—"All Mine are Thine and Thine are Mine." We thus belong to Him and He would have us know it, that He may be all to us, the very centre of our faith, the One in whom we trust at all times, and His constant changeless love our sure resource in every need: as His brethren, to confide in Him for every step to glory (Heb. ii.): as His sheep, for all we want

and for deliverance from every fear, right through the valley of the shadow of death : and so in all else.

There may be great ability displayed in speaking or writing of our new relationships and of what becomes us in them, but are we daily learning the force of this expressive and endearing term—"His own;" as therefore no longer the world's own? Oh! it brings Christ so near to us. So Paul found it. "The life which I *now* live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). The light of His love in the past shone brightly on every step of Paul's life from his conversion to the end, and that same love should be to us what it was to him.

There are three truths as to our Lord, brought before us at the beginning of this chapter. First that He was departing out of the world. Second, that He was going to the Father. Third, that the Father had given all things into His hands. In the greatness of His love He would have us share in this three-fold joy. In order to

this, during supper, that *last* supper so full of testimony to His death, "He riseth and laid aside His garments; and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." It is clear that our Lord by this action would leave deeply impressed on our hearts the truth, that His love, while fully expressed in dying for our sins according to the Scriptures, is still in living exercise towards us, and will be to the end. That now, though glorified, He girds Himself to serve us, and takes the low place even at our feet, that He may separate us morally from the world, from all love of it, and of the things that are in it. The very mention of this should move every affection of our souls. What then to experience it? What, to respond to His grace and thus yield to His heart's desire that, while in the world, we may have our "part" (*i.e.* portion) with Him where He is, *with the Father*, and not with the world that lieth in wickedness? Is there any truth more needed at this time,

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when there is so much all around that appears harmless and yet hinders our joy in the Lord? What a poor, wretched world it is, yet the devil tried to tempt even Jesus with it (Matt. iv. 8-9). Does he not tempt us, and is there not within us a proneness to desire rest in the things of the world, an easy path, and even to receive honour one of another? Shall we then refuse the present service in love of our adorable Saviour, in unmasking the wiles of the devil by His word? The water in the basin points to "the water of the word" (Eph. v. 26), and "the word" searches the heart and detects its thoughts and intents. As water loosens and detaches the dust of the earth from the feet, so "the word" separates us from all worldliness to our true position in and with Christ, and brings us into communion with the Father and with His Son, that our joy may be full (1 John i. 3-4). Shall we not welcome this close, personal dealing with our ways when done by the Lord, and that so tenderly? It is not the whip and the scourge, but the water and the towel. Do not let us, like Peter, make objection and put forward our



own thoughts (vv. 6,8,9). He was wrong every way. He knew nothing, apparently, of what it is to be, as to his *person*, clean every whit before God, and that by new birth; while, as to his *walk* to need the cleansing of "the word." He learned it afterwards, as we shall see. He was clean, but all his ways were not.

It is in this gospel that we have a remarkable witness to the two fold character and value of the death of Christ for us. When Jesus said "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, and when the last act of indignity was done to Him, the soldier with a spear piercing His side, (though he knew that He was dead already), "forthwith came thereout blood and water," and we learn the value of the Cross as we search the Scriptures as to the efficacy, not of the blood only, but of the water. The Old Testament is full of illustrations of our need, as sinners, of both. The children of Israel were safe from judgment under the blood of the Paschal lamb, but were saved from their enemies by passing through the Red Sea. Faith was needed for both (Heb. xi. 28-29). The

leper was pronounced clean at once when the blood of the dead bird was sprinkled on him, yet to be clean he washed himself in water (Lev. xiv.). In the ordinances of the Day of Atonement almost all things were by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission. Thus Lev. xvi. 33 is very expressive.—“And the high priest shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar; and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.” When this was done *all* were clean, but being only by the blood of bulls and goats—inefficacious sacrifices—the atonement had to be repeated year by year continually. It is not so with the precious blood of Christ. Those who are cleansed by it are bidden to draw near within the veil *at all times* in fullest confidence (Heb. x. 19-20). We might think that we should defile the heavenly sanctuary by our presence, but so perfect is the efficacy of the blood of Christ that, not only is the worshipper once and for ever

cleansed by it, but the sanctuary in every part is protected from defilement by it. Yet the priests had to be washed with water and to wash their hands and feet whenever they went into the tabernacle. All the congregation, too, had to be taught the use of "the water of separation."

If Lev. xvi. gives us instruction, typically, as to the efficacy of the blood, Num. xix. is no less explicit as to the need of the water; though it is to be feared that some have given but little attention to it, forgetful that, if moral cleansing does not follow judicial cleansing, their lives are not, and cannot be, as becometh saints. Some citations from the New Testament may well follow those from the Old. We are pointed in 1 John v. to the blood of Christ as the witness, in conjunction with the water and the Spirit, that God hath given to us eternal life. The testimony as to our many sins in chap. i. is—that His blood cleanseth us from them all; in Eph. i.—that we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God's grace; in Rom. v.—that we are now

justified by His blood; in Heb. xiii.—that Jesus suffered without the gate that He might sanctify the people with His own blood. These unqualified and unchangeable results of the blood of Christ should be cherished in our hearts. For the believer, there is not a single question left to be settled. *Now, even now*—"There is not a cloud above, not a spot within."

Yet while this judicial cleansing is perfect and abides for ever, there is moral and practical cleansing also. Till the death of Christ, God was dealing with the old nature to demonstrate its hopeless state, its enmity and rebelliousness. The final proof was the cross. There man was displayed in all his repulsive nakedness. Then there was no cloak, no excuse for his sin. This old rebellious nature must be put away by the death of Christ, or moral, practical cleansing is impossible. Separation from sin is by being *dead* to it. Separation from the world is by being *crucified* to it, as Paul was (Gal. vi. 14). In Rom. vi. 2, we have the fact as to all who believe—"we *have died* to sin." In verse 6 we *know* that our

old man has been crucified with Christ, and in verse 11, we are to *reckon* ourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. The fact, our knowledge of it, and our duty are here plainly stated.

This is the doctrine, but in the chapter before us to-night we have more. Our Lord and our Teacher is seen in astonishing grace coming to us individually (as we see to Peter) that we may truly and willingly submit our whole walk and way to His judgment in order that they may be judged and cleansed by Him. How real is the restoration of our souls when He restores them. There are moments of temptation to us all, and we differ in our tastes and temperaments. Some amusement, as the world calls it, may be going on in the street, and in passing, the ear may be caught, the eye follows, the mind gets entangled, and true spiritual joy, to say the least, is marred. We are having fellowship with folly. Can we barter our fellowship with the Father and with His Son for trash? Alas! in one way or another, as James says, "we all often

offend" (chap. iii. 1, N.T.), but in this chapter in John we learn that the Lord, the Teacher, is nearer to us than all else; and nearer to save us by teaching us "the difference between the holy and the profane, and to discern between the unclean and the clean." There is nothing that so reveals to us the efficacy of the Word for every day life as the present, faithful, affectionate service of Christ in washing away our defilements, for His word meets everything. Having the new man now, not only the old man, but *his deeds* are to be put off, that Christ may be all, as well as in all (Col. iii. 10, 11).

In Peter we have a striking example of this gracious service of the Lord. His case has been referred to already. Self-confidence was his weakness in the beginning of his course, and this led him to lay claim to superior devotedness to his Lord, which in the moment of trial he failed in the most distressing way to display. During this last supper, Jesus said to the disciples—"All ye shall be offended because of Me this night, for it is written, I will smite the

shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." Peter at once replied, "Though all shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." This unseemly speech seemed to call in question the word of the Lord and the truth of the Scripture He quoted. His feeling of devotion to Him at the time cannot be doubted, but why this painful self-assertion? Was there any humility about it, any real knowledge of himself and of Him in whose presence he was? The Lord gave a very quiet answer to this great demonstration of love—"Verily I say to thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice." Alas! he was unmoved, he adhered, and even added, to his boast. Never was he nearer ruin, but the Lord prayed for him. His grievous fall we need not dwell upon. When the cock crew his conscience was reached. When the Lord looked on him, his heart was broken. He remembered the words he had despised and refused, and went out weeping bitterly. That forgiving look, those faithful words, changed

everything. He who said "Thou shalt never wash my feet" learned his need, and the Lord's rich grace to meet it. He had sat among the rejecters and murderers of Jesus, warming himself at the fire they had kindled, and there denied Him. In John xxi. we see him by another fire, fed and nourished by the risen Lord. His restoration must be public for his future service and joy, and others must witness the rich grace, the changeless love of Him whom he had so deeply wronged. And not His love only, but the value that He set on the love of His poor, weak disciple. The heart-searching question, thrice repeated and thrice humbly and sincerely answered—"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me"? furnished every other disciple to the present moment with an inexhaustible theme. So the Lord of glory speaks to each one of us; can we reply as Peter did? Then can He trust us with what is dearest to Himself, and give us not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake (vv. 15-19).

There is one thing more that may be pro-



fitable to us, to notice "That disciple whom Jesus loved" (so John delights to describe himself) would not abandon Peter when in soul distress. It was impossible for such a disciple to look lightly upon his grievous sin, but Peter's heart was broken and contrite and he could have sympathy with that. Therefore let us observe—when Mary Magdalene on the first day of the week came to the sepulchre and found the stone rolled away, she ran to Peter. But where would she seek him? She evidently knew—*with John* (John xx. 2). Did he not remember the word, "If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet?" That disciple did not abandon Peter in his sorrow. Who more constantly together than Peter and John, both before and after the resurrection? Can we then question the care of the one and the grateful love of the other? Would *we* bind our brother to us? Here is a lesson. By grace, be faithful, yet merciful; be true, yet loving. A broken and a contrite heart the Lord will not despise. Shall we?      WM. BURBIDGE.

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John xiv.



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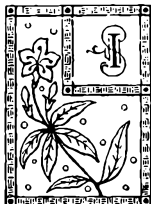
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# The Secret of True Peace and Power.

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JOHN XIV.



NEED not say that the Lord knew well the sorrow that would come upon the disciples on the morrow; the distress, if not the darkness, that would overwhelm them when He should be crucified. It is scarcely possible for any of us here to realise the intensity of their first grief when He whom they trusted would have redeemed Israel was given up to the terrible death of the cross, and was laid in the grave. Their earthly view of the kingdom, their confidence in Him as the Messiah of whom Moses in the law and the Prophets did write, the Heir of all its glory, and their anticipations of the blessedness of the time when He should have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth, would make their disappointment beyond our ability to conceive. Yet, this would be as nothing compared with the anguish which would fill their hearts at the cruel murder of Him to whom they were devoted by ties of tenderest

affection, of the most reverent esteem, and of the deepest gratitude.

The Lord, in a few forcible words, described their grief, "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come. . . . and ye now therefore have sorrow"; but He would that their sorrow should not trouble their hearts. "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me." He points beyond the cross. In all His glory with the Father, the glory which He had with Him before the world was, His interest in them would be unchanged. If in that upper chamber He had instituted the memorial feast and had washed their feet—acts of deepest meaning—if in all His course they had seen His devotion to them, His love would know no change. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end," that blissful end which was purposed for them. Beside all this, if they had love for Him would they not rejoice in His joy? Would it not be a sweet and blessed thought that He was in the perfect delight of the Father's glory away from the world that scorned and crucified Him? Nothing takes us so much out of ourselves as pure, disinterested love for another, and this is supremely the case when Christ is loved (v. 28).

There is not a greater blessing for the human heart than for Christ to dwell in it by faith. This not only takes us out of ourselves, but, in spirit out of the world and all its allurements to enjoy His love for us, and to reach forward to all the glory which His love has made ours. We learn in His present place and joy our true place and portion, and know that where He is at rest and in perfect blessedness we shall be also. This is the truth set before us at once, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." He had said, "*Believe* also in Me," and that at once puts faith to the test. The words are most simple, but where in all Scripture is there such a revelation? Have we yielded ourselves to its heaven-attractive power? "*My* Father's house." Oh! what a contrast to this sin-afflicted earth and to the world that hated Him. There He rests with the Father, and soon with all the sons of God whom He would bring to the same home to be for ever with Him. Solomon, standing before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spreading forth his hands

towards heaven, could say, "Hear Thou in heaven *Thy* dwelling place." How surpassing is this word of Jesus, "I go (there) to prepare a place for you." My Father's dwelling place is Mine, and *shall be yours*. Again we say, what a contrast to the world and its prince. It was not only that the evil passions of men were exhibited at the cross, Satan's power and malice were at work there, as the Lord testified, "This is your hour and the power of darkness." He found something in the hearts of all to act upon, even in the soldiers, to get possession of His garments and cast lots upon His vesture. No creature can estimate the moral depths and heights of that scene at Calvary, but it is joy to know that the Holy Sufferer has passed out of it to His Father. His taking the kingdom is not here referred to, nor any change in the ordering of the earth externally is even hinted at. The Holy Ghost came down to take people out of it, but no vials of wrath were poured out on guilty Jerusalem, and the Gentile monarchy was undisturbed.

This discourse differs essentially from that on the Mount of Olives, and this was the latest. The distinctive portion which the believer in Jesus has, and the place he will have, apart from God's government of Israel and of the world,

are obscured whenever an attempt is made to mix up the prophecy in Matthew xxiv. with the truth revealed in John xiv. In Matthew xxiv. there is much to direct our thoughts to what is, or will be, passing on the earth. In John xiv. there is absolutely nothing. On the contrary, there is everything to turn our thoughts away from the earth. The Lord engages our affections more and more with His Father, with Himself, and with His home, and that home is *our home*. Do we not wish to be taken to it? It is only a question of "a little while" and He has arranged how to bring us there. As I am speaking to you, there the Son, in the enjoyment of His Father's love, is looking down upon the many sons of God who are such by faith in Him; each in his own difficulties and sorrows, the young and the old, the poor and the rich, the sick and those that are well, leading them on step by step, until at last He will come again and receive all to Himself, and fill that house with those He has so loved down here. How good to begin this chapter with this sight of Christ!

But let us pass on. The grace of the Lord is wonderful. He had just said, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," when Thomas interrupted Him, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?"

It was an exceedingly rough speech. Not that Thomas did not love the Lord, and ardently (chap. xi. 16), but this is a very marked trait in his character, to be very outspoken as to his difficulties, regardless of the way he did it. The Lord did not allow this apparent contradiction to arrest the outflow of His love. He knew how to turn it to the richest account. "He saith to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by Me." "*I am the way.*" In a little while they would see where that way began, for to be brought to God is to be brought into the light where there can be no concealment of even a thought or intent of the heart.

The first, the deepest, the indispensable necessity for such a presence is to be cleansed from *all* sin, and this could only be by the shedding of His blood. Thus, from the abandonment on the cross—"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me"—from death, from the tomb, right up to the Father in heaven, He is the way. His side must be pierced, the blood of expiation, and the water of purification must flow, the veil must be rent, the grave must be overcome, or not a step can we take from our place and portion to His. If He is the way, He must be the way from Calvary. When



I see His sorrows and His sufferings—when I see that in His sorrows and sufferings He must be forsaken of God—when I see that nothing but the blood and water from His pierced side can meet my need, and that He must be buried to give me the victory, in His resurrection, over the grave, then I say with adoring praise, "*He is the way*," and have no fear of the end. There is more than this. He has gone before us to mark out our path, and His unceasing care, as we confide in Him, will keep us in that path. He is in this the way. We can only learn our way by studying His. He said, "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." Are *we* rebellious? Our wills must be broken, or we fail to realise the sweet and quiet power of the word we linger over—"I am the way." Even to the restored Peter the word had to be repeated—"Follow Me." "*Follow thou Me.*" It is not without interest—so practical was Christianity at first—it was commonly talked about as "the way" (see Acts ix. 2, xix. 9, xxiv. 22 R.V.)

Jesus added, "I am the truth." We have no measure or standard of good but Christ. By Him alone can we put difference between good and evil, between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean. Conscience without Him

is an unsafe guide (Acts xxvi. 9). He is the Truth also, as to the scene in which we are found (John xv. 18, 19), and, as to what He has made us, by His work, before God—"As *He is*, so *are we* in this world." Equally so as to what He has made us before men. "Now are ye light in the Lord, walk as children of the light ;" but so to walk is impossible if we lose sight of Him as the Truth. Hence it is added—"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee" (Eph. v. 14, R.V.), for sleep (spiritual slumber) closes the eye like death. The most instructed Christian, if he is to shine as a light in the world, must receive light continually from Christ. *Knowledge* of truth is not *faith* in "the Truth."

Christ is the Truth as to the Father. We can learn the fulness of the name "Abba"—only in Jesus. "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." Philip had said, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us"—a beautiful confession of a profound truth, though one who had been so long time with the Lord as he, *ought not* thus to have made it. It was impossible to have a fuller revelation of the Father than in Jesus, and the Lord tenderly rebuked him for his dulness. But is he alone in this? How many seem to lack the settled confidence of

*heart* in the knowledge of God as their Father, and of themselves in the relationship of sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. In Christ alone we learn both. Grand study! Shall we neglect it and like Philip miss our true blessings?

And Jesus also said, "I am the Life." On this truth we must touch with deepest reverence. In the Epistle we thus read—"The Life was manifested, and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." Human thoughts must be silenced here. Are they to be heard for a moment when the glory of "The Life," which was with the Father in and from all eternity, is in question? The second truth is, "The Life *was manifested*," and this is quite distinct from the third, which is, "*We have seen it.*" The sun may shine upon sightless eyes. Is its glory dimmed because they see it not? So the Holy name "Son of God" was given to that "Holy Thing" which was born of the virgin: "Immanuel" too, and "Jesus." Did the *manifestation* of these glories of the babe laid in a manger depend on any of Adam's race beholding them?

Some did, but their sight of these glories did not make them shine the more, neither did the blindness of the mass as to them make them

shine the less. Oh! put no slight on the truth, "The Life *was manifested*." If some fail to see it every moment from His incarnation to His leaving the world and going to the Father, attribute it to no eclipse of its glory. Let the shame be theirs for their dulness, for the dimness of their vision, let it not be His, for the least slight to the Son is a slight to the Father. "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent Him." To those who delight to trace the glories of "The Life" in its uniform, constant display, how sweet the truth that He is *their* life now (Col. iii. 4). To look on Christ and know that He is "our life," is a joy indeed. No doings of our own gained this life, it is God's free gift, and all right doings must flow from having it. "He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

One brief word more on the Lord's answer to Philip—"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." This gives us an increased interest in the records of the Lord Jesus in this Gospel—selected portions out of the vast materials which His works and words supplied (John xxi. 25). In chap. iv. *He* sought the woman of Samaria, but He also adds—*The Father* was seeking worshippers (v. 23). In v. Jesus quickened dead souls by His word. The Father quickened

also (v. 21). In vi. the Father giveth the true bread from heaven ; Jesus gave it too (v. 51). In x. Jesus declares His love and care for His sheep, but said—"I and My Father are one" (vv. 28-30). These examples might be multiplied, but are enough to show us how intensely valuable the Gospels are. In the Epistles we learn *where* we are brought in Christ, our standing and condition ; but in the Gospels we learn to *Whom* we are brought, and *Him* who brought us. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."

The 12th verse of this chap. presents to some a difficulty. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also ; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto My Father." In the next chap. He teaches them that He would work through and in them ; that without Him they could do nothing. Thus the glory must be His, although He delights in putting honour on them. But mark the words "Because I go to the Father." When He left the world to go to the Father the work given Him to do was finished (John xvii. 4). Righteousness was accomplished ; peace was made ; love to sinners had been perfectly displayed ; God was glorified in all His attributes, and the Holy Ghost could be sent

down. Before the cross He was straitened, but after He had ascended, the Gospel of reconciliation could go forth in the whole creation (2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Col. i. 23). How few were His disciples before; yet on the day of Pentecost one single testimony brought thousands to confess His name!

Observe that the verses 12, 13, 14 are closely connected. "*And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name I will do it.*" Would they desire to do the works He did? Then, their motive, their object, must be the same—the *Father's glory*. Whatever Christ did, from the greatest act to the least, it was for this. "I honour My Father." "I do always those things which please Him." How many motives may sway us. How easily SELF in its ten thousand forms may warp even our best affections. Yes! this is true. Still in holy confidence, in the name of Jesus, and with the love of a child we are to pour out our hearts before the Father. Self will be subdued in that presence, and our prayer and our efforts will be directed aright. "Whatsoever" is a full word; a single eye and an undivided heart are included in it. Twice the Lord says, "*I will do it.*" Do we question it, or shall it be said of any of us, "Ye have

not, because ye ask not"? Whatever will be for the Father's glory *in* us, or by us, it is for us to ask, it is for Christ to do, and to do in His own perfect way. May we prove it.

In xv. 16 "ordained" is simply "set," and although the Apostles had conspicuous and honoured places, every Christian has some place where he is "*set*" of God to glorify Him—a servant, a master, a child, a parent, a wife, or a husband. In this place let us each abide in Christ and His words abide in us, and we shall glorify the Father by bearing much fruit. How grand a truth! Then also we may ask *what we will* and it shall be done unto us (v. 7). How full a promise! Oh! for a heaven-given desire for the glory of the Father and for the honour of the Son in a world that knoweth Them not. Nowhere is this desire more kindled than in coming in prayer to the Father; for there, whatever we ask for the Father's glory, the Son will do it, and whatever we ask in the name of the Son the Father will do it, because it is for *Him*.

In xiv. 16 it is the Lord who makes request to the Father for the disciples. They had been separated out of the world to Him, and now He was leaving them. Would they then be alone? Would they be left "comfortless," *i.e.*, *orphans* or *destitute*? Rebecca, in Genesis xxiv., serves as

a simple illustration of their condition. She, at the close of that chapter, is no longer at home in the house of her father with natural helps and loves ; she is also not yet with Isaac. Eliezer is sent from Canaan by the father of Isaac to conduct her to him. She is not comfortless. Eliezer turns her thoughts to Isaac and to Canaan his home, and she hastens with him to it. In an Almighty way and power the Holy Spirit does this for the obedient disciple. He gives the power to *see* Jesus, though not with natural sight ; to know that He *lives*, though slain, and slain for him ; and hence the disciple *lives* also—to know, without question, his standing in Christ. “At that day”—the day of the Holy Spirit’s presence during Christ’s absence—“ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.” With this the Lord gives His own peace. It will be seen all through the chapter how deep is the interest the Lord takes in the personal condition of every believer. Things on earth are often dark to us (on the morrow, and how intensely dark for the disciples, we can but feebly realize), yet all is bright in these words of the Lord. He is the Way, there is no darkness with Him. He is the Truth, there is no uncertainty with Him. He is the Life, all, all is triumph in Him. We have but to arise, and *with Him* go hence (v. 31).

WILLIAM BURBIDGE.



# The Blessedness of Obedience.

John xv.



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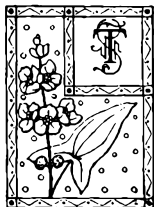
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# The Blessedness of Obedience.



JOHN XV.

*(The R. V. is sometimes quoted.)*



HE last words of the fourteenth chapter — “Arise, let us go hence” — mark an important division in these precious communications of the Lord to “His own.” He had set them in the most exalted position as sons of God, had revealed to

them the Father, and provided every safeguard to keep them in the conscious enjoyment of that position until He should come again to receive them to Himself, to dwell with Him in His Father’s house. All that chapter is devoted to the unfolding to them of absolute and unmingled grace. He would now touch upon the question of their responsibility, while on earth, as having this exalted position and hope. “I am the true Vine

and My Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He cleanseth it that it may bring forth more fruit." These solemn words follow immediately on—"Arise, let us go hence"—giving this command a symbolic as well as a literal meaning. They must break entirely with the earthly system. It had rejected Jesus, and must be rejected. The Lord Himself must be, for them, the sole Director, and the only source of power in all they did, for it is a question of *doing* now. "Without Me ye can do nothing." Israel had been proved to be "an empty vine bringing forth fruit to himself" (Hosea x. 1) and such would be all who clung to it. As the responsible vine which Jehovah of Hosts had planted—"a noble vine," it had brought forth only wild grapes. "He looked for judgment, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry" (Isa. v. 1-7). No fruit to God would result from their maintaining their connection with Israel, or even with the Law. They must be joined to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that they might bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. vii.).

A study of the character of the fruit the

disciple of Christ should bear (see vv. 9-17) will prove how gracious, how heavenly it is. Such truth calls for devout meditation, rather than exposition, though exposition may, by God's grace, lead to meditation. Our hearts for the most part are weak in getting hold of Divine love, the love which ought to be flowing through us. "This is My commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you." Very few of us have learned yet how the Lord loves us, and when we turn back and see how we have loved one another, we may well be humbled at finding how little we have entered into the meaning of such a simple command as this. The doctrines of Scripture may interest us, and we may delight in preaching and teaching them, but no ability to speak of the truth of God discloses the soul's practical condition. Such a verse as this will make it manifest. But there is more than this. The Lord saith, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you, continue ye in My love." If it be a difficulty to estimate the love of Christ for us, how shall we understand the love of the Father for Him? Yet He would have us consider it, that we may put a right value on obedience. The blessed ideal of the church

(although church truth is not John's subject, but the principle is the same) is, that she is subject to Christ; this was the manifestation of her *first* love. So here, "If ye keep My commandments ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." Would we behold the abundant, constant fruitfulness of the True Vine? we see it here—*always obedient*, always as One walking down here, in the infinite delight of His Father's love. Observe too, even in thus pointing out the blessedness of obedience, the Lord introduces no thought of future rewards, nothing of crowns of glory and of righteousness and of life. The reward is *His love*, that holy, perfect, devoted love, consciously enjoyed now, while doing His will. This glance at the middle of the chapter, will help us to value the instruction regarding our position on earth as attached to Christ as *branches of the True Vine*; not, be it carefully observed, as members of His body. To remove a limb from a human body would be to render it incomplete. Not so to take away a branch from a vine. In chapter xiv. those addressed are sons of God; in the fifteenth they are viewed as disciples of the Lord. No one can

be a son but by faith in Christ Jesus. He must receive Christ, and be "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This is the first truth as to them in this Gospel (John i. 13). But one may attach himself to the Lord as a disciple without necessarily being a believer. This is set forth with great plainness in chapter vi., where we read that "many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him" (v. 66). In v. 64 we have this explanation—"Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him." Judas was thus a conspicuous example of a fruitless branch, externally and in name attached to Christ, and put in an exalted position as an Apostle. He could preach and cast out devils with the rest, yet there was no change in his heart. In Heb. vi. we have the same sad fact. Some Hebrews for a time left Judaism for Christianity and then fell away, (this is the right rendering of v. 6. see -R.V.): and this is the case with all stony ground hearers, "who hear the Word and anon with joy receive it, but, not having root in themselves, endure but for a while"; yet are they responsible for the profession which they make.

Many, however, that are not such hearers, but true believers, become greatly troubled when they read "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He (My Father) taketh away," so ready are they to look at themselves to find evidences of their salvation. But if they seek to get a standing before God on the ground of what they are, of their fruitfulness, they will never do it. It would be self-righteousness though they little think it. The witnesses that God gives them that they have life, are not their works or doings at all, but, "the Spirit, the water, and the blood." The Spirit quickens, the water cleanses, and the blood expiates, and these are the fruits of Christ's work, not of theirs (1 John v.). The testimony is that "God *hath given to them* eternal life, and this life is in His Son." The question of having life must surely be settled before there can be any reference to the practice of life; thus the fourteenth chapter precedes the fifteenth, and is marked off from it by the words "Arise, let us go hence." The legal state of many Christians, (ignorant of the truth in 1 John iv. 9), puts them on working for life, and not from the possession of it. When the enemy throws a fiery dart at them, they have not the shield of faith to quench it.

The eye turns in on self. What God has done to save is forgotten, as well as the state we were in when He did it (Rom. v. 8-11). It is what *they* are—"Perhaps after all I am a fruitless branch," they say, "I was at one time very happy, walking in peace, and joy and love, but it is not so now. The world has got hold on me, religiously perhaps, but I feel it is not Christ. Shall I be taken away? Shall I be cast forth as a branch and become withered?" These exercises serve to break a man down, to humble him, but should teach him not to look to experiences, instead of Christ, to know his standing before God. If his walk has grieved the Holy Spirit he has lost the power to enjoy his standing and relationship in Christ, but he has not lost *them*. It is really wrong, as well as sad, that all the precious truths of the fourteenth chapter should be sacrificed to a single line in the fifteenth, misapplied, because not understood. Fruit-bearing for the glory of the Father is of supreme importance, but no soul is *saved* by fruit-bearing. Our state was one of death and condemnation, and nothing but the love of God in sending His own Son that we might live, and our sins be atoned for, through Him, could meet it. And it is met, *thoroughly met*, and we live and are justified apart from all



works of ours. The perfect love of God casts out fear, because fear hath torment (1 John iv.).

In verse three the Lord saith—"Already ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you." By "the word," all that they were by nature was judged, their secret thoughts as well as their overt acts, and they received a new life; they were born of God, begotten by the word of truth (Jas. i. 18). 'This is true as to every one "that heareth His word and believeth on Him that sent Him—he hath everlasting life, and he shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). Let us allow no doubt as to this, it would be to doubt our Lord. And observe what assurance as to this He gives us at every turn. The subject before us in chapter thirteen differs from this in fifteen; yet in both the Lord says—"Ye are clean." In xiii. He adds "*but not all*," for Judas had not then gone out. When he had left them, there is no exception. All were clean. In chapter xiv. the Lord gave them peace, His own peace, and would now add to peace, joy, His own joy (xv. 11). From first to last Jesus carried out His Father's mind. This was His joy. Is it ours? Impossible if Christ be not in us; (the flesh is never obedient) and equally impossible

if we do not abide in Him. "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." We seek His strength by abiding in Him. He ministers it to us, the strength that is in Himself, by being in us. It is wonderful that we should have the *peace* of Christ, yet more that we should know *His joy*; the joy of Him whose *path* was one of unspeakable sorrow. Yet much affliction and great joy are to be found together. And let us not lose sight of the fact that these words—"Arise, let us go hence"—follow on this announcement by the Lord—"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." He is not here called "the devil," or "Satan," or "the wicked one," but "the prince of this world": the ruler of this skilfully ordered scene by which he acts on men of every shade of character and disposition to keep them at a distance from God. If such be the ruler of the world, what must the world be that he rules? Morally, the whole course of it is according to him. It must be, and to be of the world is to be subject to his authority. Solemn thought! None perhaps more solemn, when we think, not only of the numbers, but of the fair show of many, that do submit to it. This prince who had

overcome all others, found nothing in Jesus. His obedience to death, as His obedience in life, bore witness to the world "that He loved the Father, and as the Father gave Him commandment so He did." Perfect love, perfect obedience, when tried to the utmost. This is the True Vine.

But all this gives great seriousness to a true disciple. The world is the world still, and we whom Christ loves, must expect the world's hatred. The Lord hath said it, and said it most solemnly (read from xv. 18 to xvi. 4) and the disciple is only a branch. Nothing more fruitful if abiding in Christ. Nothing more worthless if not (Ezek. xv.). And if thus abiding in Christ and His words abiding in us, to a man of the world subject to and energized by its prince, no contrast can be greater, can be more apparent, or more distasteful. And we have all to meet the world. Some in their homes, very many in business, the poor in the factories and workshops, the rich in even more exposed positions. The Lord keep us from thinking we can maintain our ground by our own power. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me."

There is another beautiful feature in this chapter. The Lord is teaching the ceaseless care His Father bestows on all who not only profess Christ, but seek also to live Christ in the world. "My Father is the Husbandman." Hence every true believer is assured at all times of the Father's perfect wisdom and love in all His dealings with him. In the True Vine—the Lord Jesus—there was always perfect obedience. "I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." So the Christian is to keep the *commandments* of Christ, and he shall abide in His love. Whatever the energy of Divine life, whatever the desire to be up and doing, "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." What is that? The mind of *perfect obedience*, come what might. When it came to this, that His body was to be mangled by the Roman scourge, and then nailed to the cross, He was not rebellious neither turned away back. Now, beloved brethren, do you honestly believe that there is a single Christian here, or in the whole world, who has no rebelliousness of spirit, no need of the government of the Father as taught in Heb. xii.

5-11, and 1 Peter i. 17, and involved in this word—"My Father is the Husbandman?" Is there one whose fruit is so abundant that he has no need of the cleansing by the Father's care, that he may bring forth more fruit? You know there is not, and you know that it is a great mercy to have your rebellious spirit dealt with and overcome. We are no losers by the Father's discipline, for its object is increased blessing. There is a good deal of will-service as well as will-worship. Beware of both. It is wonderful to see a Christian serving, yet having no will as to the service. "In every good work doing *His will*." And it is wonderful to see a saint suffering according to the will of God, and his own will not at work at all. There is one dear man—I do not want to speak of these things if not for profit—who has been for years suffering from cancer. and more than cancer. I have visited him four or more times since I have been in these parts, and yet I have never heard him once refer to his distressing maladies, unless asked about them. He is glorying in his portion in Christ. Shut out from communion with his brethren, he is enjoying yet more, the deeper, richer fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. Oh! let us lay it to heart; sub-

jection precedes communion, and communion joy. And let us also lay it to heart, that the Husbandman is the sole Judge of the fruit.

Look at John viii. The Lord said, "I speak to the world those things which I have heard of My Father." "As My Father hath taught Me I speak these things" (vv. 26-28). Ministers, are you prepared to take this place, to speak only what the Father hath taught you through Christ? What else can be fruit? But the world will not stand it. They kept not your Master's saying. How will they keep yours? But learn a lesson from the woman of Samaria, how she began her service. 'The moment she got the truth from the Lord she hastened to publish it. The long expected Messiah was come. Jesus, the Man who told her all that ever she did, was the Christ, and *she left her water-pitcher*. The Spirit takes notice of it. Have we? Christ was all, the one sole object of her heart and life, and there was no effort, no reserve for herself. Dear friends, let there be no thought of discouraging service, but watch against self which can cling even to a water-pitcher, and spoil the fruit. Oh! in service to be beyond self; to leave it—name, reputation, position, everything—especially in a day when

in ministry, so much is apt to be made of the water-pitcher (John iv. 28, 29).

Well, beloved Brethren, I would here close by asking you to observe the order of the truth as *to us* unfolded in this chapter. First we are treated as *disciples*, then as *friends*, then as *witnesses* of our Lord (vv. 8-15-27). Confidence is thus reposed in us, and service entrusted to us, if true disciples. But a friend of Christ and a friend of the world, in the very nature of things, are opposed. We may have therefore a very solemn part to play yet under the eye of the leaders, religious and irreligious, of the world. But let us remember, "Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be My disciples." Let this be our desire, this our care, and leave results with God.

WILLIAM BURBIDGE.



**The  
Presence and Mission  
of the Holy Spirit.**

**John xvi.**



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# The Presence and Mission of the Holy Spirit.

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JOHN XVI. 1-15.



WE cannot but be impressed, while studying these chapters of John (xiii. to xvi.), with the way in which the Lord sought up to the latest moment to express His love for His disciples. There

were but a few hours now before He would be delivered into the hands of men to be crucified, and with desire He had desired to spend those few hours with them and for them. At once they are assured of the continuance of His love. Having loved them

while with them, He would, when gone to His Father, love them still, love them to the end. This for them would be experimental. They would have to yield themselves to His care. All that is of the world, if adhered to, would separate them morally from Him when in heaven with the Father, and weaken their hope of being with Him and of His coming again. He therefore would detach them by *His word*, applied to their consciences, from all worldly defilement. This is the meaning of the symbolic act of feet-washing. The power of the world is broken for him who receives the truth of chapter xiii. Jesus glorified, Son of the Father, is nearer to him than the world; is concerned about him individually, as about Peter; and all his walk and ways are under His eye, not only as the Omniscient God, but willingly exposed to Him as to a gracious Saviour. The water needed is not as in a bath, for he is bathed (born again), but as in a basin (see v. 10 R.V.), and the towel follows the

action of the water. How few the words of Jesus! How simple the action that can restore the soul, and how all is forgotten that is forgiven (2 Cor. vii. 8-11, and John xxi. 17).

We may observe in chapter xiv. that being *children of God*, and this is declared at the beginning of the Gospel (John i. 12), and repeated with emphasis in the Epistle (1 John iii. 1-2), nothing but the joys of the Father's house will be suited joys. Not the kingdom, not the glory, not even in a vague way "the rest," wonderful as such truth is, but the place where *love* would be satisfied. Jesus did not call it heaven, as men do, but "My Father's house." The English equivalent is "*Home*," and when there the supreme joy is, that "we shall be *like Him*, for we shall *see Him as He is*." This is love indeed.

In this chapter, as in the preceding, there is everything to detach us from this world, nothing to bring our thoughts back to it. This cannot be too earnestly insisted on. I remember a

celebrated Nonconformist proposing the question:—"Is it possible to make the best of both worlds?" Now, to the Christian, this world is crucified by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was Paul's deliberate judgment. If the world could thus treat the Son of God, there was no hope for the world, and to be *delivered* from it, not to make anything of it, was his glory. As for "making the best" of the Father's house, to speak of it is profanity, for there Christ Himself is supremely "the best," and He receives us to *Himself*.

The fact that dying Christians delight in this chapter carries a lesson to the living. The Spirit of God at such a time, draws out their affections to the Person of Christ, while their consciences rest on His work. Though it be by death, they will soon reach His very presence, be face to face with Him (Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. v. 8). So the simplest, yet the most powerful truth as to the coming of the Lord, is this—"Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be

caught up together with them, (the raised dead) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord " (1 Thess. iv. 17); or, as here—"I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, ye may be also." Be assured that no clearness of knowledge about the coming of the Lord, as a doctrine, will so act upon the affections, as the knowledge of His Person, and happy occupation with Himself by the Holy Spirit, while waiting for Him, will do.

This leads us now to consider briefly the great truth of the mission of the Holy Spirit, the other Comforter, sent, in the first place, to maintain the believer in the new relationship to the Father and to the Son, into which redemption has brought him; and in the second place, to be a Witness for Christ during His absence, and to sustain the believer in his testimony before a hostile world. These two subjects, of such deep practical importance, are clearly distinguished, the first being considered

in chap. xiv. 16 to 20, and 26 ; the second in chap. xvi. 7-15.

Every Christian that feels the present condition of the professing church, the confusion, the strife, the departure from the faith, the evident power of Satan over men's minds, and looks for *present* help, will rejoice in the truth (unfolded in the 14th chap.) of the Holy Spirit, as *the other Comforter*, or Maintainer of his soul in the very circumstances in which he finds himself. While the Lord was here, He directed His disciples' path, met their difficulties, answered their questions, instructed, reproved, encouraged them at all times, and kept them in His Father's name. Now the Holy Spirit has taken His place, not as accomplishing redemption, but after its accomplishment, to be the Comforter, the Maintainer, in His stead and on His behalf. Without the care of the Lord they would have been in constant danger of being corrupted by the leaven of the Pharisees, or of the Sadducees, or of Herod ; or they

would have gone back as those did who did not believe in Him. So without faith in the Holy Ghost what do we see? Superstition, reason, worldliness exerting the most baleful influences in the church, and many going back.

The Holy Spirit is now the SENT ONE, as truly as Jesus was the Sent One ; and sent by the Father in answer to the request of Jesus, and because of His acceptance of His work ; and He is sent to abide with us for ever. That is, not only with us on earth, during the absence of the Lord, but for ever—throughout eternity. While with us here He may be grieved with our ways, and hindered in His operations by our unbelief. Still, He is the power of all we do enjoy of Christ, and of our relationships with Him and with the Father. What then will it be when we shall grieve Him no more, and when, unhindered by anything in us, He will be the power of full and ceaseless communion for ever? Men talk and write of the *influences* of the Spirit, but such a way of talking and writing

dims the truth of Himself, a Person, God the Spirit, now on earth in a way He has never been before, and for an end and purpose that cannot be again. Indeed, no tongue can adequately tell how much depends for Christians on the fact which they appear to be so slow to recognize—the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit; that He has come and not gone, and that now He is not only with, but *in* every true believer, his body thus becoming His temple (1 Cor. vi. 19). With this the world has no part. The world cannot receive the Holy Spirit, because “it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him.” What daylight this lets in on the folly of attempting to mingle the world and true Christians. The world cannot adapt itself to Him Whom it neither sees nor knows. It can use the things of the world in a religious way, music, architecture, and the like, and that in a lavish manner, but the Holy Ghost has come down to associate all that are truly Christ’s, not with the things of the world, but with *Him in*



*heaven.* Hence the Lord said, "The world seeth Me no more, but ye see Me." The difference is immense! Heaven itself would be as much a blank to a Christian as it is to a man of the world, if, by the Holy Spirit, the eye of his soul did not see Jesus there. So here, if walking in obedience to His commands, the Lord promised to *manifest* Himself to them. How is it that many professing Christians know nothing about it, while others, very simple-hearted people too, never find Him absent? It is just this sight of Jesus that deepens affection to Him. Nothing can take His place in the heart then, and all that the world offers in its religion, in lieu of Him, only gives pain. Be perfectly sure that there is a heavenly choir as well as a worldly one. Those who are filled with the Spirit, sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord (Eph. v. 18, 19).

Freshness of affection to Christ being thus maintained by the power of the Spirit, we are not to think of Him apart from ourselves, nor

ourselves apart from Him. Is He risen from among the dead, having put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself? Is He alive, victorious over death? "Because I live," He saith, "ye shall live also." Is He "in the Father," glorified? "In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and *ye in Me*, and *I in you*." What perfect rest in the presence of God is ours if, by the Spirit, we are thus occupied with Christ; if He Himself is our object, our eyes resting on Him, knowing that we are *in* Him, by His own faithful word.

Our adorable Lord would not be satisfied with anything less for "His own" than this rest, this peace, and therefore, with nothing less than their receiving the Holy Spirit that they might have it. If we have once seized the truth that we *have received* the Spirit from the Father, at the request of Christ, and by grace will not let it go, we shall be preserved from one of the greatest dangers of these times—ignorance, if not denial, of the fact that the Holy Spirit has come, that He is not only with us who believe, but *in* us, that our bodies are His temple; that He is to us another Comforter, maintaining our souls in all the truth of Christ, bringing all things to our remembrance, whatsoever He has

said to us during His life down here, and teaching us all things as to Himself in the presence and the place where He now is with His Father. This (however imperfectly set forth now) is the subject in chapter xiv.

Chapter xvi. deals with the remarkable fact that zeal for God leads many to persecute those who honour His Son. Saul of Tarsus was once one of these. He was, as touching the righteousness of the Law, a blameless man, and was zealous towards God, thinking to do Him service by pursuing Christians unto death—binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. The more religious he was, the better servant of the prince of this world he became. That which he did to others was afterwards done to him when he became a witness for Christ, so that he would rather stand at Cæsar's judgment seat than be tried at Jerusalem, rather be at the mercy of Nero than of the Jews.

It is in the presence of this hostility that the Lord, in chapter xvi., sends forth His disciples to be His witnesses, and therefore here the Holy Spirit is before us, as also sent of Him from the Father to be His witness (chap. xv. 26). If in any feeble way *we* take this place, the all-

important thing for us is, that our testimony, so far as we do testify, should be in perfect harmony with that of the Holy Spirit. We have therefore the clearest statement of what the Spirit's witness is,—“And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on Me. Of righteousness, because I go to My Father and ye see Me no more. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”

“Of sin”—The world, both Jew and Gentile, sat in the judgment seat, and Jesus was brought up before them in judgment. The verdict was—“He ought to die;” and the sentence—“Take ye Him and crucify Him.” *They believed not on Him.* The state of a man might be inferred from many things, but CHRIST is the perfect test now. Unbelief was the root, the fruit of which is seen at Calvary, and for this sin the wrath of God abides on all guilty of it. Oh! to be true as to this. One has seen the best of men according to the world's standard, living to an advanced age and doing acts of kindness to the last, yet, sad to say, sternly refusing to believe that Jesus was the Christ. What did the religious world say? “He was saved.” What

said our Lord? "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." What is the testimony of the Holy Spirit? "Of sin, because they *believe* not on *Me*."

"Of righteousness"—There was another tribunal. God, the Judge of all, had yet to be heard; and in righteousness He raised Him from the dead, whom the world crucified, exalted Him to His throne, and committed all judgment to Him. The Spirit witnesseth to this righteousness of God, beseeching men to be reconciled to Him, to come into His favour through faith in Jesus, or warning them as to the sure result of despising Him (2 Cor. v. 20-21, Acts xiii. 41).

"Of judgment"—Christ has gone. Satan remains for awhile in his usurped authority over the world. His judgment is pronounced, but time is given for any to flee for refuge from his rule to Christ, "and him that cometh to Me" He saith, "I will in no wise cast out."

Such then is the Spirit's testimony as regards the world. To those who are Christ's in it, how different is His attitude and way. He is, as a present Comforter, always with them and in them, their "guide into all truth." Let them beware of another guide, as they would honour Him. "He will show them things to come." As

witnesses for Christ in the world they will need prophetic truth, lest they should be drawn into plans and schemes for improving the world, regardless of its sin. "And," the Lord adds, "He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." By the Holy Spirit we learn all that Christ is and has—Himself and the whole circle of His glories, not for our own enjoyment only, but that we may minister those truths, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to others.

WILLIAM BURBIDGE.

