

NEW MAN AND THE ETERNAL LIFE
NOTES ON THE REITERATED AMENS OF THE SON OF GOD
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"THE TYPES OF GENESIS" "THE LAW OF THE OFFERINGS"

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men" Rev. 21:3

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PREFACE

More than two thousand years ago a captive in Babylon, after the city of his fathers had been destroyed for the sins of those who dwelt in it, was carried in spirit into his own land, to see the vision of a temple, from which living waters flowed to all the world. There a Voice was heard, saying, "Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart on all that I shall show thee; for thou art brought hither to the intent that I might show this unto thee; and declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel." And then the same Voice said again, "Thou, son of man, show the house unto the house of Israel, and let them measure the pattern, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, show them the form and fashion of the house, and all the ordinances, and all the laws thereof; and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form, and do all the ordinances thereof."

A vision not unlike this has been seen by some in every age, of a temple destroyed in Adam, but raised up again in Jesus Christ our Lord. In Christ the House is shown as God alone can show it. But though for eighteen hundred years the Church has had the vision before her, for the most part it is yet sealed. Even to saints very little has been opened of it. Yet this is the vision God would have us see, for Christ is the pattern to which we are predestined to be conformed; and we shall be like Him when we see Him as He is. Now as of old, therefore, a Voice is saying, "Show the House to fallen men," that they may know what God can do in man's ruin. In proportion as we see it we are changed from the wretched ruin, which we have all become, to be a building of God, a house not made with hands, in which He shall be served, and praised, and seen for ever. Even if as yet we cannot see the House itself, it is something at least to look over its plans. They may stir us up to long for, and seek, and perhaps at last to find, the true building.

The following pages are an attempt to call attention to this House, and to some of the ordinances, and ways, and laws, thereof. The Gospels show it in all its breadth, and length, and depth, and height. These Notes only touch so much of it as is brought before us in Twelve Sayings of our Lord. It seems as if He foresaw that without some words His life would not be understood. At all events, by words as well as by life, He calls us to behold and mark the heavenly pattern. It does not seem to have been noticed how these Twelve Sayings, specially marked by reiterated Amens, form in themselves a distinct and perfect series. God can wait for eyes to mark His works. His light for ages was serving men, before one was found to see the wonders of that light which all received so freely. So is it with His words. Heaven sees their beauty, if earth as yet is blind to it.

Of course in dealing with such a subject as man renewed by God, there must be, not only some repetition, but things also, which, spite of the repetition, will at first be dark, and hidden even from disciples. For "the house is for the Lord, and exceeding magnificent," and the different courts, body, soul, and spirit, are so connected, that one cannot be drawn without bringing into view something which belongs to other portions of the same temple. All the parts, too, are according to one pattern, marked by one ruling thought throughout, each detail more or less repeating the one idea which stamps the whole building. But this repetition only brings out God's delight in this His house, which He has

made in every part to bear some traces of His image. Certainly God does not shrink from repetition, either in His word or in His works. In His Word the varied aspects of His Christ cannot be shown without Four Gospels, which repeat the same story. So again in nature, the heavens and earth, in the same seasons, flowers, and fruits, produced age after age in endless repetition, again and again rehearse the same one wondrous tale, of life out of death, and beauty from corruption. So in these Twelve Sayings there is repetition. There is much, too, which can only be understood as we live the life here drawn for us. True disciples will not be offended to learn how little they yet know. Only let them live Christ's life, and all will open to them.

May the Lord grant us all to see more of the fashion of the house, which He has built in Christ, and yet is building, in the place of the earthly house of this tabernacle, in which we groan here, being burdened; that in measuring its courts, its laver and altars, its candlestick and bread, and thus seeing how unspeakably more glorious all these things are than the moving tent in which we now sojourn, we may sigh and cry for the house from heaven, even to be built up in His likeness, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. "*Domine Deus, a Te petatur, in Te quaeratur, ad Te pulsetur. Sic, sic accipietur, sic invenietur, sic aperietur. Amen.*"

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INTRODUCTION

"THE AMEN, AND THE DISCIPLE WHICH TESTIFIETH"

(Rev. 3:14 and John 21:24)

NOTHING is more characteristic of the present day than the tone of questioning and doubt, which so widely pervades all realms of thought, and every section of society. Never probably in any former period of time of the world's history was there such mental activity, division, and anarchy of opinion, as we now see around us everywhere. Science has opened so many fields, in all of which much is yet unsolved,--philosophy has searched so deeply into the nature and origin of man, unsettling much that was once believed, but supplying little certain to take its place,--while the growing complications of society force upon us questions still more practical as to the rights and wrongs of men, to every one of which all sorts of jarring answers are returned from every side,--above all the Church, which should have been a guide and light to men, is so divided and unable to guide herself, much less the world,--that thousands are asking whether there is, or can be, any certainty for man; whether all that has been counted truth is anything more than probability,--whether therefore it is not better to confess that we can never get beyond guesses, even upon those points respecting which our inmost souls are constantly and importunately asking for more light.

Now there was another age, which in much of this resembled ours; the age which saw the break up of the old-world civilisations; when not Greece and Rome only seemed bankrupt, so far at least as truth was concerned, but when even Israel, which had been set to be a light among the nations, was turned like the sun into darkness, and like the moon into blood. But then, as ever, when the night was darkest, the morning was at hand. Into that dark age He came who could meet the doubt with certain truth. He had always been in the world, although it knew Him not; always giving to as many as received Him light and power to become the sons of God. Now He was made flesh, and came with a faith which overcame the world, and with a truth which made darkness light. He did not argue. He was the Truth, and bore witness to the truth; and those who received His witness could set to their seal that God is true, and has not left His creatures.

The Truth yet lives. What He then said He is saying now. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away. His creatures need Him, for He formed them for Himself, and He alone can satisfy their need. Their ruin was the lie, which brought them death. Their salvation is the truth, which brings eternal life. As the truth therefore He has come, as Prophet, Priest, and King; to teach, to comfort, and to rule; suiting His revelation to our need; warning where warning is required; comforting and helping those who need comfort. Has He no message for a doubting age? Can He give no certainty to those who are like the wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed? He came to Israel perplexed with sects of Pharisees and Scribes; and for those who received Him there was certainty and rest. Is He absent from us now? To the last Apocalyptic Church, which, as many believe, figures the state in which the professing Church is to be found just prior to our Lord's return, and which, if free from certain sins which had so

grievously disfigured some earlier Churches, was yet more than any other possessed by the spirit of untruth and self-delusion; which said of herself, "I am rich," and "knew not" her true state, that with all gifts she was "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," the same Lord appears, and speaks as "The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the Creation of God." (Rev. 3:14-17) Does not this title tell us that in Him we may have certainty for doubt, and help for our need, if we will listen to His voice?

For this Amen has Himself uttered some memorable Amens. And of all His words none are perhaps more weighty than those which are thus prefaced by reiterated Amens, by which, as with a trumpet, He calls attention to the truths so introduced, as though He foresaw how slowly we should apprehend them. Of sayings thus distinguished, twelve have been recorded for us, all peculiar to the last Gospel. And if under the law the Amen could seal the judgment of the unfaithful wife, making the very water of sanctuary to become a curse, if she had played the harlot: (Num. 5:22)--if the Amen of God's people Israel could confirm their curse, should they depart from God and work abominations; (Deut. 27:15-26) --if when in the Church men bless with the spirit (I Cor. 14:16), the Amen closes the blessing;--if in the Book of Psalms, which belongs to both covenants, the first three volumes of its prayers are sealed and concluded by the same redoubled Amen; (Footnote: In the Hebrew the Psalms are divided into five books. Of these the first three end with the double Amen, which the Septuagint translate [Greek characters] and the Vulgate, Fiat, Fiat. Our version keeps the Hebrew Amen. Amen. See Psalms 41:13; 72:19; 89:52. The fourth book ends with Amen, Hallelujah. See Psalm 106:48, where the Septuagint still keep the double [Greek]. The fifth with Hallelujah alone. See Psalm 150:6.)--what shall we think of those sayings of the Lord Himself, which He has thus specially marked with His reiterated affirmation? Can I serve my brethren better than by calling their attention to these Amens of the Amen, the faithful sayings of the faithful and true Witness.

But first a remark or two suggested by this form of words itself, and by the fact that in one only of the four Gospels is it recorded for us. As to the words, "Amen, Amen," as our Version translates, "Verily, Verily,"--for Amen means simply "True" or "Truth," (Footnote: See Isa. 65:16. "God of truth;" in the Hebrew, "God Amen.")--does not the form of expression itself reveal something both as to our state, and the grace of Him, who, if we cannot hear the whispers of His love, will yet choose other and more unusual forms of address, if only He may arouse and bring us to communion with Him? "True, True, I say unto you," says the Truth. Does not the language imply that we need light, and are but dull hearers, who require something startling to awaken our attention? Is it not like saying, I must speak as to one who will not believe me but upon oath, or as a witness in a court of justice? For this is not the language of friend to friend. What friend need to say to another, Amen, Amen, Verily, Verily? It rather tells of distance,--that we know so little of Christ's mind, and can learn so little from His example, that we need unusual and even repeated and solemn asseverations to make us listen to Him. It is as if His oath and bond were required by us, before we could believe Him! (S. Augustine, Tractal in Johan xli. § 3) But it tells us also of Him, that He will stoop even to this,--that no false pride or shame will keep Him from exposing the true state of things, if there is any breach or

distance between us,--that He will still meet us where we are,--and if indeed the whispers of His Spirit are drowned by the clamour and cravings of our flesh, He will not therefore leave us to ourselves, but will condescend to words, which, if not such as He would, or such as best become Him, are yet required by our necessity. Therefore He says "Amen, Amen," that being roused by such a witness, and receiving His words at first simply on His authority and without any due sense of their eternal truth and blessedness, we may in due time come to know their power, that "they are spirit, and they are life," (John 6:63) and prove in our experience that "he that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself," (I John 5:10) and that "he that hath received His testimony can set to his seal that God is true." (John 3:33).

This "Amen, Amen," is only recorded in the Gospel of that Apostle, who describes himself as "the disciple which testifieth." (John 21:24) And this fact may in some degree modify our thought as to the implied rebuke which the use of this peculiar form of speech appears at first to carry with it. It may be that the truth thus introduced, because it so much transcends our fleshly apprehensions, must ever be first received on testimony, before it can be seen or felt or lived in by us. Certain it is that St. John presents Christ to us in a relation far higher than that which is set forth by any of the other Evangelists. St. John tells us of the Word, who was with God and was God, the Only-Begotten Son, who brings again God's own eternal life into our fleshly nature; in His own person first revealing and declaring it to men, that of His fullness we might receive and manifest the same. Of such an One there must be much which will transcend man's natural thoughts; which, therefore, if spoken here, must at first appear both dark and mystic; which can therefore only be declared to carnal men as a truth, the reason of which may be understood some day, but which will always have to be first received by faith upon authority. Such words as, "Ye must be born of water and of the Spirit," and "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," though by long use we have become more or less accustomed to them, must have seemed like riddles to those who first heard them. We know how even a true enquirer was pressed by them to ask, "How can these things be?" (John 3:9). They may explain why St. John calls himself "the disciple which testifieth." Others may argue like St. Paul. St. John, with the truth he has to teach, can only testify. For the things he tells us are of the Word made flesh; God's life in human nature; things above man's understanding; to be seen indeed, if we have an opened eye, but till so seen to be received on testimony. The reiterated Amens all speak of this, each of them taking up some distinctive peculiarity of this heavenly life, whether as seen in Christ, the eternal Son of God, or in those who by grace are called to His members.

Such being the burden of these Amens, it may at first seem strange that the Church, as such, is never named in any one of them. But the reason is that they speak rather of the peculiar virtues of the eternal life, than of the outward form or body in which this life is manifested; virtues which may shine brightest when the outward vessel in which this life has dwelt is marred and broken; which therefore may most appear in the very break-up of the Church, whose full glory, even in her Lord's, only comes through that cross, and suffering here, which lifts her up from earth and opens heaven. Christ's own Fleshly body is the witness of this truth. Not in His greatest works on earth was the eternal life ever so

manifested in Him as by His cross and triumph over death by resurrection. The change of the dispensation, from flesh to spirit, from the Jewish nation to the Christian Church, was a shadow of this same mystery. For the Church came into being or manifestation by nothing less than the ruin and condemnation of the fleshly dispensation, though the same spiritual life which is in the Church existed all along, though not at so advanced a stage, in the saints under the old economy. And so does that eternal life, which these Amens speak of, come into yet fuller manifestation by the very fall or passing away of the Church or Christian dispensation. Just as with Christ's own body, there is a first and fleshly form, before that form through death is raised and glorified; so in His mystic body the Church, Christ in the flesh, precedes Christ in the spirit, for "that is not first which is spiritual." (I Cor. 15:46). Therefore the peculiar witness of these Amens says nothing of the outward Church as such, but only of the New Man and his eternal life which grows and works within it, which will not only outlive the Church's apparent failure and shame, but is never so fully seen as in that failure. For, as Paul says, "We which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." (II Cor. 4: 10, 11) Thus the omission of any reference to the Church in these Amens is itself a lesson, full of comfort and instruction for those, who, like the disciples of old, are perplexed and troubled at the cross and shame, which must ever attend Christ's true body. Such may learn here the appointed way, in and by which along the eternal life is fully manifested.

Now this teaching as to the eternal life, and its varied works and manifestations, though implied in all the writings of the New Testament, is yet in some sense distinctive of St. John; for he dwells upon it with a persistence which makes it the one idea of his Gospel, his Epistles, and his Apocalypse. In each he shows in different forms the workings of this one life, first in Christ's flesh, then in believers, then in the course of this world. First in his Gospel the eternal life is seen in the beloved Son, rather than in those who He makes sons and heirs with Him; but surely seen in Him, as Firstborn and Firstfruits, that it may be received by others through Him. Therefore He testifies, that "God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Then in his Epistle, written when the other Apostles had already been gathered home, and when St. John remained the sole survivor of the favoured twelve who had walked with Christ on earth, the one thing he presses upon his brethren is, that the eternal life, which he had seen on earth in Christ, was a life which was to be continued and manifested in all believers. Did any fear that, when John was gone, the last undoubted link with Christ would be taken from the Church, and that it would be left to a second-hand tradition, which is uncertain, or to a letter or writing, which, as it would require interpretation, might be misunderstood or even falsified. The Apostle's answer is that he has told them of an "eternal life", which he has "seen," and even "shown" before them; that they are called to share it, because God gives us this life, and invites us, not to fellowship with an Apostle only, but with Himself, even "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ;" (I John 1:1-3) no longer therefore to live our natural selfish life, but to "walk even as Christ walked;" (I John 2:6) for "now are we the sons of God," (I John 3:1) and therefore, "as He is, so are we in this world;" (I John 4:17) that therefore as "He laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;" (I John 3:16) for "if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." (I

John 4:11). The whole of the Epistle is but a reiterated declaration that "God hath given to us eternal life," and that the elect are called to live in and manifest it (I John 5:11, 12). And what is his Revelation but the opening of the mystery of the manifestation and development of this same life in the wider sphere of a fallen but redeemed creation, out of which evil is to be at last for ever put away by the coming in and revelation of the life and glory and kingdom of the Son of God (Rev. 11:15; 21:1.). In each and all John's witness is of the same eternal life, which is to conquer and inherit all.

And this, as it seems to me, is the teaching which more than any other is required both by the church and world at this day. For many things show us that "it is the last time"; and the "last time," as it is marked above all others by "many antichrists," (I John 2:18)-- powers which would take the place in us which of right belongs to Christ, and the eternal life which He has brought us, - needs very specially that testimony respecting this life, of which St. John is the peculiar witness. The other Apostles have each their special truth, suited to some stage of the Church or individual. Of these Paul's truth comes first, and stands to the Church and to each soul, as it stands in Scripture, as the first teaching which we need to set us at peace with God through faith in Christ Jesus. He meets us as we start; and at this stage his words, as to our ruin and the righteousness which is by faith, are those which are most suited to, and therefore naturally most prized and dwelt on by us. At such a stage John's teaching, though we may read it, does not really meet us. Paul is our guide, and with him we are occupied with our own acceptance before God, and with Churches and Church questions; in a word with those truths, or rather with truth under those forms, which Paul ever ministers to us. If we advance we soon come to the truth which the Apostle James teaches, touching the moralities which belong to and must accompany Christian doctrine. We go on again, and come to Peter's truth, addressed not to Churches or Church-teachers, as with Paul, but to the "strangers scattered" (I Peter 1:1-4) on earth, but who are "elect to an inheritance reserved in heaven for them." His words, so full of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow, and of our sufferings and glory, if we remain faithful, are now the teaching which seems most needful for us. Once more we advance, and so come to John, and to his witness as to the eternal life, which has dwelt in man, and which the sons of God are called to manifest. This is the teaching which seems peculiarly fitted for a time when the outward Church is fallen, and when, as in the "last time" which St. John speaks of, carnal Church rule prevails, so that though John writes unto the Church, Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence, receiveth him not, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth the brethren out of the Church. (II John 9-11). John soars up heavenward, like the eagle (Footnote: By universal consent the fourth cherubic form, that of the eagle (see Rev. 4:7) has been assigned to St. John and his Gospel by the church in all ages.) when all that can only walk on earth appears to fail. At such a stage something beyond mere church-teaching is needed by us; for the trouble is that men are in high places in the Church who seem unable to recognise Christ's life and works, when these are manifested as a present reality in His despised yet living members. Therefore the disciple whom Jesus loved becomes the witness of the eternal life, which shines only the brighter even though the Church be betrayed and her outward form be broken by man's wickedness; that life which his God's own, to be most fully seen, not in escaping the cross, but in triumphing over it. This teaching will last us

to the end; and like John will tarry till Christ comes; as He said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." (John 21:22)

It is this teaching which the reiterated Amens sum up, showing us the course and stages of that eternal life which is given us in Christ Jesus. I have already said, that there are twelve sayings of our Lord's, which are thus introduced. In some of these sayings, the reiterated Amen occurs but once; in others, twice; in others, thrice; in two instances, no less than four times; the number of reiterations in each instance depending, if I mistake not, on the special importance or apparent strangeness of the testimony to which they are appended. But there are only twelve sayings which are thus distinguished from the rest of our Lord's words. The first tells us of the Sphere or Home of the New Man: heaven, long shut to man, is now re-opened to him (John 1:51). The second shows how alone we enter this home, by a New Birth, involving a passing through the waters, that is a death to nature, in the power of God's spirit (John 3:3, 5). The third tells about the Law of this new man; that he does nothing from self, but only what the Father doeth; that therefore, instead of losing a life and being judged, like the corrupt old man, who does all from self and ruins all, the new man quickeneth whom he will, and hath authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man. (John 5:19-22). The fourth tells us of his Meat, the living Word, that bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat and not die (John 6:24-35). The fifth shows us the Liberty which he has and gives; even to be free from sin; for whosoever commiteth sin is the servant of sin, and the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the son abideth ever (John 8: 31-35). The sixth declares his Divinity, that, as he "proceeded forth and came from God," his is a partaker of God's nature, and can truly say "I am" (John 8:48-58). The seventh describes his Service, as a shepherd with his sheep, first walking with them where they walk, and then laying down his life for them that they may live (John 10:1-15). The eighth more fully opens his Sacrifice, and its results, showing that except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit; that therefore he that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal (John 7:24-26). The ninth show us his Lowliness, and that disciples are cleansed, and God is glorified by his humiliation (John 13:1-32). In the tenth we are shown his Glory, that he reveals God, so that he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also (John 14:8-14). In the eleventh we have his Sorrow and Joy (John 16:16-25). The twelfth and last shows us his Perfecting; the end, even as the beginning, of this wondrous life, being still marked by the same entire surrender of self to God in everything (John 21:15-23).

Such is the series, each stage of which unveils some further truth or new aspect of the distinctive life of "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24). The first six are mainly doctrinal, and the latter six are all practical. Throughout it is, as I have already said, no so much the outward form, in which Christ first comes, which here is drawn, that form which is our likeness rather than His own; the veil under which the real man is hidden, for He was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3), "made flesh" (John 1:14), nay even "made sin for us" (II Cor. 5:21); but rather the "new creature" (II Cor. 5:17), which lies hid under and breaks forth from that outward form, when, as it must be, it is marred and broken to put on its true glory. And

what a sight it is! The whole universe contains no wonder equal to this of man reformed by God into His own image. Such a man belongs to heaven and earth; nay more, heaven and earth belong to him, for he is "heir of all" (Heb 1:2; Rom. 8:17; I Cor. 3:21-23). He is indeed the image of all worlds, for the essences of all things, matter and spirit, seen and unseen, temporal and eternal, all are hidden in him. He is even the "image and glory of God" (I Cor. 11:7; Col. 1: 15); for there is nothing in him which does not show something of God, not anything in God which may not be seen in him, even while He is in this world. Thus linked with all; in spirit with God and all good spirits; for his will is in union with the will and purpose of God, the Father of spirits, who is a spirit; and in body with the world and all its creatures and powers, which shall in due time be re-headed and reconciled in him, for this new man shall draw and bring all things to himself, as a loadstone draws iron; he is able to act with and have power upon all, not on creatures only, but on God Himself also. The shadowy body of sense, our raiment of humiliation, for a season hides this new man from us; yet there are times, as we see in Christ's transfiguration, when an earnest of his glory is seen even here by some of those who are his fellow-heirs. And though the appointed way for this new man, now as of old, must lie along the highway of the holy cross; though shame and sorrow are his portion here, for he is ever a "stone which the builders disallow" (Matt. 21:42); though he finds scant welcome, few knowing what he really is, or, if they know it, confessing him in his humiliation; though he seems shut up and shut out from much which others enjoy, having it may be less of this world than some of the poorest here; yet all things serve him; all things are his; nor can anything in the end resist his rightful authority.

Of course, according to the law referred to by St. Paul, we cannot expect to understand all that is written of this life, unless we have it quickened and growing and working in us; for who can know the things of a man, unless he have first received a man's spirit? (I Cor. 2:11). Even possessing this life, if yet we are only babes, if heaven is not yet open to us, we shall find many things said of the new man which must be hard to be understood, though these same things may be the daily experience of others of our brethren. Only let us follow on to know the Lord; and then the things which we cannot now receive will one day be plain, and where we cannot now follow we shall follow hereafter. God has provided for every stage, even as He has provided for all. Not without a purpose has He given four Gospels, three of which show us the Christ, that is the new man, either as Son of Abraham, or Son of Adam, or as Servant of God, that is in His earthly, rather than His heavenly relationships, that we, as the sons of Abraham, and of Adam, or as God's servants, may see what we can of Him in these lower aspects and relations, till we are able to see Him as Son of the Father also, and, so seeing, learn to walk as sons of God with Him. The life in each case is the light of men. Just in proportion as we do the works we understand the doctrine.

This, then, is our subject, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and has been manifested unto us. Most men are now content with the bare tradition of this life, and look upon it as a thing well nigh unattainable, or to be attained only in the world to come. But this life has been, and may be, and shall be, manifested here. Seeing is not being; but seeing may help us, not only to understand what man's true life really is, but also to draw

nearer to Him who is our life and ever near us, that so, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we may be changed into the same image. Amen.

FIRST "VERILY, VERILY"

The Home of the New Man

(John 1:50,51)

The first question of the Old Testament is, "Where art thou?" (Gen. 3:2). This is God's question, addressed to fallen man, calling him to consider where he now is, whether his present state is right, and why he is not still with Him who made him. The first question of the New Testament is, "Where is He?" (Matt. 2: 2), asked by men who have just been awakened by heavenly light to feel they need a God and Saviour, and who desire to know where He may be found; the answer to which is immediately given by the Evangelist,-- "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us." God's question reveals man's state, that he is not where God placed him. Man's question draws forth the purpose of God's heart, that "God is with us," fallen as we are, and that our nature, spite of our fall, is His tabernacle.

The first of the reiterated Amens touches both these truths. Our Lord thus opens the series: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Henceforward ye shall see heaven opened, and angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man"; words which imply that heaven, man's proper home, long shut, shall now be opened, and that all that man has lost shall be restored in and through his heir, that is, the "son of man." Thus, the first "Verily, Verily" declares the proper Home of the New Man. Heaven is his home: heaven again is opened to him. The old man by disobedience lost his home, the Paradise in which as God's son he could converge with and see God; and is shut out and shut up in bondage in outward nature, because, having lost God's life, he is unfit for heaven. The new man, formed by the indwelling of the Word of God, and "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3:10), by a necessary law of His life, which is of God and heaven, through putting off and dying to the old and fleshly life, comes back again to opened heavens and to their angel hosts, as to his true home and proper dwelling place. This is the witness borne by the first reiterated Amen: "Verily, Verily, Henceforward (Footnote: The words here [Greek words] are rendered "hereafter" in our Authorized Version, and when our Version was made this was a correct translation. So we pray in the General Confession "that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life;" that is, not at some future time, but "from this time forward.") ye shall see heaven opened, and angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

These words were spoken by One who had just had heaven opened to Him, who being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself and became obedient, not only to death, even the death of the cross, but also to that mystic death in baptism, which showed to men the one only way by which as fallen creatures they could come back to God's kingdom. Therefore, when in submission to the Baptist's witness, all the people were baptized, so thus, though they understood it not, confessing man's state, as by nature dead to God, and that only by death to this nature can any be delivered. and "it came to pass, that Jesus also was baptized, and as He came up out of the waters heaven was opened to Him, and a voice from heaven said unto Him, Thou art my beloved Son: in Thee I am

well pleased." (Luke 3:21, 22). Thus was heaven opened again to man. Then He to whom it was thus opened, comes forth to tell men of their true home, and how it may again be reached and entered: not by hiding from ourselves our present state or that we are dead to God and fallen from Him; but by confessing all this, first by a mystic death in the baptismal waters, when we are sacramentally buried with our Head, and then by dying and being buried with Him in that other greater baptism, which He spoke of when He said "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished" (Luke 12:50); in the assurance that when we thus take our true place, as dead to God, and subject to His judgment, He will take His place as Saviour, and say to us, as He said to Christ, when He took our place, "Thou art my beloved son." All this indeed, of the way of man's return to his true home, from which he fell by disobedience, though set forth in type in Christ's baptism, does not come out in word until the second "Verily, Verily," which tells us that the way into the kingdom is only through those deep waters which Jordan typified. But the blessed fact that heaven is henceforth opened to man,--that he shall again see that world of light and love, for which he was formed, and from which he has so long been banished,--that he shall be made a new creature, fit to deal with spiritual things, not only man, but "Son of Man," begotten again to a lively hope by Jesus Christ; and that in his way back to his true home he shall be conscious of heavenly companions, angels of God, ascending and descending on him,--all this is witnessed in this first "Amen, Amen," thus showing the true home of the new man, that is, of man renewed through Christ Jesus. The old man is of the earth, and, akin and bound to the earth, he neither cares for, nor sees, the things of heaven. But the new man is of heaven; and, heavenly in his birth, even while on earth can walk in and show the life and light of heaven. This is the burden of the first reiterated Amen: "Ye shall see heaven opened, and angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

I have said that this comes out of the witness borne by Christ, immediately after His baptism, to the disciples first gathered to Him. These were men all sprung from the stock of Israel, fallen, as the Church is now, under an alien rule, and torn within by endless separations. But, though fallen, they were not forsaken. A witness, sent from God had come preaching repentance. And not a few had felt his words were true, who, having for a season been his disciples, through his teaching come ere long to be disciples of a higher Master. Some, like Andrew, by their earthly teacher are directed to the Lord Himself (John 1:35-37). Others, like Peter, are "brought to Jesus" by some brother in the flesh, who, having first followed one sent of God, is now following the Lord (John 1:40-42). Some again, like Philip, are "found and called" directly by the Lord Himself, as it is written, "Jesus findeth Philip" (John 1:43); while others, like Nathaniel, are called by those whom Christ has called (John 1:45), who are perhaps the commonest type of true disciples. It is to one of these last, and not to John or Peter, that our Lord specially addresses this "Amen, Amen," saying, "Hence- forward ye shall see"; for the promise of "opened heavens" is to all, even to the weakest and least distinguished of His true disciples. But something must be learnt ere this is reached. The disciple has to learn that he is seen, before he hears what he shall see. So our Lord, before He says, "Ye shall see heaven opened," first says, "Before that Philip called thee, I saw thee" (John 1:48). For we must be made to feel that our Lord sees us through and through before we can be taught what we ourselves shall see in due season. Then follows the confession, the result

of feeling ourselves known,--"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." And then come the words, "Because I said, I saw thee, thou believest. Thou shalt see greater things than these. Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Henceforward ye shall see heaven opened, and angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Now this promise manifestly refers to that which had in vision been revealed of old, when at Bethel Jacob saw a ladder linking heaven with earth, with angels of God ascending and descending on it, and the Lord Himself above, saying to weary man, "Behold, I am with you"; forcing Jacob to say, "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not: this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 33:12-17). All this is here revealed, not in vision, but as a present fact to which, even if we see it not, this first reiterated Amen of the True Witness bears sure testimony, declaring that communion with the unseen world is again restored to man in Christ, that heaven so long shut is henceforth open to him, because our nature is none other than the house of God, and even this flesh has become through grace the fate of heaven; yea, that the Lord Himself is in this place, even though we knew it not, but have lain down to sleep, like Jacob, with stones for pillows, as if there was no present God. Christ's flesh is the ladder joining heaven and earth. And in making this revelation, this first "Verily, Verily" further declares man's proper name, lost in Adam, but restored again in Christ Jesus, that he is not "seed of the woman" only, great as are the glories which gather round this name, but "Son of Man," heir of undivided man, before separation of any kind had entered in. But upon the full import of this title, "Son of Man", I will not enter here, as it comes before us more fully in the testimony (In the sixth "Verily, Verily,") as to Divine Nature of the new man in Christ Jesus. I turn rather to the promise, that "henceforward we shall see heaven opened, and angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

The promise is first that man shall henceforth see his long-lost heavenly home. Is it then possible for us here to come to opened heavens? Is not heaven further than the sun; and is it not therefore simply incredible that we should see or hold communion with it? No--Christ's words are true. We may through Him here enter heaven and enjoy God's presence as really and fully as His saints of old, from Adam in Paradise to John in Patmos. Heaven is not far off. Heaven is our home. Nothing but our flesh, with its fallen self-hood and unbelief, hinder our seeing the kingdom which is at hand (Matt. 3:2). For what is heaven but the spirit-world, which is lost or shut to the natural man, only because by the fall the life of God is crushed, and the spiritual sight and sense are gone, so that man though a spirit is content to live in earthly things, not indeed without cravings for a spirit-home, as every false religion and superstition testify, nor without ceaseless protests, in his yearnings, hopes, and fears, nay even in his very dreams, that the outward world is not the only one. For indeed man is a spirit, in a house of clay, and therefore, though he knows it not, is an inhabitant of an inward, as well as of an outward, world. Outwardly indeed, as in the present body and its life, we are in a world lighted only by the sun of nature; but inwardly our spirits even now are in a spirit- world, which only is not opened to the natural man, because to open it to such would be to open the dark world into which by sin we have all fallen. But if by grace man is right with God,--if through Christ he is brought back in spirit from self-will and self-love to trust God,--the opening of the unseen only opens again the world of light and love, which is man's proper home and true

dwelling-place. What therefore will be manifested to each man at his death may be anticipated here, and entered into more or less, just as we live of Christ, and Christ in us. Opening heaven is but opening the inward spiritual world, which mercifully is shut to us till we are restored to peace with God through Christ Jesus.

Let us take some examples of this "opened heaven" from the experience, first of Christ, and then of His disciples.

First comes the opening of heaven, which took place at Christ's baptism. Here no details are given as to what He saw. The fact only is recorded that "when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3: 21, 22); and that, as an almost immediate result, He was specially tempted of the devil, a voice from hell at once questioning the truth witnessed by the voice from heaven, and saying again and again, "If Thou be the Son" (Luke 4:3, 9). All this is surely still fulfilled in Christ's members. What they see may not at first be clear. They may see no more of that spiritual world which is opened to them than a new-born babe sees of the outward world which it has come into. They may even mis-see the things around them, as we do for years on earth: they may for awhile "see men as trees walking" (Mark 8:24). They may as yet have no words to speak of what they see: the very meaning of it may be altogether hidden from them. Yet heaven is opened to them; other eyes can see this, for the Spirit like a dove now abides on them;--no longer "the mark of the beast" (Rev. 13:17), whether of the serpent, dog, or fox, but "the spirit like a dove," of steadfast love and gentleness;--and (what they cannot forget) a voice has sounded in their ears, "Thou are my beloved child." Till now, though of God's elect, "to whom," while even in the flesh, "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises" (Rom. 9:4), because as yet but children in the faith, we may have differed nothing from servants (Gal. 4:1-3), though we are called in Christ to inherit all. But now we have heard the heavenly witness, "Thou are my beloved son," sealing the truth of our baptism, that our Father loves and is well pleased with us. Now we know we are sons: a voice from hell may challenge this truth, tempting us to prove that we are sons by what we can do, rather than by the fact that as children we can in all things trust our Father. But the voice from hell cannot prevail. Heaven is opened to us; and, that glimpse can never be forgotten.

As a second example of "opened heavens," - take the scene commonly called the Transfiguration, which also shows what Christ's members may attain while in this present life. For Christ's transfiguration is as surely a stage of Christian experience as His baptism, fasting, or temptation; not perhaps so early a stage, for the transfiguration only very shortly precedes His death; yet one which may most certainly be known, if we follow on to be partakers of His sufferings. For it is not in the Gospel which shows Christ as the Eternal Word, but in those which reveal Him as Abraham's seed and Son of Man, that this scene is recorded, to teach all Abraham's sons, yea, even all the sons of Adam, that they may reach, not to opened heavens only, or to the voice saying, "Thou art my beloved son," but to a communion with saints, such as is recorded here, to speak and

walk with those, who, though they passed hence ages ago, are yet, like Moses and Elias, very near, even caring for, and talking with, us. And indeed may we not ask whether this transfiguration was a change in the Beloved Son, so that He appeared as He was not before; or was it not rather in His disciples, so that they now saw Him as He had always been; living in two worlds, both in the seen and unseen; walking on the earth, and yet, "the Son of Man who is in heaven" (John 3:13); talking with men, yet communing with the departed, in the very light of God? Whichever view we take, the lesson is the same. We may come, and indeed "have come, to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb 12:22, 23).

I almost fear to speak of what is opened here. Yet the Gospels declare these things; and, as a stage of Christ's life, they must, sooner or later, be a stage of our experience, if to us to live is Christ. For He is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever. If therefore He lives in us, we must, like Him, be begotten of the Holy Ghost; and then, like Him, be men of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. If He lives in us, men will esteem us stricken and smitten of God: we must, if like Him, be numbered among the transgressors (Isa. 53:3, 4, 12). But there are other things which come with this experience, and among them is this foretaste of the glory, which is to be revealed in us; that as we pray (S. Luke says, [Greek words], 5:31), with some of those who love us most, the appearance of our countenance shall change, and heavenly companions be seen communing with us, speaking of the Exodus (Luke 9:28-30) which we must accomplish, from that city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (Rev. 11: 8) when through the strait and narrow gate of death we shall go out for ever from the house of bondage. Surely it is a wondrous scene, that man, while yet on earth, and still clothed with the body of humiliation, should in spirit hold direct and conscious communion with the saints of ages past who are within the veil. Yet this too is part of the promise: "Ye shall see heaven opened, and angels of God, ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

But this blessing, like all things spiritual, is not without its peril to imperfect disciples. We see this in Peter and the two brethren who were with him. That opening of heaven and communion with the departed, which is safe and blessed for the Perfect Man, awakens thoughts in imperfect disciples, which, if followed out by them, would give to creatures a place and honour which belongs to God alone. For while the Perfect One calmly communes with the departed, touching His departure out of this world unto the Father, the imperfect disciples are saying "Let us make here three tabernacles," not only "one for Thee," but "one for Moses, and one for Elias." (Luke 9:33). They would give a place to the departed, for which is not rightly theirs. And that this is a peril ever attending the first opening of communication with the spirit-world, is seen not here only, but in the other cases recorded in Scripture, where even the beloved John, once and again, when heaven opened to him, fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who spake with him; and was corrected by the words, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren which have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." (Rev. 19:10 and 22:8,9). The Church's history is full of examples of this. That Church, above the rest, which claims peculiarly to be St. Peter's has practically repeated Peter's words as to making tabernacles for the departed. But the Church of Rome could not have erred here as she has, had she never had visions akin to that set before us in the Transfiguration.

Men do not worship the host of heaven unless they see them. Such an error shows how near the saints have been to some; how truly their presence has been felt as a reality. But spite of their presence we are called back to "Jesus only" (Matt. 17:8), by the voice which says, "This is my beloved Son: hear ye Him."

How wise and loving then was the Hand which at the fall at once shut Paradise to man, severing him from a communion with the spirit-world, for which, as fallen, he was unfit,--for there like can only reach to like,--and gave him instead at the gate of Eden cherubic forms (Gen. 3:24), "figures of the true" (Heb. 9:24), instead of purely spiritual communications; forbidding him, as fallen, that is in self-hood, to seek communion with the unseen, either by wizards, necromancers, or consulters with familiar spirits (Deut. 18:9-12); because, as fallen, by laws which the old man little understands, in the spirit-world he could only reach spirits like himself, by whom he would be worse deceived; but which yet opens heaven again as soon as man is fitted in and by Christ to return to such communications. But even disciples have to learn how to use this communion, for like all good things it may be awfully abused. The peril may be judged from this, that, even when with the Master, His dearest disciples first come to opened heavens, the sight awakens thoughts and words which need correction. We need to be educated to behave ourselves in the new and glorious home to which our Father's grace brings us. Such are some of the openings of heaven vouchsafed to the Son of Man, in all which, as members of His body, we are called to share with Him. That at His baptism is, I trust, generally known: that at the Transfiguration is much less understood, only because few follow on by a daily death (I Cor. 15: 31) to apprehend that for which they are apprehended. Lest, however, any should suppose that such visions are peculiar to the Head, Holy Scripture has recorded other like openings of heave, granted not to the Lord only, but to His disciples. To take all the instances recorded would fill a volume. Two vouchsafed to Peter and John, types, as the Church has long seen (Footnote: See below, on the twelfth "Verily, Verily," John 21:18-22), of the active and contemplative life, may suffice as examples of the way God's saints are led to this experience.

Let us look then at the vision granted to Peter (Acts 10:9-16), when "he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it were a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, wherein were beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air;" all which were seen, not only "let down" out of heaven, but "received up again together"; which taught him, what he had not learnt, though he had followed Christ for years, and had received the promised Spirit and the tongue of fire,--the lesson we are all so slow to learn,--that we "should call no man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). If few as yet have learnt this, it is only because few as yet have seen this vision, which only comes when such as have known Christ after the flesh are brought through the outpouring of the Spirit to know him in the spirit. This is an experience peculiar to the Book in which it is recorded, the purpose of which, (for each book of Scripture has its special aim,) is to show how those who have known Christ after the flesh may be led to know Him in the spirit, and so be brought from the Old into the New Covenant, from the letter to the spirit, from bondage to true liberty. We do not find this experience in the Gospels. In them we have types of the experience of the disciples while as yet they know Christ only after the flesh; when, having left their

nets or earthly callings at His word, they emerge from being mere Jews or John's disciples to walk with and be followers of the Lord; while yet they still are "carnal, babes in Christ"; (I Cor. 3:1); following Him indeed, but most unlike Him; still full of self; disputing who shall be greatest; striving while He is submitting; soon stumbled at His Cross; yet truly loving Him, and gifted and sent out by Him to preach His gospel, and to do some of His works; but all the while regarding Christ as separate from them, as One to be followed indeed, but not yet one with them and in them. This latter experience comes out in the book which we call The Acts of the Apostles, where we are shown how carnal disciples become spiritual, and learn and prove that Christ lives in them, by His indwelling Spirit. Alas! how few here reach this; how many are offended if they are even told that till they reach it they are carnal. And yet as long as we only know Christ as outside of, rather than as formed and growing in us, though we may have given up much to follow Him, and like Peter have confessed Him Lord and Christ, and by Him and with Him been used to feed thousands,--we may still only know Him after the flesh, and be still strangers to the power of His resurrection (Phil. 3:10). We shall deny this till the brighter light begins to dawn. We shall surely confess it when we reach to that which the disciples reached at Pentecost. Then we may see, what we have long confessed, that "there is nothing unclean of itself" (Rom. 14:14); that "to the pure all is pure" (Titus 1:15); that a disciple of Christ may, nay is commanded to, "eat," (Acts 10:13), that is, receive and conjoin to himself, all sorts of creatures; that as all had descended, so all should ascend; that, though they had been unclean, "God had cleansed them" (Acts 10:15); because something had been done for them by the wondrous incarnation and resurrection of the Eternal son, by which all creaturely defilement, be it what it may, had been and could be put away. Who really understands this truth, that by becoming man,--who is himself an epitome of creation, containing the essences and lives and faculties of all creatures,--He by whom all things were made, in whom all things consist (Col. 1:16,17); has linked Himself to all, and by His blood has cleansed all? "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell, that having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him he might reconcile all things to Himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col. 1:19, 20). Heaven opened now teaches Peter this. Many a day had he been in bondage as to clean and unclean, not through any carelessness about God's will, but rather through the desire to please Him, or at least to keep His word. Now the meaning and end of Christ's Incarnation, and of His offering, begin to open to him,--the meaning of His coming down, as the sheet was let down out of heaven,--the meaning of His stooping, as He says, to be "a worm and no man" (Psa. 22:6),--of His becoming a Lamb (John 1:29), yea and a Lion also (Isa. 38:13; Lam. 3:10; Hos. 13:7); for it is as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" that "He opens the book" (Rev. 5:5),--the meaning of His going back into heaven in our nature, (even as the sheet was taken up again with all the living creatures,) and appearing there as the Lamb and the Lion also (Rev. 5:5,6),--all this is gradually learnt. And when a soul, like Peter here, really sees what is involved in the creature's return in Christ to God,--when we see how in Christ all the faculties in man, the lowest as well as the highest, have been sanctified and raised from earth to heaven,--how not the ox or lamb only, that is service and meekness, but even the lion and the eagle (Rev. 4:7), that is force and keenest insight, may one and all be consecrated, and stand around the throne,--then is learnt the lesson which Peter slowly apprehended, that he "should call no man common or unclean"; a wondrous lesson surely, now as of old

only to be learnt, as Peter learnt it here, through "opened heavens." But there are visions still more wondrous than this, for Peter's example shows us only such openings of heaven as may be reached by those who live the active life of faith and conflict. John shows us those visions which may and must have been seen by the passive suffering life of contemplation. The man in Patmos, separated from his brethren, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, sees things which he must indeed write in a book and send (for so he is commanded (Rev. 1:9, 11)) to the seven churches, but which the churches, living as they do, will little understand, though the things seen may be fulfilling in heaven, that is the world of spirits, all around them. I do not attempt to open these visions. They are like the heavenly city they speak of, open to all, but opened here to a few; with gates that never shut by day, and there is no night there, but into which there can in no wise enter anything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but only those who are written in the book of the life of the Lamb, that is the patient life of self-sacrifice (Rev. 21:25, 27). For as it is the Lamb who alone opens the seven-sealed book, so is it the life of the Lamb which alone can enter these glories. Glimpses however of these visions must be known to some, for there will ever be Johns as well as Peters among Christ's followers; and such cannot but see what John once saw (Rev. 1:13-16), how One like unto the Son of Man walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; in priestly robes; for is He not the Priest, whose office it is to keep alive the fire, and trim the lights in God's sanctuary; but showing the woman's breast (Footnote: "Girt about the paps" Rev. 1:13. St. John here uses the word [Greek], which is the woman's breast, while [Greek] is the breast of a man. Compare what is said of the angels in Rev. 15:6--[several Greek words]), for in the Lord the man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man (I Cor. 11:11), made again, like Adam unfallen (Gen. 1:27 and compare 2:21, 22 and Col. 3:10), where there is neither Jew nor Greek, nor male nor female (Gal. 3:28), but a new creature and a new man in Christ Jesus (II Cor. 5:17). This is not the form in which the Son of Man is seen at first, for to redeem us He took our likeness, "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:7), and was circumcised upon the eighth day (Luke 2:21, 27), that so, sharing the shame of our divided nature, He might bear its curse, and heal the breach, and through death bring us back in and for Himself, again to bear the undivided image of Him who formed man in His likeness. All this is seen at the very beginning of that Revelation, which, from "a door opened in heaven" (Rev. 4:1), leads on to "heaven opened" (Rev. 19:11), when the Priest is seen as King of kings and Lord of lords, out of whose mouth goeth the sharp sword which must smite all flesh, both of free and bond, and great and small; (Rev. 19:15, 19); after which is seen the new heaven and new earth, where there shall be no more death, and the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:1, 2), with the river of the water of life, and the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:1, 2). This too surely has been shown to some, but only shown, now as of old, by the coming to us of one of the angels which have the seven vials full of the seven last plagues (Rev. 21:9). Angels with earthly mercies too often through our weakness only hide from us the heavenly city. It is the angel with the plagues who comes with judgments on the creature, who yet says, as he did to John, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Not until these last plagues are fulfilled can any enter the temple (Rev. 15:8), or see fully the things within the veil, for the way into the holiest is not made manifest while the first tabernacle,

in which we groan, being burdened, is yet standing (Heb. 9:8 and II Cor. 5:1, 2). But the veil, though not yet taken away, is rent (II Cor. 3:16; Matt. 27:51; and Heb. 10:20) for all through Christ's sufferings. Thus even here may we get some glimpses of our home.

But does heaven thus open to believers now? Is it granted to Christians at this day to have the secrets of the spirit-world revealed in vision to them? Again I answer, what is heaven? Is it not the world of light, unseen by sense, that spiritual sphere into which man is brought in Christ, as partaker of His resurrection; where things are perceived which flesh and blood can never see, and joys are tasted which are not of this world? So long indeed as we are dead in sins, the things which occupy us most are the objects which the outward senses see, or hear, or taste, or handle. In these man lives, often for years, not wholly without witness of another world, which dimly rises before him in his fears or aspirations. But with Christ another world appears. Spiritual things, of which perhaps we may have heard,--for in every age God has His witnesses,--become now matters of experience. Truths, which have been hid under a veil, begin to open to us. We now see what we never saw before, the things of Christ, who is the truth, and the things of God, who is a spirit. We may as yet little understand what God is opening to us. But whenever the things of God, once unconsidered, occupy our hearts,--when sin, righteousness, and judgment, are daily before our eyes,--when we see Jesus interceding for us,--still more when Holy Scripture is unveiled, so that in the law, the prophets, and the gospels, we see wonders touching Christ and His kingdom, which never dawned on us before,--then heaven is truly opening to us, even if at the time we know it not. And the proof is this, that all those truths, which opened to Christ, or to Peter or John, in the visions which we have considered, when heaven opened to them,--whether it be the witness that we are sons, or the assurance that God is now well pleased, or the consciousness that departed saints are very near us, or the truth that no man henceforth is common or unclean, or that the risen Lord is walking in our midst, as the Priest amid the seven golden candlesticks,--all these truths will now be matters respecting which we too can say, not only that we believe, but see them ourselves, though they are not of this world, but of heaven. Where these are seen, heaven is opened. There may be clouds,--there will be clouds,--and we may fear as we and others enter through them (Luke 9:31), but, spite of our fears, the cloud itself is but the gate of heaven, and angel hosts are all around.

For whenever man's true home is opened, the servants of that home are also seen, even the "angels who ascend and descend upon the Son of Man", ever near, though unseen by sense, ministering to man's wants (I Kings 19:5, 6), or directing his steps (Gen. 16:9), or barring his way, if he turns aside from God (Num. 22:21, 26); never waiting to be thanked, content, either in ascending or descending, to honour God or succour man; and therefore excelling in strength, because they do His will (Psa. 103:20). So when heaven opened to Isaiah, and he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, and when at the sight he cried, "I am a man of unclean lips", a seraph at once flew to him with a live coal from off the altar of the Lord, saying, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thy sin is purged away" (Isa. 6:1-7). So again, when Daniel saw his great vision, and was fallen to the earth, one whose face was as the light appeared, and set him upon his knees, and said, "O man greatly beloved, unto thee I am now sent. Fear not, peace be unto thee; be strong; yea, be strong" (Dan. 10:5-19). Still more does the gospel reveal this intimate sympathy between

the spirit-world and man. Angels are present in the assemblies of believers (I Cor. 11:10). The angels of children behold the face of their Father who is in heaven (Matt 18:10). Yea, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth (Luke 15:10). The special promise of this first reiterated Amen is, that henceforward man shall be conscious of this heavenly host, and "shall see angels, ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

The old man sees nothing of this. To the eye of sense heaven is closed; the ministers of heaven are unperceived, though they are on every hand. But with the new man and his new life comes, first the faith, and then the knowledge, of ministering spirits ever present to keep us in our way. It was so with Christ: it is so when He is formed in us. Angels were heard singing at His birth (Luke 2:9, 13); angels guide His early steps (Matt. 2:13); angels minister to Him in His temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4:11); angels appear strengthening Him in the garden (Luke 22:43); angels at His grave roll away the stone, and declare that He is not here but risen (Matt. 28:2, 6). He is seen of angels (I Tim. 3:16) first and last. And as He is, so are we in this world. For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. And therefore we also, even as He, need and receive this heavenly help, while for a season with Him we are lower than the angels. For the new man's life under opened heavens calls for heavenly help. Worldly aids are not enough for this calling. Opened heavens do not deliver man from present want.

He to whom heaven was opened immediately hungered (Matt. 4:2), and was with the wild beasts (Mark 1:14). Nay, opened heavens open hell. The voice from heaven, witnessing that we are sons of God, is at once followed by a voice from hell, calling us to question and doubt our right to this title (Matt. 3:17 and 4:3). Often in such temptations nature seems in peril of dissolution; but the hosts of heaven are close at hand. And like the prophets servant, when our eyes are opened, (and it is the inward eye alone which sees these things,) we perceive that chariots and horses of fire are all around, and that they that are with us are more than they that are against us (II Kings 6:17). Thus does "heaven opened" show "angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man," and that the servants of our Father's house are near. Surely, as one said of old, "he must be the king's own son, on whom the servants of the king ascend and descend (Chrysostom, in Johanness Hom. 21§1); he must be the heir of heaven to whom the heavens open.

This, then, is the witness of this "Amen, Amen." Heaven is the home of the new man, and holy angels are his servants and companions. Till man finds this home he cannot rest. He may be a wanderer in a desert land, or a captive in prison, though he knows it not, or a madman, dreaming of wealth, while he is in beggar's rags; but whilst he is of the world, he has no home, for the world has still no heart (Hos. 7:11), and "without hearts there is no home." But the home is not far off. Heaven is near, for God is near; and the kingdom of heaven is henceforth open to all who can believe God. Oh, that He who went before us may lead us in His way, to see that wondrous sight, so often partially, so soon fully to be, known, when opened heavens shall be seen by all, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together (Isa. 40:5). As Christ's members we are called to share this even now with Him. One work of His promised Holy Spirit is to take of the things of Christ, (and He says, "All things that the Father hath are mine,") and to show

them unto us. But only as we are partakers of His experience can we come where He is gone before. He came to opened heavens by baptism, fasting, and temptation; by a transfiguration, by the cross, by resurrection. There is yet no other way. Flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom. There is but one way by which our nature can be brought to God, and that is shown in Christ Jesus. This is the special burden of the next reiterated Amen, "Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

SECOND "VERILY, VERILY"

The Birth of the New Man

(John 3:3-13)

No higher question can be proposed to man than that of the way by which he may regain his long-lost home. Let man be what he may, two facts are before him here: first, that sin and evil are on every hand, see not only in the outward troubles which abound everywhere, but even more in the inward weakness and unrest which burden man's spirit; and secondly, that all men have some hope or dream of rest and deliverance out of all that now confines and disquiets them. Man, even in his fall, and while he clings to earth, feels that such a scene of change is not his home; that there must be a place of rest somewhere. The first "Verily, Verily" tells us that heaven is this home, and that, though shut through sin, it shall again be, nay even now is, opened to us. The second "Verily, Verily" tells us how to see and enter it. "Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Verily, Verily, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Verily, Verily, I say unto you, We speak that we do know, and testify that which we have seen. No man hath ascended up to heaven save he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." (John 3:3-13)

Now, these words at first may seem mysterious, and even somewhat arbitrary; but if through grace the light of heaven reach us, we shall see that they simply announce a fact, and that there is, and can be, no other way into the kingdom. And our Lord's saying upon this subject, "No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven," shows by why this second birth must be, and also how it is effected. Let us mark how both the questions are answered by these words.

1. First, Why must this be? Why is a new birth the only way to enter heaven? Simply because to live in heaven we must have the life of heaven. Man can live in no world without its life. He can enter no world but by a birth. He can therefore only enter heaven by being born into it. And so far from there being anything arbitrary in this, the reason for it lies in the very nature of things. Each creature can but live in its own proper world; earthly things in earth, and heavenly things in heaven. If man then be fallen and has lost the heavenly life, the one thing he needs is the restoration of that which he has lost. Till he gets this, he can no more live in the Paradise for which God made him, than a man can live on earth without the life of this world. To return to heaven, therefore, he must have heaven's life requickenened in him. To re-enter that world of light he must again be born into it.

To make this clearer, I must here speak of the three different worlds in which as men we are, or have been, or may be. For man stands in relation to more worlds than one, and, until we see what these worlds are, we can have no clear conception of the truth our Lord is here teaching. There is, first, God's world of light and love, generally called heaven. There is secondly, the dark fallen world of self-love, and pride, and wrath, that is the

hellish world, called in Holy Scripture "the power of darkness" (Col. 1:13); and these two worlds, which are unseen by sense, are, the one unmixed good, the other unmixed evil; and there is, thirdly, this outward seen and temporal world, which is neither good like heaven, nor evil like hell, but which is everywhere full of figures of the two other worlds, all earthly good being some reflection of the world of light, all earthly evil being some shadow of the dark world. Each of these three worlds has its own life, in almost infinite variety, depending on the sun and light and air of each respectively; and to live in any of these worlds a creature must possess its life; that of earth to live on earth; that of hell or heaven to live in hell or heaven.

Now Scripture plainly tells us of the natural man, that as to the light-world he is dead; without God's life, and "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1); and yet that while so dead to God he has two other lives, and is therefore living in two other worlds; "walking" not only "according to the course or life of this outward world" (Eph 2:2 then six Greek words), but also "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2, 12); that thus in his body he lives the life of the seen and outward world, and in his soul the life of the dark world, with all the restlessness which comes from pride and self-love (Footnote: See Ambrose, *De bono mortis*, c.12); while his spirit is dead to the life of heaven, which must be rekindled in him, if he is ever again to return to and enter God's kingdom.

But this is not man's proper state, nor that in which or for which he was created. God created man in His own image (Gen. 1:26, 27): in spirit a creaturely likeness of Himself, a trinity in unity, with will, reason, and affection; and with heaven open to him, in the Paradise of God, where he might converse, not with God alone, but with those spiritual intelligences which are with God in heaven,--all of which is now hidden from our eyes,--while in his inward life, as a piece of red-hot iron looks all fire and not iron till the fire is gone out of it, that no raiment was needed, nor was there any shame, for the light of heaven beaming through all was His glorious dress, and he could feel no nakedness, for there was neither sin nor self-will. But the glory soon went; the life was quenched. How it was lost is one of the very first lessons which Holy Scripture teaches (Gen. 3:1-7). Man, trusting to creatures more than God, and thinking in independence to be as God, fell under the power of those very creatures over which he had been set as lord, and out of the world of light which was his true kingdom. For the lie of the serpent, that God was grudging and untrue, and that man in self-will could be as God, which is the substance of the first and indeed of every temptation, poisoned and slew man's heavenly life, as a serpent's bite kills the outward life; and by the poison of this lie he died at once, not indeed to the outward world, but to the life of heaven, and fell out of the world of light into that spiritual darkness and unrest which is his present portion; by this inward death as much cut off from God's light-world as a man who has here lost the earthly life is cut off from and dead to the things of this present seen world. Then the glory and the inward joy and peace all went; and, a poor fallen creature, he sought to hide his shame with fig-leaves, and to find his support and joy in the creatures by which he was surrounded; his soul, instead of being a flame of light and love, turned into a consuming inward fire; prone to envy, pride, and wrath; his love turned to self-love; like sweetest wine to sourest vinegar; while his body became subject to all the powers of this world; touched, even as

the beasts, by cold and heat, and pain and want; so weak that every creature on earth can vex it, every element destroy, and even a look or word trouble it; yet, spite of all this, with an inward feeling that he was made for better things, and is destined one day to rule all things.

Thus fell our father Adam; and in this state, fallen from God, he begat sons and daughters in his own image; and from him have grown the family of sinners, who, strangers to their true life, till renewed by grace, can find no joy in peace, and love, and heaven; and have no eye for spiritual things, but seek their home on earth, in the cares and pleasures and labours of this present life. And we, the fallen children of this fallen head, like the children of some king who has been dethroned and carried into captivity, where his children and children's children have been born slaves, and by generations of hard bondage have not only well-nigh forgotten the tradition of their father's glory, but have become utterly unfit to occupy his kingly place, their unnatural state of bondage being now more natural to them than a throne and kingdom,--we, the fallen children of men have so long been fallen, that we can scarcely believe who man once was, or what is yet his true kingdom; - made in God's image, he once walked in Paradise with God, and that for this end we are and were created. So fallen are we that we settle down here, as if this were our home; scarcely believing the witness which the gospel brings, that the life Christ lived is our true life, that He was what man is called to be, and one day shall be; no longer slave to sin and death, but victor over both, and lord of all creatures; and that He comes to give us our true life, because until it is requickened we are lost, dead to all that God has prepared, and yet is keeping for us.

But all this seems gross exaggeration to some. They allow that they are weak, that they need teaching and guidance, and even that they may need mercy. They feel that something is amiss; that men are not at rest. But to say that they are dead, without God's light and life, and that they may be conformed to Christ, who is the image of God, this seems incredible. Yet Christ and His Apostles say this: indeed this is the burden of their teaching. This is their witness, that "God hath given to us eternal life" (I John 5:11), because nothing less than this life could really meet our necessity; that "he that believeth on the Son have everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36); and again, that "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God has not life" (I John 5:12). The mystery of the gospel is that man is dead and yet alive again in Christ,--that there is judgment for, and yet remission of, sins. This is the threefold witness of the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood (I John 5:8). The Spirit says, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). And the Water, that is baptism, witnesses the same, burying us with Christ (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12), (and we do not bury live things but dead things,) out of the very grave of nature to raise us up new creatures, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And the Blood declares the same; for Christ said, "This is my blood: drink ye all of it. For except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man ye have no life in you." (Matt. 26:28 and John 6:53, 54). I do not say all feel this death. This outward life hides it for awhile with its present pleasures, or cares, or occupations. This indeed is the reason why men so love the world, because it keeps them from coming to themselves; while the loss of it shows us what poor, empty, restless souls

we are till grace finds us. And this too is the reason why God so often takes these things from His elect, that in the discovery of their inward want they may long for their true life, and seeking may find it to their eternal joy. Till that new life is quickened in us we can no more taste or see the things of God, than without this early life we could know the pains or joys of this world. For just as it is only by a participation in the nature of the old man that we can share his lot, so only by a participation in the nature of God's Son can we know His life and our true portion in Him. Conscience tells us that we lack something. We cannot see the things of God--His kingdom may be near, but till we have His life it is not opened to us. But instead of being willing to come to ourselves (Luke 15:17), and to know our need, and so to come to our Father, to receive again our true inheritance, how many inventions have we to hide the aching void within, how many diversions to get away from self, and still the soul's hunger. Better surely, far better, to come here to ourselves, by sorrows, even by sins, which so wound us that we cannot rest until we find a Saviour, than to live here strangers to our true state, unsaved, unquickened, and unchanged, till we go hence in darkness we know not where.

Such then is the needs-be for regeneration. We "must be born again," because only by a new birth can we re-enter heaven. The question yet remains--

2. How we must be born again;--how can the life of God be quickened in us;--and how, when it is quickened, can we return to heaven? Here again the answer lies in the declaration, "Verily, Verily, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" for "no man hath ascended into heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven"; in other words, no life can enter heaven but that which first came from, and which even here belongs to, heaven. Regeneration, therefore, or the requickening of God's life in man, can only be effected by Him who has that life, that is the Son of God; first, by His coming down from heaven to dwell in man, thus to raise up the eternal life in our nature here; and then by His dying to this nature, to bring us out of it to heaven, in the power of that life which He has quickened in us. Thus there are two distinct stages in this work. For we need, not only to have the heavenly life revived in us, but no less to be delivered out of the hellish and earthly life, in which as fallen we are held captive. The first is accomplished by the Word, the see of God, coming into our place, joining Himself to us, and sharing for a season our straitness. The second is effected by His bringing us out of our place into His, through the strait and narrow gate of death, which is the one and only way fully to know and enter heaven. Every natural birth is the figure of the spiritual; "for the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made (Rom. 1:20). Could men but see how this present earthly body grows, from so small a beginning to so wonderful a house; and how both the fire and water work in it; they might see the shadow of the more glorious house (II Cor. 5:1, 2), which is built up by the seed of God, and stand astonished at the wonders of the building and the glory of the Builder. For the new man is the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitches (Heb. viii. 2), with its holy place and most holy (Ex. 26:33), which, like the male and female, though divided for a time, are predestined to become one, when the veil is rent and done away. But we are so fallen that very little can be said here of the way in which God is ever giving life. Something however must be said of these two stages of man's regeneration, first as wrought by the

Holy Ghost in Christ our Head for us, and then as wrought by the same Spirit in us who are His members. First, then, regeneration was wrought for us in Christ. In Him, that is in His person, man has been regenerated. In Him man again received God's life, by the coming of the Eternal Word to dwell in flesh, by whose indwelling our nature was requickened, and so regained in Christ that which had been lost in old Adam; so that man here, in Christ, was the son of God, with all the virtues, powers, and glories which belong to such a lineage, though for awhile these glories were shrouded by the veil, that is to say this flesh (Heb. 10:20), in and under, which the Eternal Son was manifested. So began the work of man's regeneration. But it was not, and could not be, perfected, save by the putting off and dying to that flesh into which the Son had come, to manifest that new creature, which is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, but the one united life in Christ Jesus (I Cor. 11:11; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). For while here, in present nature, the eternal life was confined: therefore it had yet a baptism to be baptized with, and was straitened until it was accomplished (Luke 12:50). Only by death did man in Christ re-enter heaven. The life of heaven was in Him here. But only through death could that life be perfected and manifested; even as the natural life, which is in a babe unborn, is only brought to light when it is delivered out of that womb in which it had been quickened. And this death to nature, before it was actually reached, was yet in measure anticipated, and very really, though spiritually, entered into, in that mystic and sacramental death, which Christ submitted to at His baptism, when, as He went down into Jordan, heaven opened to Him. But it was actual death, "even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8), that fully opened heaven. Then the veil, which hid the inner from the outer court, was "rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matt. 27:51)--for the work is done by God for us,--to show, as the Apostle says, that through the rending of the veil, that is this flesh, the way into the holiest is opened by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 10:19, 20). For indeed the veil is present nature, which here hides both heaven and hell, till through grace that life is rekindled which belongs to and can re-enter heaven. And the way into the holiest is not made manifest while the first tabernacle, that namely which is of this creation (Heb. 9:8, 11 then three Greek words), is yet standing. No man can enter into the tabernacle of God till the angels with the last plagues have poured out their last vials (Rev. 15:8). Christ died to enter heaven. He entered "by His blood"; having so "obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12; Deut 12:23).

Such was the way back into heaven for man in Christ. And, to come where He is, the self-same thing must be wrought in us by the same Spirit. For there is, and can be, no other way. No mere uniting of the divided parts or properties of the fallen old man can give us that life of God, which we must possess to enter heaven. God's own nature must be first requickened by our receiving the Word, the "seed of God," in whom is life (II Pet. 1:4; John 1:4); and then there must be a delivery from, and putting off of, the fallen old man, through the cross, that is through death to present nature. Only so do we regain the "image and likeness" (Gen. 1:26; I Cor. 11:11) of our Maker and our Father; only so are we "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21). If we receive the word and keep it in our heart,--for it is the heart, the feminine part of our present fallen and divided nature, which, like Mary, yet receives the word,--if, like her, on hearing God's promise, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," our heart replies, "Behold the

handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:33, 38)--then that word, being the seed of the kingdom, will quicken God's life, and so create a new man in us, "which is Christ in us, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27); in whom the breach is healed; in whom our nature is no more divided; in whom "of twain one new man is made, so making peace" (Eph. 2:15). And as when the Lord was born, the world still went on its old way, little conscious that One had come, and was among them, who should one day change and rule all things; so when the new man is formed within, the outer life for awhile goes on much as before; the daily calling and its earthly care, and too often old lusts and habits also, still engross us; a worldly eye sees little new; while yet the life which shall live for ever has been quickened within, and, a new man been formed who shall inherit all. From the first this "new man" (Eph. 4:24) is God's heir. But whilst here in these bodies of our humiliation, the life is often sorely crossed and straitened. Only by a redemption of the body, for which we sigh and cry, saying with the Apostle, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24), and by death and resurrection with Christ, are we delivered.

And this deliverance we obtain, like Christ, first sacramentally, when receiving the word, in a mystic and sacramental death, we are buried with Him in baptism, into the life-giving name or nature of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and then manifestly, when in due time through crosses and sorrows, and at last through death, we pass from seen things to unseen, from earth to heaven. "The Church, like Paradise of old," as a martyr said, "is watered by four rivers, namely the Gospels, and by these, as by a spiritual inundation, she bestows the grace of saving baptism" (Cyprian. Epistel lxxii., ad Jubienum). Baptism is our confession that only through death with Christ, by receiving His word and dying with Him, can any be delivered. Death, which is but another baptism, of which we all may say with Christ, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished," when "all God's waves and billows go over us" (Psa. 42:7), when we "come into deep waters, where the floods overflow us" (Psa. 69:2), is but the substance and fulfilment of that first great sacrament, for only through these deep waters can we enter heaven. Therefore we say, I believe one baptism for the remission of sins." For only "he that is dead is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:7). Quickened we may be, and are, while yet not severed from the first creation; sons of God we are even while not yet "delivered from the bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:21); for here, as in nature, there is conception before quickening, and quickening before birth, and, long after the life of Christ is conceived in us, it lacks for a season the image of the man, though this surely will come in its season; but the seed is not brought to perfection in a moment, or without separation from its first temporary home, through the travail pains of nature, and the bursting of one shell of life after another, till all is perfected. Nor can we safely hurry the process, though till it is accomplished we are imperfect. For just as in nature a babe may be born too soon, so is it in grace: our days of bondage and darkness in the womb of nature are all appointed, and good for us. Therefore the elect is "made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth" (Psa. 139:15), while lost and fallen spirits "corrupt themselves by reason of their brightness" (Ezek. 28:17). But the time comes when we must be born out of all that which now holds us. And only when so freed from present nature are we freed from sin: only when dead do we really enter heaven. This is the burden of this second Verily, Verily,--"Except a man be born again, he cannot

see the kingdom of God: except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Of this "new man" formed in us, there are many things to say, which are hard to be uttered, only because when, for the time we should be teachers, we are still children (Heb. 5:12). But this may be said, that as old Adam is the type of our natural life, so is Christ the type or figure of the eternal life, as it grows out of human nature; first coming into our likeness, to bring us into His in due season. At every stage, whether in the womb, or as a babe, or twelve years old, or with heaven opened, or in transfiguration, or in resurrection, it is the same one life; but very different does it appear, and very varied are its works or sufferings, as it advances through these stages. It does too at one stage what it cannot at another. For Christ, though from the first, "that holy thing" (Luke 1:35),--for "He was conceived of the Holy Ghost,"--could not and did not, as an infant, in Jewish swaddling clothes, do the works of love and power which followed His baptism by the same Spirit; and even then, though He was Himself baptized with the Holy Ghost, He did not pour out that same Spirit as it came forth from Him when through the cross and resurrection He had passed again from earth to heaven. So with Christ in us; for the story is but one: Christ for us being but the prelude and figure of our experience of Christ as formed in us. When first conceived the new man is unseen: it may, and at present must, be so hidden that no outward eye as yet can see it. Then, when first seen, it is but as a babe, which, though as truly heir of God as it shall be when it rules all, for awhile needs the service and help of others to preserve it from its enemies. Even when heaven opens to it, and the Father's voice is heard saying, "Thou art my beloved child," and power is given through the Spirit to open blind eyes (Acts 26:18), and raise the dead, and cleanse lepers, even then this life in us must often say with Christ, "How am I straitened until the baptism be accomplished." So grows the heavenly life in us, until it comes at length through death to the place where Christ has gone before us; when in and with Him, freed from the things which bind it here, it shall do His priestly works within the veil. O wonder of wonders, that being called with such a calling,--that even when quickened with this eternal life,--we should yet cleave to and crave after the dying things of time, from which we are redeemed in Christ Jesus. Such is the new man, and such the entrance to the kingdom. Only by receiving the word can the creature regain God's life; only by dying to its fallen life and to its first form can it be brought to God's kingdom. What then, it may be said, are we to think of the heathen, who have never had the gospel preached to them? Shall they all be excluded from the kingdom? I answer, They too, though not as we, have had the Word. God has "not left Himself without a witness to them, in that He did and does them good, and gives them showers from heaven, filling men's hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). God was not, and is "not, far from them"(Acts 17:27). He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not (John 1:10). But His Word, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9), is ever crying to all who will receive Him (Prov. 1:20-23, and 8:3, 4). His works too are a ceaseless word to men, "because that which may be known of God is manifest in them" (Rom. 1:19, 20). Thus "as many as received Him became the sons of God," even before "the word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:12 and 14). They might not know, as we do, that they were sons (Gal. 4:1-3): they had not the light as it now shines on us in the face of Jesus Christ; for in His birth and death and resurrection God has

opened to us the whole process and way of our redemption. But in every age His Word has been with men, seeking by every occasion of joy or sorrow to speak to them as they could bear it, "rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, for His delights were with the sons of men" (Prov. 8:31). "Many therefore shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God; while the children of the children shall be cast out into outer darkness; for there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last" (Matt. 8:11, 12 and Luke 13:29, 30). The true children of the kingdom are not those who merely have the word, but rather those in whom a life is formed according to it. Such, though not of Israel, will obtain witness that they are righteous, like him of whom it was said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Luke 7:9). There may even be some who, in this earthly life, have never consciously received the Word, either through the Scriptures or through preaching, or even through the "many voices which are in the world" (I Cor. 14:10),--who have lived here in nature, simply as parts of nature, moved only by its life, knowing nothing of that life and image which the Word renews in us,--who may first hear the gospel, like those to whom Christ "went and preached," when, as "spirits in prison" (I Pet. 3:19), they there wake up to see their ruin. Such may yet be "saved" at last, "so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:15), by the ministry of those who, having won the prize of the first born (Rev. 14:1-4), are kings and priests with Christ. But, first or last, none are saved but by the Word. No life but that of heaven can re-enter or live in heaven.

With what love then should we welcome and keep that Word, in whatever measure it may come to us, whether in letter or in spirit, as gospel or as law. Unless we receive it, we cannot be saved. For the true life of the soul, which was extinguished in the fall, can no more rekindle itself as a flame of light and love in us, than the fire which is shut up in a flint can come forth of itself, or the life which is hid in some dark root can burst out into blossoms without the sun and air of heaven. A power above us must effect the change. But if God, in whom is no darkness at all, through the beams of His Eternal Son, who is the Sun of Righteousness, enter like light and warmth into the very nature of the fallen creature, He makes us alive by His indwelling. Then beauty after beauty may be brought forth, the creaturely image of that Sun which has effected all the change. But the Word or light must be received. We are helpless without it; but God too, if one may say so, needs the creature's will and co-operation. If we will not receive Him, no change is wrought. God cannot convert us unless by grace or judgment we are willing also. Keep then the Word, whether it judges or quickens; whether it justifies or seems only to condemn. We need both to be quickened and to be slain. Therefore "the Lord killeth and maketh alive (I Sam. 2: 6). The ministrations of death and life (II Cor. 3:6-9) are both for us. One life, the life of heaven, needs quickening in us, and the Word of God as gospel quickens it; and one life, that of hell, needs slaying in us, and the Word of God as law slays it. For just as by the lie, or word of the serpent, the life of hell was quickened, and the life of heaven poisoned in man, when he was even yet in Paradise; so by the truth, that is God's Word, the life of heaven is requickened, and the life of hell destroyed and slain in us, while yet we are in darkness. Keep then the Word. He that receives and keeps it, by it is made a son of God.

And let us cherish too and gratefully accept the cross. By it we are not quickened. The Word alone quickens. But by the cross, that is through death, we are delivered; just as in natural birth that which has been quickened is only delivered by a going forth out of the womb in which it has been conceived, as for a season held captive. Only by the cross, that is by death, are we delivered from bondage of corruption which surrounds us here. And all our sorrows, which are but portions of the cross of Christ,--for His cross was only the penalty of our being where and what we are,--if like Him we meekly accept them as coming from the hand of God, are but the travail-pains of our delivery. Let us bear them patiently, and they will bear us out of the darkness into the light. Therefore even for our flesh, let us be thankful; for this present body of sin (Rom. 6:6), of humiliation (Phil. 3:21), and of death (Rom. 7:24), in whatever light we view it, whether as a prison, a workhouse, or a hospital, is also serving us, and has a glory, though, like the glory of death and condemnation (II Cor. 3:9, 10), it is as nothing in comparison with the glory that excelleth. In it we have a time and place to die and to be born; to die to sin, and be born to God; to put off the filthy garments of the old man, to put on the raiment of the new. Thus all is for our good, flesh and spirit, death and life. All things are ours, if we are Christ's.

Most thankfully also let us accept the sacraments of the cross, baptism and the supper, "the water and the blood" (I John 5:6). Rightly to understand these is to understand the whole gospel; for they are "extensions of the incarnation," the creature form in and by which the living Word yet comes down so as to reach and be received even by carnal men. And may we also, as Christ's members, become ourselves in due time sacramental, like His wounded hands and side giving forth both water and blood. Christ's members will yet give these when they are pierced (John 19:34); when like Paul, who "bore in his body the marks of the Lord" (Gal. 6:17), they can truly say, "I die daily" (I Cor. 15:31). Such ministrations may be yet beyond us. They will come with Christ's cross. There is "a time to be born", as well as "a time to die" (Eccl. 3:2).

THIRD "VERILY, VERILY"

The Law of the New Man

(John 5:19-30)

Thus far we have only seen the Home of the New Man, and the one only Door of Entrance to it. We are now to see the Law by which he lives. And this is no mere external commandment, saying to him, "Thou shalt," or "Thou shalt not," but the very law of his being, like the laws of nature, bringing about certain results, by an inward force which moulds and forms the whole life. In a word, the law here set before us is what the Apostle calls "the law of the spirit of life, which makes us free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). The one is the innate tendency of the new man, as being partaker of God's life, to do God's works; the other, the natural tendency of the fallen old man, as corrupted by the serpent, to live in sin and self-will rather than in God.

The law by which this new man lives is here opened to us, and the results of such a life, in all which he is a perfect contrast to the fallen old man. For what specially characterises the old man is, that in all he acts from self, and so brings death and judgment upon himself and his posterity; while that which marks the new man is that "he does nothing from self, but only that which he sees the Father do"; the result of which is that to him it is given both to "quicken and to judge," that is, to be the Father's viceregent in the ministration both of life and death to fallen men. Thus is all that died in Adam quickened in Christ, and all that rose up in Adam cast down in Christ, and judged by Him for ever. This is the subject of the third reiterated Amen. "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that He himself doeth; and He will show Him greater works than these that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5:19-22).

First notice the occasion of these words; for it shows how the children of the kingdom, if themselves lacking the life of God, may pervert the very ordinances, which were given to lead them to the heavenly life, into so many reasons for rejecting that life when it appears and works among them. Here Christ, in the life of God, Himself the true fulfilment of the sabbath, had just given power to an impotent man to pass from a life of infirmity to a life of health and rest. But because this was done upon the sabbath day, the Jews condemned, not the healed one only, but the Healer also. Hardened by the letter of truth, they judge the acts of love. His simple answer is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,"--in other words, "I am not acting in self-will,--if I did, I could neither give nor possess rest. I am only doing what my Father does. God does works of mercy every sabbath day. I therefore work, because it has been proved,--this man's misery proves it,--that this sabbath, this rest of the first creation, is indeed no sabbath." God did indeed rest in an unfallen world; and since the fall, before finally giving up the first creation to condemnation, He tried it once and again, first without, then under, law. But spite of law

sin works in it, for self-will reigns in man; therefore neither God nor man can rest. Therefore instead of "God did rest the seventh day," the truth now is, "My Father worketh still; and I, as Son of God, do what my Father does,--I also work." And then as showing the secret of His own life, which, because it is a life of rest, can communicate the same rest to as many as will receive Him, He utters the words descriptive of the law of the New Man. His life is rest and can give rest, because it never acts from self, but only does the Father's will.

Thus are introduced the words which open the law or way of the New Man: "Verily, Verily, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do. For what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son in like manner" (Greek word).

1. First, "He does nothing," nay more, "He can do nothing from self." Now this exactly reverses the way of old Adam. The old man always acts from self, wanting to be something in himself, which is the sure way really to remain nothing. Self, too, is the end of all his doings; self-seeking, or self-exalting, self-will and self-love in some form or other ever mark him. Thus the old man does "according to his will" (Dan. 8:4). Hence even his good works may be sin, for indeed in all its shapes sin in the creature is nothing else but self-will; and this even in things which, seem to be holy, as in prayer, almsgiving, or fasting, which should all be sacrifices to God, but which, as our Lord shows, may all be done for self, merely to "have glory of and to be seen of men" (Matt. 6:1, 2, 3, 5, 16). And indeed it is in his religion that the self-will of the old man is most offensive in the eyes of God, because religion should be reunion, the merging of our own will in the Lord's that His will and not our own may be accomplished in us. But, instead of this, self-will is often busy, as an angel of light, in forms of godliness without the power, which only add greater strength to the workings of that fallen life, which must die if we would see God. For fallen man would fain be something, instead of wholly yielding up himself, that all that is done in him may be of God.

But the Son does nothing, and can do nothing, from self. His life is to do what the Father doth. Instead, therefore, of living to appropriate or claim or retain for self what is not his own, which in one form or another is the law or ruling principle of the old man, while he remains without religion,--instead of being busy in religious forms, which leave self-will untouched, which is the way of the same old man, when he turns to occupy himself with what he calls the things of God,--the new man "does nothing from self. Wherefore when He cometh into the world He saith, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7). Even when he would do good, His Word is, "Not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42). As to His words too He says, "I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me I speak these things" (John 8:28);--"I have not spoken of myself" (John 12: 49); --"My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me" (John 7:16). For he is filled with the Holy Ghost, who "speaks not of Himself" (John 16:13). Not one act or word therefore is self-derived or independent. It seems as if He had no will of His own. And yet because he is man, he must possess a will; for God has a will, and man is made in God's likeness. Only in this does the will of the new man differ from that of the old, that in everything it is subject to God, even to "do the will of Him that sent him, and to finish His work" (John 4:34). So "morning by morning wakening his ear to hear" (Isa. 1:4) the Father's voice, He

"does always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). The very times of his service are not his own. While others hurry, he waits, saying "My time is not full come" (John 7:8). For "he is not able" (Greek words) to act in independence. Therefore "he cannot sin" (I John 3:9); and this, like the corresponding language respecting God, that "He cannot lie" (Titus 1:2), so far from limiting His power is rather the secret of it. For as he commands nature who obeys her, so he whose will is one with God must in willing His will command His almightiness. The angels which excel in power are those which do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word (Psa. 103:20). And the Son who "does nothing from self," though for a season lower than the angels, and subject through our fall to all the changes and burdens of pain, sorrow, and death, which make up the course or life of this world (Eph. 2:2), by yielding up Himself in all to God, brings in another power by which He can bear and do all things.

What such a life costs man, though set forth in Christ, can be seen only by those, who, living the same life, in some measure know what it is to be conformed to Him. Not without sore trial is this done. For as gold is tried by fire, so are acceptable men in the furnace of adversity (Ecc. 2:5). The will has to be proved whether it will choose its own, or wait the Father's pleasure. The well-beloved Son is the perfect pattern. I say nothing of all the years of obscure toil at Nazareth, where, as a saint (Bonaventura, Life of Christ, chap. xv. § 13) observed of old, "His doing nothing wonderful was in itself a kind of wonder." But even after the spirit of God comes upon Him, and He is anointed for His work, and the voice from heaven declares His true relation to it, He yet does nothing from Himself, but in man's state and lot, still has His will tried to the uttermost, whether in all He will be faithful and obedient. He must have no will but the Father's, and this He must fulfil or suffer, whatever the consequences of such obedience, and whatever the temptation to save Himself rather than to bear what is appointed for Him. In such a path He must give up even His rights, except as God may please to give them, assured that He is in the Father's hands, and that, whatever the trial, all is perfect love. But what this costs poor flesh and blood, those know who have endeavoured even in their little measure to follow the Pattern. For the trial is not the giving up of friends, money, station, nor even those dear to us as the apple of the eye. These are sacrifices; yet are they little in comparison with giving up one's own will, that is one's self, in everything, to do or suffer what God may please from day to day; not using what is in our hands, like Peter, to resist, even when we unjustly suffer wrong; nor pleading with the Father to escape the cross, even when we might, if we chose, so pray, as the Blessed Master said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall give me twelve legions of angels" (Matt. 26:53); but in the faith of Christ Himself, which is far more than faith in Him (Footnote: Compare the words, "the faith of Jesus Christ," with "believing in Jesus Christ," both of which occur in Gal. 2: 16, and elsewhere in the New Testament.) yielding up ourselves to God in everything, even as He did. For faith in Christ ever comes and claims the promised help, and receives for answer present blessing, with such words as, "Be it unto thee according to thy will" (Matt. 15:28); while the faith of Christ, in the face of darkness, says only, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." Blessed be God, One in our nature has done and borne all this; and in our nature He still gives His members power to do and bear the same. But all this costs a man himself, though in thus losing self we find God.

If such a life is now rarely to be seen, the simple reason is that the cross or dying of the Lord, though boasted in, is not yet known, and therefore the life of Jesus is not made manifest in us (II Cor. 4:10, 11). Yet the new life by grace may be and is in souls, in whom it is not manifested. The veil, that is to say this flesh, conceals the light. But where the new man lives, the law of his life is this:--he "can do nothing from himself." And many a Christian knows, that, though as yet he finds not how to perform that which is good (Rom. 7:18), the spirit is willing, though the flesh is weak. It is in his heart to obey in all things, and "it is well that it is in his heart" (II Chron. 6:8). Yet this is our calling, that the outward should be as the inward, and that through a daily death the life of Jesus should be manifested even in our mortal flesh.

Here, then, is what the new man cannot do: "he cannot act from self." What he can do is "what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, those also doeth the Son in like manner." Yet the measure in which he does this, (for he does at one stage what he cannot at another,) is according to the measure in which he seeth what the Father doeth. "For the Father loved the Son and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth, and He will show Him greater things than these" (John 5:19, 20). Here is hid and yet revealed a law of the divine working, as to the way in which the Father shows, and the Son sees, all things which the Father doeth. For, as Augustine says, "it is not, that the Father first does a thing without the Son, that the Son thus may see what the Father doeth; but the Father shows what He doeth by doing it by the Son, for the Father does noting that he does not by the Son." (Tract. In Johan xxi. § 2). This is the way in which old Adam shows us what he does; by doing it in us; for we do not really see his works without us till they are done within. Do what you will before a babe, it does not see it. And thus too does our Father show us what He doeth. It is only as His works are wrought in us that we see or understand them. And the Eternal Son when he took our place revealed this law to us, so that He "grew in wisdom" (Luke 2:52) as He did the Father's works. Therefore, though from everlasting He was the Son, "by whom all things were made," only when the Spirit like a dove came upon Him did heaven open, and mighty works begin to show forth themselves in Him (Matt. 14:2 and Acts 10:38). Thus, as the Father showeth Him all that Himself doeth, does the Son see and do the same. What are these works? For what the Father doeth, that also doeth the Son in like manner. Briefly then, for God is love, the works of God are works of love, which manifests itself in meeting every form of need and evil; which hears all, believes all, hopes all, endures all; and which shall never fail till all are overcome and ruled by love. If, therefore, when all was darkness, God said, "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3); if when the creature was void and formless He wrought till all was very good (Gen. 1:31); if when sin again came in He still worked on, with call, and promise, and gift, meeting the creature's need; (Gen. 3:9, 13, 21); if, in spite of all that men have been, He is still a refuge for us (Psa. 62:8); if He looseth the prisoners, and openeth the eyes of the blind, and raiseth up those that are bowed down; (Psa. 146:7, 8); if, to crown all other mercies, He gives the brightness of His glory to come into the form and place of sinful men, to bear their curse and burden for them (Heb. 1:2); if these are the Father's works, these also doeth the Son; He too comes saying, "Let there be light"; He too works to bring forth a new creation; He too looseth the prisoners; He too openeth eyes of the blind; He too raiseth up those that are bowed down. And so too must His members, each according to their measure, because it is not they that live, but Christ who

liveth in them. They too, therefore, can say, what things soever their Father doeth, these His children must do likewise, and be perfect even as their father in heaven is perfect (Eph. 5:1; Matt. 5:48). Nay, more, because the righteousness of God is in them,--a righteousness without the law (Rom. 3:21), for God is not righteous because any law is laid upon Him, saying, "Thou shalt," or "Thou shalt not," but simply because He is unchanging, perfect love,--as sharers of His life and love, they do His works, because, according to His promise, He dwells and works in them (II Cor. 6:16 and Phil. 2:13). Great, therefore, as are the Father's works, so great indeed that "there is no end of His greatness," for after all that we have seen we must cry like Job, "Lo, these are but parts of His ways, but how little a portion is heard of Him" (Job 26:14), because "what things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son," of His works too it may be said, that, "if they should be written everyone, even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25). For the whole creation is wondrous, but much more so is the new; and the sons of God are fellow-workers with their Father; His heirs, in and by whom, according to His will, all the kindreds of the earth, yea, all creatures, shall be blessed.

2. It remains to mark here what our Lord adds, as to the results of such a life, and the wondrous privileges which follow and accompany it.

These are the right and power both to "quicken" and to "judge," and thus to be God's viceregent in the administration of His kingdom. The New Man is ordained to be the judge of quick and dead. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (John 5:21-23); and again, "As the Father hath life in Himself, so that He given to the Son to have life in Himself, and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man" (John 5:26, 27).

Here again every word describes a state the very opposite to that of the fallen old man. For old Adam, through his self-will, not only dies, but is also judged; the new man, doing nothing from self, both "quickens" and "judges" others. These works are nothing less than a participation with God Himself in those operations which are peculiarly His own. For when He would set forth His own glory above all gods, these two powers, to "quicken" and to "judge," are what He claims for Himself as His distinctive prerogative. "See now," He says, "that I, even I, am He; I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal" (Deut. 32:39). Yet these are the very powers committed to His sons, who do nothing from self. O wondrous grace, that the creature formed of clay, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth (Psa. 139:15), being renewed after the image of Him that created him (Col. 3:10), should be, not only quickened with God's life, but the means to quicken it again in others, and should also be God's agent in judging and subduing, whether in heaven or in earth, or under the earth, every will which has rebelled against His authority.

But why should these special gifts of "quicken" and "judging" be committed to the Son of Man? Because both life and death are needed to redeem man from his fall and bring him back to heaven; and the Son, and those who by grace are sons in Him, being

God's heirs (Rom. 8:17), in and by whom He will restore all, need to this end both the power to "quicken" and to "judge," even as they themselves have first been judged and quickened. For by the fall, as we have seen, we are without God's life, not lost only, but dead in trespasses and sins. Therefore this life of God needs quickening in us; and the Son, and those in whom He lives, are the appointed means and channels for this quickening. And again since by the serpent's lie we are not only dead to God, but have had another life quickened in us, which can never rest, this fallen life must somehow be destroyed; for the only way out of any life in which we may be living is to die to it. And inasmuch as fallen souls, living in self-will, either cannot or will not judge themselves, God's elect are appointed by the Word not only to quicken, but also to judge, those who yet require such a ministry; by the Word, as Gospel, to quicken those who still are dead in sins, by sowing in their hearts that seed which shall grow up and blossom into the kingdom; by the same Word, as law, to judge that evil life which keeps men far from God, that by a death to it they may be delivered out of it, according to the word, "He that is dead is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:7); this judgment or "ministration of condemnation" being only for a season, and "to be abolished," as St. Paul declares, that the "more glorious" "ministration of life," "which remaineth," may abide for ever (II Cor. 3:9-11). God's sons, therefore, "quicken" and "judge," because God Himself in love does both, and they are called to do what He doeth. He judges, because thus only can the evil life, in which His creatures are captive, be brought to a conclusion. He quickens, because without His life we cannot enter or live in His kingdom. And so His sons do the self-same works; killing to make alive; bringing down to the grave that they may bring up (I Sam. 2:6). This is the end of all; though death and judgment to bring forth that promised new creation, where there shall be neither death nor crying any more (Rev. 21:4, 5).

But to look more closely at these works.

First, the elect "quicken" others. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (John 5:21). Here God's purpose shines out, that "as by man came death, by man should come," not only the resurrection from, but also "the resurrection of, the dead" (I Cor. 15:20, 21 Compare verse 20 and 21), in due season. For the "resurrection from the dead" is the special portion of the Son, and of His members, who are elect with Him, that, being first-fruits, they may be also fellow-workers with God in the "resurrection of the dead," that is the final restitution (Acts. 3:21). Nor does it rob Him of His glory to say that this is wrought "by man." Rather is it to the praise of the glory of His grace that the whole remedy for sin shall come "by man," even as the sin did; according to the words, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." A niggardly God might grudge to give such glory to those who once were rebels, and who are by nature children of wrath even as others yet are. But our God is love, and love delights to give itself to the beloved, that others may be shares of its blessedness. God therefore even in nature, that wondrous veil which hides His glory, while also it reveals Him, shows Himself as the Almighty Worker who always works His works, not apart from, but in and by, His creatures. Even in giving earthly life, it is quickened and conceived, not without, but by the operation of, his creatures. To them is given to be fathers and mothers, that is to give life to that which is as yet without it. Everywhere, even to the lowest forms of life, in herb, or tree, or beast, whose seed is in

itself (Gen. 1:11), is this power given, to reproduce the life proper to each respectively. So is it with the life which shall abolish death. It too is "by man." And so "the Son," in and by His members, "quickeneth whom He will." Thus do they work out, not only their own, but others salvation also, for it is God that worketh in the, both to will and to do His good pleasure.

Whom then does the Son thus quicken? He "quickens whom He will" (John 5:21). And His will, as we have seen, is to do nothing from self: to do that only which is well-pleasing to the Father. What then is the Father's will? He "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth; for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (I Tim. 2:4-6). Therefore the Son says plainly, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hands" (John 3:35). And again, "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that as to the all which Thou hast given Him, He should give to them eternal life" (John 17:2 See the Greek). And again "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out; for I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that as to the all, which He hath given me, I should lose nothing of it, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:37-40). Therefore the Apostle tells us, that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. After which (Gr. word. Compare the use of this word in Mark 4:17, 28) cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:22-24). The Son is the means by whom all men shall be saved (John 3:17; 4:42; 6:33; I Tim. 4:10; I John 4:14). But in this salvation some are called before others, the first-born and first-fruits, who here die with Christ, being joint-heirs with Him, in bringing and subduing all to God, till "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10, 11).

This quickening is effected by the Word, or seed of God. But there are two distinct times when with somewhat differing results this quickening takes effect, connected with the two different relations of the Son, as "Son of God," and "Son of Man:"--the first in this present age, for "Verily, Verily, The hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; " of whom it is said, "Verily, Verily, He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath (it is a present possession) eternal life, and does not come into judgment (John 5:24, 25), but has passed out of death into life:" this being the present quickening of the "dead in trespasses and sins":--the second, when our Lord returns, when "all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man," when He will come to "do judgment, because he is the Son of Man" (John 5:27, 28). As to the first of these quickenings, our Lord's words here only more fully repeat His teaching as to the way into the kingdom by the new or second birth. Life is only by the Son. Nothing can ascend into heaven, but that which came down from, and here belongs to heaven. Therefore the Word, in whom is life, has come from heaven, and as many as receive Him have eternal life. These are they over whom there is joy in

the presence of the angels of God, who were dead, and are alive again (Luke 15:10, 32). These are the true Hebrews, the "passers-over" (In Gen. 14:13, Abram is called "the Hebrew." Hebrew word, which is rendered by the LXX _____ or the passer-over.), who keep the true "pass-over," and thus "have passed from death unto life." And these like Christ their Head, because partakers of His life, become sowers of the same seed, taking heed to themselves and to the doctrine, that in so doing they may save themselves and those that hear them (I Tim. 4:16). And as ministers, not of His word only, but of His quickening spirit also, in them is fulfilled the word, "He that believeth in me, out of His belly shall flow the living waters." These are the "first-fruits" (James 1:18; Rev. 14:4). But "if the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy" (Rom. xi. 16). There is therefore another quickening; ""hen all that are in the graves shall hear, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of judgment;" "the judgment," even as the quickening, being "committed to the Son," "that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father" (John 5:22, 23).

This brings us to the "judging"; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; and hath committed it to Him as Son of Man, for "the Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man." I will not here attempt to open all the wonderful fulness which is contained in this title, "Son of Man," as contrasted with another kindred title of our Lord, namely, "Seed of the Woman," which speaks of other human relationships and opens other glories, because this subject comes even more directly before us again in the Sixth Reiterated Amen, which speaks of the Divine Nature of the New Man, who is there also very distinctively "the Son of Man." But I may say here that woman was not in the beginning separate or taken out of man (The separation was not till after Adam's sleep. See Gen. 2:21, 22.) The title therefore, "Seed of the Woman," assumes division, and ever shows our Lord in His varied relation to the "multiplied conceptions" of the woman, either separate from some, or related to others, in virtue of certain tastes or qualities in them. The other title, "Son of Man," shows Him simply as begotten in the image in which Adam was originally made, in which case His link with men is not in virtue of certain qualities in them, but of a common blood-relationship with all. Two consecutive chapters in the book of Genesis set forth this contrast, the one throughout giving the Woman's Seed, the other only the Son of Man. (Footnote: The 4th and 5th Chapters of Genesis give us two different lines. In the former, under Jehovah, we have the Woman's Seed. Throughout we read of the woman's conceiving, and then of her seed. Thus "Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived, and bare Cain." (vs. 1.) "And she again bare his brother Abel." (vs. 2.) "And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived, and bare Enoch." (vs. 17.) "And unto Enoch was born Irad." (vs. 18.) "And Lamech took unto him two wives, Adah and Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents." (vs. 20.) "and Zillah, she also bare Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah." (vs. 22.) "And Adam knew his wife again, and she bare a son, and called his name Seth; for God, she said, hath appointed me another see instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." (vs. 25.) Here it is all the woman's seed throughout, with varied qualities and tastes. Compare with all this the generation of the Son of Man under Elohim, in chap. 5: "God created man; in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He

them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." (vs. 1, 2.) "And Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth." (vs. 3.) "And Seth begat Enos; and Enos begat Cainan, and Cainan begat Mahalaleel," and so on. (vs. 3, 12.) No woman's conception is referred to. It is throughout the "Son of Man." The one seed is under Jehovah, except where, at the end, Eve says, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel." The other generation is under Elohim. And the words of Eve, as to Elohim, not Jehovah, appointing her "another seed," when Seth is born, show how the "Seed of the Woman" and the "Son of Man" are one. Every word here is significant, though, as in the wonders of nature, few eyes are opened to perceive the "open secret.") In the one we have "man that is born of a woman"; in the other, "the Son of Man whom God has made strong for Himself" (Job 14:1; Psa. 80:17). But on all this I will not enter here (Footnote: This contrast has been well shown in Mrs. Brewster Macpherson's Parables of Judgment, pp. 77-79.). Enough to note, that "judgment is committed to the Son, because He is the Son of Man." And the Father does this first, that thus He may forever silence the old serpent's lie; for who can say that God grudges when He makes His fallen creatures the heirs and vessels of all His highest glories; but no less that, by making man who has been judged the judge of men, He would teach those who are judged that the judgment is not the end of, but only the means for the fulfilment of, God's purpose. For man is judged by one who not only can say, "I also am formed of clay; therefore my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee" (Job 33:6, 7); but by one, who, though now the Judge, has Himself been judged with our judgment, to lift us in Himself out of it, and to be a witness to the judged ones that they also may and shall be delivered in like manner. Thus does the judgment of the Son of Man witness that judgment must issue in blessing, because He who judges has Himself been judged that He may save all.

As to the judgment, its nature is first shown us. This "judgment committed to the Son" is not, as so many think, merely the proper and inevitable consequence of sin: it is rather the appointed means by which the sin shall in every case be overcome. For there are two very different classes of judgments: first those which are the natural consequences of sin, such as Adam's fear of God, his hiding from Him, and the loss of the divine, eternal life (Gen. 3:3, 8, 10.); and secondly, those which are not the consequences of sin, but rather run counter to them, being the result of the word or sentence passed by God upon the evil-doer to correct the evil, such as the multiplication of the woman's sorrow, and man's bread in the sweat of his brow, and his return to the earth whence he was taken, to bring to an end the life of disobedience (Gen. 3:16-19). The first are the proper or natural results of sin: the second, the result of the sentence of the living Word of God, judging the sin, to make the sinner hate it, and to bring him out of it. And it is in this last that the elect are fellow-workers with God, judging to heal, even as they have themselves been healed by judgment. Their judging is in fact like that of the Judges whom God raised up of old, whose work was, not to destroy, but save His captive people (Judges 2:18. See also the sense of the word "judge," in Ezek. 20:4; 22:2 and 23:36; margin.). It is indeed "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31); but it would be far more fearful thing if we could fall out of them. The saints all know this. They too, through sin, have all once been "in a great strait," but in it, like David, have preferred God's judgment, saying, "Let me now fall into the hands of the Lord, for very great are

His mercies" (i Chron. 21:13). Shall they when called to judge with Christ ever forget their former straits? Will not their joy be that through the judgment the last captive shall at length be freed?

This judgment is begun already, for it is "eternal judgment" (Heb. 6:2), and therefore, is not future only, but even now present. Even now, where there is light, there must be judgment, for light cannot but judge: and the Son is light; and those who live His life are light also. Therefore like Him even while judged, and the world always condemns them, the sons of God, in every age, in much patience, in labours, in stripes, in watchings, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the amour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, as deceivers and yet true, though the world think not of it, are surely judging all things. Whatsoever they bind on earth is bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loose on earth is loosed in heaven (Matt. 18:18). For the life is the light (John 1:4 and 8:12). And as at creation, the light, as soon as it was created, was at once divided from the darkness, and thenceforward, becoming a fellow-worker with God, simply by being what it was, expelled and judged the darkness; so with those who live Christ's life, their light, whether they will or not, because it is light, instantly judges all around that is unlike it. Hence men's hatred to the light, so long as they are darkness, because the light smites them. But though it judges, it also renews. For the light which is of God, like God Himself, having made some who were darkness to be light, even while judging communicates that self-same light, that souls yet bound by darkness may be light also. Thus are "all things that are reprov'd made manifest by the light, and whatsoever is made manifest is light" (Eph. 5:8; four Greek words).

But the judgment which is thus proceeding is hidden. Living in sense, while it yet lasts, men will not credit that "he that believeth not is condemned already"; or that, when the elect are now judged, "they are chastened of the Lord, that they should not be condemned with the world" (I Cor. 11:32). Therefore the days come when the judgment now hidden shall be revealed, when Christ's members, now judged with Him, shall come with Him to judge the world (I Cor. 6:2). And as in that day the world shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn; so shall they look on His brethren, who with Him and like Him have been chastened by the Lord, and pierced by sharp arrows, even bitter words; and they shall mourn to see the sufferers set as princes over the earth, judges of those by whom they have been judged and cast out. Nor is this all, for "we shall also judge angels" (I Cor. 6:3), those mighty spirits, which kept not their first estate, and since then have been accusing God and man. This is the glory which awaits God's sons, who by grace "do nothing from self." Having first been judged and rejected they shall judge the world, in that great coming Pentecost when with tenfold light and power they come forth with tongues of fire to quicken, and the mighty rushing wind to shake all that must be shaken. Then shall the elect run to and fro as sparks among the stubble, to consume and purify all with the fire of God; yea, "they shall shine as the sun in the glory of the Father," "for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Matt. 12:43; Rev. 12:5).

But can these words, which our Lord adds, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (John 5:23), be applied to man? We know that some, jealous for God, who "will not give His glory to another" (Isa 42:8), have scrupled to give, even to the Only Begotten Son, the honour which they think is due to God alone; stumbling at the grace of the holy Incarnation; not seeing that the Son is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15), the brightness of His glory; and the express image of His person (Heb. 1:3); and that therefore "he that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which sent Him" (John 5: 23). Such shall one day see, that "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10, 11). But of those who give all honour to the Son, even as to the Father, there are not a few who stumble at the thought of any like honour being given to His members. And the true heirs, like the beloved Son, seek not their honour here, saying with Him, "I receive not honour of men" (John 5:41); nor of men seek they glory, when they might be burdensome as the apostles of Christ (I Thes. 2:6). And yet ought they none the less to be "counted worthy of double honour" (I Tim. 5:17), and to be "esteemed very highly in love for their works' sake" (I Thes. 5:13). For in the honouring of those in whom the Lord reveals Himself, the honour is not to the vessel, but to Him who puts His glory in it. For just as when He said, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me" (Matt. 10:40), and "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me" (Matt. 25:40). He shows that to receive them is to receive Him, and that service done to them is done for Him; so in the honour given to them is the honour given to Him, because the glory is not theirs, but His, even as the works they do are not theirs, but His who worketh in them. No man taketh this honour unto himself (Heb. 5:4). First the Head of the body "received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (II Pet. 1:17); and so in His members, when they share His glory, shall the glory be the Lord's, for "He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:10). Then shall it be seen how He honours those who honour Him. For He has said, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee" (Rev. 3:9). This honour have all His saints. For "he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to pieces; even as I received of my Father (Rev. 2:26, 27). For "the city," which is "the Bride," "has the glory of God," "and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour to it" (Rev. 11:11, 24, 26). Well might Paul say then, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18); for "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal right of glory" (II Cor. 4:17).

Such is the law or way of the New Man, and such its glorious end. From first to last it is not of this world, even as Christ is not of this world. It is indeed the very law or way of God, His own life working in the creature, which, in virtue of its very nature, and because it is love, must quicken and give life, while it no less inevitably corrects and judges all

that is opposed to it. Just in proportion therefore as we live this life, only doing what the Father doeth, because it is He who works in us, His power and light must shine out through us. And strange as it may seem to fallen men, that the power to quicken and to judge should be the fruit of yielding up our creature-will to God in everything, Christ's life is the witness that such self-surrender receives all power in heaven and earth, while the self-will of the old man on leads to death and darkness. Blessed are they who through all temptations to self-pleasing are steadfast in this law, to do nothing from self, but only what the Father doeth. No evil shall hurt, though all may gather round them, for they are blessed, and shall be blessings to others, for evermore.

FOURTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Meat of the New Man

(John 6:24-58)

Having thus been shown the Home of the New Man, then the door of entrance into it by a New Birth, and then his distinctive Law or way, with the results which always accompany it, we are now led on to the support or Meat of this New Man. The Fourth "Verily, Verily," tells us that he lives upon the "bread of God." This is that which the hidden manna (Exod. 16:33; Rev. 2:17) and the shewbread of old prefigured, and like them can be fully seen only by those who walk in the light of the golden candlestick (Exod. 26:35, and 40:22-25) in the sanctuary of God. We need therefore the Spirit's sevenfold light to look at these things. Without it we shall not rightly handle this bread. For this reason perhaps it is that our Lord speaks as He does here respecting this mystery.

For the witness of our Lord upon this point is marked by unusual reiteration. Four times does He here repeat "Amen, Amen," showing the mysterious nature of the subject, which requires for its elucidation no less than four distinct, though closely connected statements. The first (John 6:26, 27) declares that the New Man's meat "endureth unto everlasting life." The second (John 6:32, 33) tells us that "the Father giveth us this true bread," which is "bread from heaven," even "the bread of God." The third (John 6:47, 48) says, "I am the bread of life. My flesh is meat and my blood is drink, indeed." The fourth (John 6:53-57) declares that, if we would live by it, this bread must be fed on or received; for "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you: whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and dwelleth in me and I in him." Each of these different parts of the one great truth, as to the Meat of the New Man, are prefaced by the reiterated Amen, which is not added here without reason.

It is interesting to observe how this truth comes in. It comes, like the preceding "Amen, Amen," as the explanation of an act done by the Lord, showing Him to be the true fulfillment of all that the Jewish dispensation typified. For the words as to the Law of the New Man (John 5:17-30) were spoken on the sabbath, in justification of healing upon that day. That sabbath or rest of the first creation through the sin of man had become no sabbath, for there was sickness and misery on this day, and neither God nor man can rest in this. Therefore our Lord, as the New Man, not doing His own works, ("for the Son does nothing from self,") nor finding His own pleasure, nor speaking His own words (Isa. 58:13, 14), only by doing what the Father did, being Himself at rest with God, show out in deed what was the true sabbath. The words we are now to consider, as to the Meat of the New Man, were spoken at the feast of the Passover, when, as God's elect redeemed from bondage, Israel ought everywhere to have been feasting on the lamb whose blood was sprinkled on their doorposts. But at this holy season, when they should have been full, a great company even of God's people, spite of the typical Passover, were wanting bread. (John 6:4,5). Then the Son of Man, having first met their outward wants, by multiplying the five barley loaves and two small fishes in His disciples' hands, makes this an occasion of bearing witness to still better bread, even of the true Paschal feast, which

is now prepared for all, as the pledge of man's redemption, and the means to sustain him to everlasting life.

1. First He declares that this meat is not bread obtained by our own work, or which, like earthly bread, corrupts or perishes, but it is bread which is given freely by the Son of Man, and endureth to everlasting life. So He says, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give you, for Him hath God the Father sealed" (John 6:27). Even the priests of old in the holy shewbread had only perishable bread, which required to be changed and removed from week to week (Lev. 24:5-9; and I Sam. 21:6); and when in the three great feasts of the Lord, at the feast of Unleavened Bread, at the feast of Weeks, and the feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering, God's elect were gathered to wait on Him, their meat was the bread which He brought forth out of the earth, and which was only the shadow of that which was to come (Deut. 16:16). But that better bread had now appeared. Therefore "the bread which perisheth," good as it is, and needed in its place, shrinks into insignificance as compared with that which Christ here speaks of. The meat the new man needs is "that which the Son of Man shall give, for Him hath God the Father sealed." He does not here yet distinctly say that this meat must be "His flesh"--that comes later on,--but even in this first word on the subject He implies it, in saying, "Him hath God the Father sealed." The allusion is to the well-known practice in the Jewish sacrifices, which could not be offered even in the old carnal service unless they were according to their proper nature without blemish; in which therefore every dove or lamb or ox brought to be offered had first to be examined by the priest, and if without blemish to be sealed with the temple seal, which witnessed that the creature was perfect, and therefore fit for God's altar (Footnote: The Rev. Herman Douglas, a converted Israelite, tells me that the Mishna, Shekalia. 1. 5, ___ Rabbi Johanan Ben-Inchas, Al Hachotbmoth, i.e. On the Seals, refers to this custom. See too J. Disraeli's Genius of Judaism, p. 154, as to the sealing of meat, which is thereby declared to be legally clean.) So Jesus was sealed by God Himself, when coming to Jordan the Holy Ghost like a dove came down and rested on Him. The bread which the new man needs is this unblemished meat, which the Son of Man shall give, for Him hath God the Father sealed; thus bearing witness that He is spotless in the eye of God, and therefore fit, even upon His altar, to be the bread of God.

But all this is brought out more fully in the next statement respecting the meat of the new man, which is the bread of God Himself: "Verily, Verily, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; for the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (John 6:32). Every word here is pregnant. The Meat of the New Man is the "bread of God." In giving it to us He gives us that which satisfies Himself, and which He has ever before Him on His table. For the altar was His table (Mal. 1:7, 12), where His fire consumed that which was a sweet-savour to Him (Lev. 1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9, etc.); and this unblemished offering, fit even to meet His searching eye, He shares with us, that we may eat "His bread" (Lev. 21:6, 8, 17, 21). And surely if when the Queen of Sheba saw the meat of Solomon's table, and the sitting of his servants, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, no spirit was left in her, and she said, "It was a true report that I heard in my land, but, behold, the half was not told me" (I Kings 10:5, 7), much more may we, for whom God not only prepares a

table in the presence of our enemies (Psalm 23:5), but whom He calls to enter into His sanctuary, and come near to His most holy feast (Lev. 23:2), rejoice and bless Him for such rich provision, who giveth to His people of His own unblemished bread, that they may eat and drink with Him.

I need not dwell here on the fact that this is God's free gift, for the words, "My Father giveth you the true bread," require little comment. And yet with our poor pride, which often makes it so hard to accept all, it is well, if only in passing, to remember that this meat is children's meat, not bought, or earned, or paid for, but freely given by a Father. It may be more needful to mark that it is not of earth, but "cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." It "cometh down from heaven." Seven times in this discourse does our Lord repeat these words (John 6:32, 33, 38, 41, 50, 51, 58). Then whatever is not from heaven is not this bread. Whatever is earthly and of this present world is not the true bread. The real meat of the new man "cometh from heaven" and is "of heaven." It is spiritual, answering to the spiritual nature which it is given to sustain. Just as to live on earth we must eat the things which come out of the earth, so to support the heavenly life we must have heavenly food. And the heavenly life longs and hungers for the things of its own world, and by an innate instinct knows them, even as the earthly life in us hungers for and instinctively recognises the bread of this world. The spirit is only fed by that which is spirit. So our Lord adds, "It is the spirit which quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63). This is the bread which "giveth life unto the world." For even for the world is this bread prepared, that they too may eat and live. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved (John 3:16, 17). Therefore He immediately adds, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out; for I came down from Heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me; and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that as to the all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing of it, but should raise it up again at the last day; and this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day (Verses 38-40). Blessed for ever be God, for "the bread of God, which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."

Having thus declared that the new man's meat is "heavenly bread," the Lord goes on to tell us more exactly what it is, that it is no other than Himself, even His flesh and blood. This is our Lord's third statement on this subject: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and died. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Verses 47-51).

Such are Christ's words. How were they received by those to whom they were addressed? Not only did "the Jews strive among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" (Verse 52), but "many also of His disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying: Who can hear it?" (Verse 60). So it is yet. Christ still walks with men,

who are only the carnal seed of the man of faith, who therefore, like Paul in his young days, are yet only "in the Jews' religion" (Gal 1:13, 14), worshiping the one true God, and grafted in to partake of the root and fatness of the olive-tree (Rom 11:17), to whom therefore pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law, and the service of God, and the promises (Rom. 9:3, 4); who nevertheless, like the Jews of old, do not know a present Saviour; who therefore through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:13); though sons walking as servants (Gal. 4: 1-3); still in holy places made with hands, more than in that worship of the Father which is in spirit and in truth (John 4:23, and Heb. 9:24). God knows how many in His church are yet in this "Jews religion," and such now, as the Jews of old, because they lack Christ's mind, will always "strive" and "stumble" at His words. There are others, even nearer to the Lord, "disciples," having heard His call, and taken some steps at least to learn of Him, but who, instead of waiting to understand what He here says, are offended that He says what they do not understand, to whom therefore this word as to "His flesh" is still "a hard saying." Why should we not believe that He knows better what He is saying than we can know it, and that if He uses words which at first seem dark to us, it is never without a reason. But the self-confidence, which judges all things by our present light, and which, if there is anything we cannot understand, proceeds at once to pare it down to some narrow meaning, which is on a level with our present apprehension, is so innate within us all, that few escape the snare. Of course in our understanding of His words, our first apprehensions are, and must be, always more or less imperfect. A partial view may be all that we can take at first of Christ's meaning. Only let us not insist on making Christ's thoughts no greater than our own. Fuller light invariably shows that no words could so exactly have expressed His mind as those He actually used, and that, though for a season they may be above us, they are all instinct with life and light.

Let us then again turn to His words, for "never man spoke like this Man," and ask, what did He mean here, when He said, "The bread that I will give is my flesh"; and again, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood drink indeed."

Two answers are generally current. First it is said, Christ's "flesh" and "blood" here only mean the sacramental bread. Others contend that the words are only figurative, (whatever this may mean,) and are fulfilled in our believing in Christ and in His sacrifice as that which meets our need. Both of these interpretations seem to me defective. Christ's flesh and blood must be His flesh and blood. We only need to see what this really is, that we may understand how literally and exactly our Lord has here spoken. We are by nature so fallen that anything spiritual seems to us unreal and unsubstantial. A "spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44) takes us into a region of which we know nothing. What the senses see and feel, that is substantial enough. What they cannot perceive seems mere imagination. And yet Holy Scripture speaks of what is seen as but a "shadow" (Col. 2:17), and of the spiritual and unseen as the real and the true. This is the one and only difficulty in the words before us. Our Lord is speaking of the life and substance of the spiritual world, and as long as we know nothing of such a substance, we cannot but feel His words to be mysterious. And yet, even whilst shut up in this present body of corruption, we are ourselves witnesses, that what is unseen or spiritual in us is true substance, or that which stands under ("Substance" simply means "that which stands under."), and supports the

rest, this outward body being but a tabernacle in which we sojourn for awhile, and the inner man the true and real person. What Holy Scripture declares is that this inward man by disobedience lost the life of God; that that life, once lost, has been re-formed and restored in Christ Jesus; and that to support this new and heavenly life we need the self-same substance as that which formed and sustained the Lord, when in Himself for us He formed the "new creature" (II Cor. 5:17). Thank God, as the babe in nature takes in its mother's flesh and blood, and grows thereby, without in the least knowing or understanding either what it takes in, or how this nourishment is communicated, so is it with us who are quickened with Christ's life and born of Him. We live by Him, while yet we understand little or nothing of that on which we live, or how we are sustained by it. But it is Christ's flesh that feeds or supports us; it is something of His very nature that we take in, through a real receiving and appropriating of His substance.

This flesh or substance is distinctively the "flesh of the Son of Man" (John 6:53). I have already had occasion to call attention to the import of this name. It speaks of man according to God's mind as he came forth from God, before that division entered, which is met and overcome by the glories pledged both to the Woman's and to Abraham's Seed. But great as are these glories, both these titles speak of division and a fall. The flesh we need to eat is not the divided flesh, either of the Woman's or of Abraham's Seed,--these could not give eternal life, though in this flesh Christ died to make atonement,--but rather the flesh of the Son of Man, that is of man as he came forth from God, before any separation had marred the work of God. This and nothing less is the flesh He gives, that so eating this flesh we may be built up again in the undivided image of the Son of Man. We shall see more fully what is here taught when we come to the Divine Nature of the Son of Man (In the Sixth, "Verily, Verily). Seen or unseen, the flesh we are to eat is that of the "Son of Man, who is in heaven," who here says plainly, though it stumbles some, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before."

Do any say, "This is a hard saying"? It may seem hard, and therefore have required our Lord's reiterated "Amen"; but the fact remains that a new man is quickened in us, who is no mere figure of speech, but a reality, more true and enduring than the seen and outward old man; and that this new man needs and has his proper food, and can no more live without it than we can live here without the meat and drink of this world; his meat being the flesh and blood of the Son of Man, which must as actually be taken in as outward food is actually received and fed on by the outward body. This holy flesh or substance of our Lord is as necessary to form a spiritual, immortal, and incorruptible body, or temple, for God abidingly to dwell in, as the blood of the woman under the law, or the flesh we daily eat, is necessary to form and sustain this present outward body. To say that we cannot describe or define what this substance is, does not alter the fact that it is a reality, given to us of God, and that if we receive it we may daily grow thereby. We do not know what matter is; yet, if we take it in, it feeds our outward man. So we may not understand the exact nature of the flesh and blood of Christ, which we receive. But we are sure that it cannot be less, but far more, real than any seen thing, because the seen is but the shadow, and He the substance of all things. "In Him all things consist" (Col. 1:17). And He, the living Word, says, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." Him therefore we receive, and in so receiving become "bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh" (Eph.

5:20), being so made part of that "greater and more perfect tabernacle, which," the Apostle tells us, "is not of this creation" (Heb. 9:11; four Greek words). And His blood is the "blood of God" (Acts 20:28), that is His life, for "the blood is the life" (Deut. 12:23), which we must partake of, if we are to live and dwell in Him. Therefore while He yet sat with His disciples at the table our Lord could truly say, "This is my blood which is being poured out for you" (Greek word; Matt. 26:28); for He was even then giving for them His heavenly life, though not a drop of His outward blood had as yet been shed upon the cross. It is this "blood of God" which we are called to drink; for only by receiving Him and His nature do we acquire the substance out of which a body of the same nature as His can be built up. Well therefore did a martyr say, that "the blood of Christ is love" (Footnote: Ignatius, of Antioch, in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. 7. The passage is interesting, not only as giving this martyr's view as to the "blood," but as showing that he took the "flesh of the Son of Man" to mean the eternal substance of the Word: for he says that "the heavenly bread is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham". The whole passage is as follows: "I have no delight in corruptible food, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham; and I desire the drink of God, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life."), for love is the very life of God, and we must drink in that very life if we would live with Him. This blood is first communicated through the "incorruptible seed" (I Pet. 1:23), which is the word of God; for seed, whether corruptible or incorruptible, is the very essence of the blood. Then when we are babes, it comes as "milk" (I Cor. 3:2, and I Pet. 2:2); until as we grow up in Christ it becomes "strong meat," and "flesh and blood" (Heb. 5:13, 14), daily increasing our strength and growth, as we can bear it. (Footnote: So Clement of Alexandria says: "The very same Word is fluid and mild as milk, or solid and compact as meat. Thus in many ways the Word is figuratively described as meat, and flesh, and food, and bread, and blood, and milk. The Lord is all these, to give enjoyment to us who have believed on Him."--Padagog. Lib. I. cap. vi.).

But there is still more in this "outpoured blood," which I almost hesitate to touch, lest in attempting to bring out more of its fulness, I should perplex or lay a burden on any of my brethren. And yet whenever Christ multiplies the bread in His disciples' hands, whether for the first or second time, more is ministered than can be taken in; though at the second multiplying of the bread, when more is given and fewer partake, less remains which has not been received. But be it much or little that remains, twelve baskets full, or only seven, disciples, if obedient, will take up and keep what they cannot take in (Footnote: At the first multiplying of bread there were but "five loaves and two fishes," and "five thousand men" to feed, and "twelve baskets full remained. At the second multiplying there were "seven loaves and a few small fishes," and but "four thousand men," and only "seven baskets full" were left. Cf. Matt. 14:17-21, and 15:34-35.). I say, therefore, that, in the outpouring and receiving of Christ's blood, there is what, for want of better words for spiritual workings, may be called a double action. For in the drinking of the outpoured blood there is a reception both of life and death. Just as the reception of the false word of the serpent not only quickened the devilish life, but at the same time poisoned and slew in man the life of God and heaven; so the reception of the flesh and blood or life-giving

substance of the true Word, not only restores God's life, but brings to an end and swallows up the fallen life also: so that in and by the one ministry of Christ's blood, even as in the one ministry of the false word by the old serpent, a double work is performed, the work of one being exactly opposite to that accomplished by the other. The serpent's lie swallowed up one life and bred another. So Christ's flesh and blood destroys the old life while it sustains the new. For by being clothed upon with the heavenly flesh "mortality is swallowed up of life" (II Cor. 5:4). And therefore the drinking of Christ's blood, while it speaks first of the reception of the heavenly life, speaks also of the bringing to an end of that divided life, which His coming into our nature consumes and swallows up. With our present blindness it is hard to speak aright of this, though it is being enacted in us everyday, if we receive the Word (Footnote: Clement of Alexandria thus speaks of this double action of the blood of Christ: "And the blood of the Lord is twofold; for there is the blood of His flesh, by which we are redeemed from corruption, and the spiritual blood, even that by which we are anointed." (Padagog. Lib. ii cap. __.) The "anointing" or "Christing" comes from what Clement here calls the "spiritual blood." The "redeeming" from bondage comes, as a result of the reception of the life of God, through the pouring out of that divided life, which, as long as we continue in it, holds us in bondage. Even our Lord therefore could say, "How am I straitened," until this baptism was accomplished. Compare Rom. 5:10.)

4. This brings us to the fourth statement touching this meat of the new man, namely, that this bread must be taken in, because the spiritual, even as the natural, life, is only sustained by food received and assimilated. So our Lord adds here, "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (Footnote: More exactly, "Ye have not life in yourselves: Greek words. Compare this with the words in John 5:26.) Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (John 6:53-57). Thus here as elsewhere nature shows us how the new life is sustained. Every creature, vegetable, animal, or spiritual, can only live by eating, that is taking in, something of the substance out of which it has been formed; for no creature is or can be self-subsistent. The earthly body lives on earth, by taking in that which is of the earth; and if it lacks this natural support, its life will first be faint, and then go out, simply for want of the substance which it requires to sustain and feed it here. So with the inward man. While it is dead to God,-- though it lives to sin and to the world,--it has no desire for the bread of God, because that life that needs that bread has not as yet begun to live and move within it. But as soon as life is quickened, hunger comes with it; the soul opens its desire, which is the one mouth for heavenly gifts; and that hunger is only appeased by the things of its own proper world, received first as "milk," and then as "strong meat."

Then if we would grown, that which is taken in must be assimilated. Only so, by the food becoming actually part of us, does it nourish or build us up. Till it is so received, we do not really take it in. It only feeds us, as it becomes our flesh and blood. But as by the fire of this outward life, in these present bodies of corruption, the food we eat is changed by the wonderful chemistry of what we call nature, first into our blood, and thence into our

flesh and bone and sinews; so by the divine fire working through our inward man does that new man assimilate, and thus make part of itself, the heavenly bread or substance of the Word, which it receives by faith. It is not enough that it is in our memory, which, like the stomach, first receives what we take in. It must become part of our life, that is our very blood, for "the blood is the life." Until it does so become part of us, it does not strengthen, but, like undigested food, may even hurt us. "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord;" that is, shall be subject to the penalty which ever follows, where food is eaten, but is not digested; "for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning," that is, not absorbing or assimilating, "the Lord's body" (I Cor. 11: 27, 29). Nature should teach us here. If a man eats or drinks what he cannot assimilate, it not only does him no good, but he receives positive harm, and is actually punished by the food when he does not digest it. And this is equally true of the results which follow from receiving the Lord's words unworthily, or from crude apprehensions of the book of nature; for all is sacramental. But when the Word or living bread is so received as to become part of our blood or life, it not only nourishes but cleanses our whole body. For pure blood, formed from pure food, flowing through every artery and vein, carries away diseased and effete matter, and renews the whole body. Thus "Christ has washed us in His blood" (Rev. 1:5); for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin" (I John 1:7); not by any mere outward application, but by circulating freely through every part of our renewed being. Therefore our Lord says here, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." That blood, or life, which was in Christ, must actually be appropriated, and assimilated, and circulate all through us, if we are to be conformed to Him.

And indeed our Lord's own words here, as to the way in which He lives Himself, put this matter in the clearest light, and show how our life, even as His, is to be supported. He says, "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (John 6:57). He is the vine, and we the branches (John 15:5), and both in the self-same way grow upon the same one root. For the head or root of Christ is God (I Cor 11:3). And as the vine feeds upon the root, and grows out of and lives by it, so does the Son feed upon the nature of the Father, which is love, and lives by Him; and as the branch lives by the vine, so does the Christian live by Christ. As the tree lives, so does every part of it. Therefore our Lord in effect says here, "The branch which eats my substance, and drinks in my sap, dwelleth in me, and I in it, because it is joined to me by a common nature, and therefore my sap, which is my life-blood, dwells in it. As the living Root hath sent me forth, and I live by the Root, so the branch that feeds on me shall live by me." This is only another way of saying, "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, even so he that eateth me shall live by me"; or, as He says in another place, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). It is all the self-same truth; for the type of all that is in Scripture is in God's older book of nature, that book having been created for no other purpose than to be itself a word of God.

But how can we receive this living "flesh" and "blood"? Is there any possible point of conscious contact between us and the Lord so long as He continues only what He is in

Himself, a spiritual being, and we remain as we are by nature, carnal? Can we at first receive Him as He is; or must He, to reach us, come to us in such a form as fallen creatures can apprehend? The Word God, the Eternal Son, by whom and in whom all things consist, is and must be much nearer to all men than any outward man or creature. Yet such is our fall out of the spirit-world, into the things of sense, that to reach us that living Word has now to approach us at first from without and through the senses. Spiritual creatures may receive directly spiritual communications. To reach the carnal some outward voice or sign must come. And He stoops to this, to "come in the flesh" (Footnote: Not without a deep and wondrous reason does the Hebrew word _____ mean not only Gospel but Flesh; for there is the closest connexion between the two: by the one as by the other the captive creature is reached and quickened. [Ed note: I have yet to confirm the existence of a Hebrew word that means both gospel and flesh - email me any of you Hebrew scholars who may be able to enlighten me on this.]), and knock at the door of the senses of our outward man, either by the "voice of words" (Heb. 12:19), appealing to the sense of hearing, or by some rite or "outward sign" (Heb. 9:10), appealing to the sense of sight; in either case stooping to reach us from without, because we are so deaf and dead within. "For," as Augustine says, "if the Beginning had remained with the Father in His original nature, and not taken the form of a servant, how could men have believed in Him? Would their weakly minds have taken in the spiritual Word, without the medium of some sound or sight addressed to the sense?" (Tractat. in Johan. xxxviii. § 11.) But He loves us. And therefore as we address our infants, not with words only, but with smiles and nods, and communicate with the deaf and dumb with signs, because the word merely spoken would not be understood, so, more than any of His most loving servants, God has come, making Himself all things to all men, that by all means He might save some. This was the reason for the forms of old, such as lambs and shewbread and the like, every one of which said something to men, respecting themselves or God. This is the reason for Scriptures and for Christ's coming in the flesh. This is the reason for the sacramental water and the bread and the wine, and for all outward preaching and testimony. In all these the Word has come, first appealing to men's senses from without, that even thus He might enter in, and quicken, and possess, and in due time transform our whole being.

And He yet comes in the self-same way, for He is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," calling to men not only by His voice within, for though the Word is very nigh them, yet, being what they are, "How shall they hear without a preacher"? (Rom. 10:8, 14) but speaking also, as He spoke of old, both to men's ears and to their eyes, so as to be "made known to them in breaking of bread" (Luke 24:35); in both ways telling us something of our need, and of the provision which we have in Christ Jesus. For either by preaching or by signs we may receive Christ's flesh and blood; by the spoken word or by the bread and wine. Therefore in every celebration of the Lord's supper there is not the bread and wine alone, but the Holy Scripture also, in and by both of which the self-same flesh and blood of Christ are ministered to us. (Footnote: Dean Comber, whose name has been dear to the Church for the last two hundred years, in his well-known book *A Companion to the Temple*, (vol. iii. pp. 57, 65) says: "The gospel hath such affinity to Christ that it is properly the Word of God, and bears the name of our Lord. (Heb. 4:12; I Cor. 1:23.) To receive Christ, and to entertain His word with faith, is all one. Finally to

believe the gospel is called 'eating His flesh and drinking His blood,' (John 6), and is a kind of spiritual communion; wherefore it is read before the sacrament, and at the altar, even when there is no celebration; because we must hearken to it with like reverence, receive it with the good, and retain it with like gratitude, as if Jesus Himself was sacramentally and visibly present. For thus Greek Liturgy orders; and the ancients used to say before the Gospel, 'Glory be to thee, O Lord,' and afterwards, 'Thanks be to God for His holy gospel,' [tanquam Christo present], as if Christ was then before their eyes.' To the same effect Archdeacon Freeman, in his Principles of Divine Service, (vol. i. p. 318,) says: "I have only to point out, lastly, that the hearing of the Lessons is from the Eucharistic point of view a most true and real reception of Christ, closely akin to that which takes place in the Holy Communion. Eucharistic celebration accordingly has ever had its Lessons of Holy Scripture, in early times very full and large, as we have seen. And the daily Lessons are but the prolongation of these. The Eastern recognition of Christ as the 'Wisdom of the Father', and enshrined in a manner in the Scripture, the Gospels especially, will be remembered. As 'Wisdom' He waits continually to enter into the soul in the public hearing of Scripture, illuminating, conforming, assimilating it to His over divine manhood." So too Augustine says, "Believe and thou hast eaten," (Tract. in Joh. xxv. § 12,) and again, "To believe on Him, this is to eat the living bread: he that believeth eateth." (Tract. in Joh. xxvi. § 1.) The well-known Rubric in the Prayer Book, I in the Communion of the Sick,) is to the same effect: "But if a man, either by reason of extremity of sickness, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, the Curate shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him for his sins, and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the cross for him, and shed His blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefit he hath thereby, and giving Him hearty thanks therefore, he doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth." The fact that this Rubric is taken substantially from the Sarum Manual (De Extrem. Unct.) shows that it is no novelty, but the old Catholic doctrine upon this subject. A whole Catena of Catholic authority could, if necessary, be produced to prove this.) To some the outward act and sacramental sign come as a living word from God, to others the spoken word seems clearer than the sacramental sign. All nature speaks to some. It is all dumb to others, or rather they are deaf to the "many voices in the world" (I Cor. 14:10), by which in all creatures God is speaking, whether we understand or not. To those to whom the heavens say nothing, and to whom day unto day utters no speech, bread and wine and water may say very little, even though consecrated by the Lord Himself. Such may need the spoken word to interpret what the Lord is saying to His creatures. And in His mercy He gives both. For He will stoop to the lowest to reach and rescue all. In either case the outward form, whether of words or signs, may be only outwardly received, and so fail to touch and help the inward man. Even Christ himself in the days of His flesh was often thus received. But wherever and whenever we meekly and lovingly receive the form in which He comes, we receive Him to our soul's profit, even when, if we try to explain what we have received or what He is, our explanation may show how little we understand, nay, even how much we misunderstand, what God has given us. For in receiving Christ we receive all that He is, though at the time we may only see something which is the least part of His glory.

How many, for instance, have obtained peace through the reception of the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," who, if questioned, would give explanations, not imperfect only, but even erroneous, of the words which nevertheless have been the means of real blessing to them? Ask them, what blood has cleansed them? Is it blood which the eye can see? How has such blood ever touched them? Or how can such blood be taken into heaven, as the Apostle says, to cleanse the heavenly place? (Heb. 9:22, 24). What answers will even cleansed souls return to such questions? And yet not only have the words as to "the blood of Jesus Christ" given them peace, but the very blood itself, though their explanation of it is all wrong, has truly entered into, and cleansed, and given them spiritual life. And so with the outward sign, the baptismal water and the eucharistic bread. Ask those, who rightly tell you that through these they have received Christ, to explain what the blessing is, what water washes the soul, and what the flesh and blood is which feeds their inward man, and the answer even of those who are truly blessed will often reveal how far the blessing transcends their understanding. The fact is that both the preached gospel and the outward sign, and the one as much as the other, like Christ Himself, are sacramental; and they who receive either, though both may be received in vain, receive through them far more than they are aware. If we do but touch the hem of His garment, virtue goes forth from Him (Matt. 9:20). If we do but faithfully and lovingly receive what He has ordained, we receive Him, for He has said, "This is my body." Blessed be His name, who has thus stooped to reach us in our fall, and to give us Himself, even when we little know what He is giving.

The result of this receiving is that we "abide in Christ." So He says here, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him" (John 6:56); or, as he says elsewhere, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23). Thus only, "eating His flesh" or "keeping His words," can we abide in Him and He in us (Footnote: It is worth noticing that four times in this passage [John 6:54, 56, 57, 58] the word Greek occurs in our Lords words, instead of Greek, which we find in the words uttered by the Jews, in verse 52. First Greek word, is the word especially used of the feeding of herbivorous and ruminating animals (See Lidelle & Scott in verb.) It points to that chewing the cud or meditation which is necessary if we would feed aright on Christ.) If any one abides not in Christ, he neither eats His flesh nor drinks His blood. For as Augustine says, "This is to eat that meat, and drink that drink: even for a man to dwell in Christ, and to have Christ dwelling in him. And therefore whoso dwelleth not in Christ, and in whom Christ dwelleth not, without doubt doth neither eat His flesh nor drink His blood" (In Johan. Tractat. xxvi. § 18. p. 412, Oxford Translation). "The sign which shows that one hath eaten and drunk is this, that he inhabiteth and is inhabited; that he cleaveth to the Head so that he is not abandoned." (In. Tract. xxvii. § 1. p. 416, Oxford Translation). If therefore any are cast forth as fruitless branches, and are withered, and cast into the fire, so that they are burnt, such things show that these do not abide in Christ, and have not truly fed upon His flesh or drunk His blood. They who receive of His fulness cannot bring forth fruit, because they abide in the Vine.

This is the Meat of the New Man; and if at times, through the weakness of our flesh, this "unleavened bread" be to us a "bread of affliction" (Deut. 16:3), or a "bread of tears"

(Psa. 80:5), if, like the roll given to the prophets to eat, the word, though sweet in our mouth at first, is afterwards for a season bitter in our belly" (Ezek. 3:8 and Rev. 10:9),-- let us not reject, but with joy receive it; for though it slay our outward man, by it the inward man is renewed day by day. Blessed are they, who, instead of "feeding on ashes," or "on wind," (Isa. 44:20 and Hos. 12:1), or even in their soul hunger feeding on themselves (Isa. 9:20), can say with saints, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Psa. 119:103). "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. 15:16). Such know what it is to have found the Bread of Life, who says, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.

FIFTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Liberty of the New Man

(John 8:51-56)

Our Lord next calls attention to the Liberty which follows our reception of the life of God. Life is a blessing, but without freedom is hardly life. Willingly therefore in every age have men laid down their lives in efforts to obtain freedom. Our Lord here tells us what is true freedom. And we need His words, for, without the freedom of which He speaks, all other liberty, whether of body or mind, may only lead to worse bondage. And yet the innate craving in all for freedom is a true witness of man's end, and that he is created to be free indeed. Here in His Fifth "Verily, Verily," our Lord shows us what is the liberty of the New Man; that it is the fruit or result of light, and only perfected in the spirit of sonship by Him who is the Son.

The place which this truth occupies in the series is instructive. This Gospel speaks of two great blessings, Life and Light, which come to man through the Eternal Word. The first seven chapters deal with life; and the first four reiterated Amens are all occupied with particulars respecting this eternal life; first, its true home; then the secret of its quickening; then its characteristic ways; and then its food. At the eighth chapter our Lord goes on to speak of light, saying, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). And then, in immediate connection with this "light of life," He speaks of the liberty which this light gives, and then of the service which as freed men we can give to God and man. This is more than life. For light not only shows things as they are, and works unnumbered wonders both in heaven and earth, changing everything that comes in contact with it, but it also frees us from the bonds which darkness ever imposes on us. Therefore, as the wise man says, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to see the sun" (Eccl. 11:7); for "when the sun ariseth the beasts of the forest, which creep forth in darkness, lay themselves down, and man goeth forth to his work and to his labour" (Psa. 104:20-23). The light frees him to work. This is the teaching here: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, then are ye free indeed" (John 8:31-36).

This truth is introduced by a declaration as to certain stages in the heavenly life, from faith to knowledge, and thence to liberty indeed. To this an objection is at once urged by some, that such teaching is derogatory to their calling as Abraham's sons, which necessarily includes, as they suppose, the full blessing. And then comes our Lord's answer to this objection, showing what the liberty of the New Man is, and what it is to be "free indeed."

1. Notice first the teaching of our Lord as to the stages of the heavenly life: "Then spake Jesus to those Jews who had believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John

8:31, 32). Here are several stages; first "faith"; then by "continuing in the Word" being "disciples indeed"; then "knowing the truth," and by it being "made free." For it is with the heavenly and spiritual as with the earthly life. When first quickened it is in darkness. Even when at first it comes forth into light, for days or months it needs the swaddling-clothes which confine and yet strengthen it. And then for years it must know the discipline of childhood and of youth, while it is still bound by rules according to a Father's will. Then, as it continues in the word, it becomes a "learner," and so step by step knowing the truth, just in proportion as it knows it, is made free. But it does not know, nor is it free, at first. It is only as we "continue in the word" that we come, first to light, and then to liberty indeed.

Let us look more closely at these stages.

The path begins with "faith," that is with receiving the word which comes from God. Faith in the son gives life. This faith is not believing this or that truth touching the Lord, but is rather believing and obeying Him, when He calls us. Therefore in the Gospel we are told rather whom than what to believe. The promise is to "him that believeth on the Son." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). "He that believeth in me shall never die" (John 11: 26). "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also" (John 14:12). "He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall go rivers of living water" (John 7: 38). For He yet calls and speaks to men; to some by an inward voice; to others by some outward event, or prophet, or word of Holy Scripture: by one or all of these compelling us to feel that "the master is come, and calleth for us" (John 11:28). All have heard these voices. And it signifies little how apparently trivial or purely personal the matter may be, respecting which He speaks to us and we believe Him. If in the smallest matter we can trust His word, life and blessing come with the word. For, in so believing Him, the breach is healed which severs us from God.

Then "if we continue in the word" more light will come: we shall be "disciples indeed." This title marks a certain progress. In the Acts of the Apostles, **Christians have four names**,--"believers" (Acts 2:44; 4:32; 5:14; I Tim. 4:12; and compare I Cor. 6:6; 14:23; II Cor. 6:14); "brethren" (Acts 15:1, 3, 22, 23, 33 and see Matt. 23:8); "disciples" (Acts 9:1; 11:26; 19:1, 9; 20:7); "saints" (Acts 9:13, 32, 41; Col. 1:2); each name indicating some stage or aspect of the same one life. First we are "believers," no longer independent of God. This makes us "brethren," in our true relation to our fellow-men. Then we are "disciples," or "learners," in the school of God. Then we are "saints," or holy, that is, set apart for God's service. Here speaking to "believers," our Lord says, "If ye continue in my word, ye are learners indeed; for a word may quicken faith, but learning only comes by waiting on the Master. Saints in every age, therefore, have said, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait; and in His word do I hope" (Psa. 130:5). "Oh, how I love thy law; it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandment has made me wiser than mine enemies, because it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients because I keep thy precepts"(Psa. 119:97-100). And so, writing to his beloved Timothy, Paul says, "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the

Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:14, 15). Thus "continuing in the word" we daily "learn." But how many by their haste to teach before they know, lose the divine art of learning any more. How can such "know the truth," which is only learnt by abiding in the word, and by giving ourselves to it, that it may possess us more and more.

The fact is that the truth grows in us exactly like a tree. The seed is the word (Luke 8:11); and this produces in our hearts first faith, then knowledge, then liberty. At first, still bound in sense, we can only receive the symbolic form of truth, as yet incapable of understanding its true meaning. Yet even thus "faith cometh by hearing" (Rom. 10:17). And this faith, feeble as it seems, like a root without beauty, contains all that will in due time come forth from it. For this faith is the spring of life. And it is the life which gives us light. Only as we live any life do we really and truly understand it. Therefore as we live this life, by keeping this word, faith becomes experience with us. We prove what we have believed, and so proving it, henceforth not only believe but surely know it. Whatever we have heard of Christ's life, or death, or resurrection, by obedience, which is communion with His life, becomes a part of our experience. Yet the seed and root of this understanding or illumination lies in the word received, which grows and develops itself in us exactly in proportion as we abide and live in it. Faith takes indeed beforehand the future as a present possession (Footnote: Clement of Alexandria has a remarkable passage upon this connexion of faith and knowledge. (Strom. lib. ii. cap. 2,) where, referring to the Apostle's words in Heb. 11:1, he calls faith [Greek] or a taking beforehand of the things which are yet unseen. See also Strom. lib. vii. cap. 10.); but we only know as we live the life. Thus only do we "add to faith knowledge, and to knowledge love" (II Pet. 1:5). Thus this knowledge is no result of intellectual power, or of any self-willed searching into the things of God, which, so far from helping us to the truth, may make the possession of it almost an impossibility. Truth comes only to the meek and true (Psa. 25:9). All experience shows that the really enlightened man is not he who desired to know God's secrets, but rather he who simply seeks to live and walk with God, and to do His will so far as it has been revealed to him. If we will do His will, we shall know the doctrine (John 7:17). Therefore, as St. Paul says, "If any one will be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise (I Cor. 3:18). Without obedience souls are "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (II Tim. 3:7). Scripture, which to unbelief is always barren, brings forth and buds to him who pleases God. (Footnote: Clement Alexander, (Strom. lib. vii. cap. 16.) five Greek words.)

Thus do we come to "know the truth," which is more than knowledge about the truth. For there are more ways than one of knowing anything. For we may know a thing on the testimony of others, or by seeing it ourselves, or by reasoning it out, or by intuition, all of which are different ways by which we gain knowledge. But we do not know anything perfectly until we have it. Fully to know pain, we must have pain. Fully to know gladness, we must have gladness. So we do not really know the truth, till we have it in our very life, till in this divine conjunction the life understanding and the light understood become one. Then we know indeed, for then we have Him who is the truth and wisdom of God, He in us, and we in Him. Even in this knowing there are stages. Like the Bride we may first say, "My beloved is mine"; our first thought being that the truth is ours, and

that we have it, rather than that it now has hold of and possesses us. But the perfection of this possessing is not reached, until, like the same Bride at a later stage, we say, "I am my Beloved's," in the greater joy that neither we nor anything we have are now our own, but that all is wholly His. (Footnote: The three sayings of the Bride in the Canticles are, first, "My beloved is mine, and I am His" (chap. 2:16); then, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" (chap. 6:3); and lastly, "I am my beloved's and His desire is towards me" (chap. 7:10). At first the ruling thought is, "Christ is mine." That "I am His" is yet secondary. For at this stage we think chiefly of Christ as ours, and so in some way for our pleasure. Then we come to, "I am His, and He is mine." Christ's ownership and possession of us now takes the first place in our thoughts, and our possession of Him, truly blessed as it is, becomes subordinate. At last we come to, "I am His, and His desire is toward me"; where the word "mine" is altogether dropped in the perfect assurance of love, that to be His indeed involves all. See on this Ambrose, De Isaac, c. 8, quoted by Littledale in his Commentary on the Song of Songs, p. 332.) For, indeed, even as respects truth, so long as our thought is to have something of our own, the blessing is never perfectly known; for in all such desire to have something of our own, something of bondage also remains with it. It is only when we feel, that, even as to the truth, we have nothing of our own, and that all we have and are is of the Lord, that the fulness of the blessing takes possession of the soul.

And then "the truth frees us." By it the false word is cast out, which separated us from God, and brought us into bondage. By it God is revealed. And this revelation frees us from our bonds, as the earth is freed from its wintry claim by the growing light and warmth of spring and summer. By it the creature is renewed. For as the sun makes the seed to shoot, and to come forth out of its grave, into a liberty which it could not know in darkness, and even transmutes, through a gradual dissolution, all that seems to shut in the germ of life, into suited nourishment for its growth and further development; so does the truth, working within, use our very bonds for good, turning them into means of greater grace and larger increase. We are made new creatures by the truth. Let us only keep the word, and "the truth shall make us free."

2. To all this an objection is at once urged by some to whom Christ speaks these words. "They answered Him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man. How sayest thou, ye shall be made free?" (John 8:33). Self in them is offended at the suggestion that they are not yet free. Some truth therefore as to their calling is set against their state. They contend that as Abraham's seed they must be free, and that there is little, if any, further liberty to be gained by obedient discipleship. So instead of "learning" they "answer"; and their answer is half-true, half-false. First, "We be Abraham's seed," which was quite true. Then, "We were never in bondage to any man," which was as false. They were Abraham's seed: our Lord allows it (Verse 37): they were still the favoured of the Lord, chosen by His grace to be His sons and first-born (Exod. 4: 22 and Deut. 14:1); but, not to speak of their bondage to sin, and to the letter of the law, they and their fathers had again and again been carried captive, and, even while they spoke, they were under the iron yoke of Rome. Yet they say, "We were never in bondage." Absurd as their answer is, it is still too often the reply of some to exhortations to look for more freedom. Not young converts only, but even old Christians, assume, that, because they are believers, they are

free. So they "answer Him." Oh, that, instead of answering, we could be still and treasure up His words, and ask for grace more perfectly to understand Him. Think of the miserable self-justifying answers, which we are all so ready to make, when Christ speaks of intelligent discipleship, and of a growth from faith to knowledge, and from knowledge to liberty indeed. Only a few years ago these very words, "We were never in bondage to any many," were taken, at a gathering of professing Christians, as descriptive, in the preacher's judgment at least, of the state of those he was addressing (Footnote: Stier, in his notes upon this passage, (Words of the Lord Jesus, vol. I, p. 358.) mentions, that the German Catholic, Dowial, took these words for his text at the meeting at Offenbach, Oct. 3, 1815.) And every day one sees believers, bound by opinions, habits, or forms, which, however useful in their place, are far enough from the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free, ready to assert that they are not and cannot be in bondage, because those who believe in Christ must needs be free. Such is not the language of God's saints. Scripture is full of the cries of those, who, though they walked with God, yet openly confessed, that, spite of the calling wherewith they had been called, through their own or others' sins they often were in bondage; and all this while they never doubted of God's purpose toward them, or that they were chosen and beloved, though in their experience they yet came short of that for which they had been apprehended. It is left for those who do know themselves to boast that they are free.

3. But this boast as to their freedom, because they are elect, only draws from the living Word more of the truth as to the liberty wherewith He makes us free. "Jesus answered them, Verily, Verily, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, then are ye free indeed" (John 8:31-36). Here our Lord declares first, what bondage is; then, that the spirit of bondage must be cast out; and lastly, who it is that gives, and what constitutes indeed the true freedom.

(i) First, what is not freedom but bondage:--"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." Privileges are no proof that we are free. Be our gifts or calling what they may, sin makes us slaves to that which we seem to indulge in, but which rather holds us captive. And our very gifts may serve to blind us to our state, for, in this sense also, "a gift blindeth the eyes of the wise" (Deut. 16:19). Let none think therefore that gifts involve freedom. If we sin, we are not free. "Know ye not," says Paul, "that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness" (Rom. 6:16). And though false teachers may "allure through the lusts of the flesh those who are just escaping from them that live in error, by promising them liberty, while they are servants of corruption," such words are vanity, "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage" (II Pet. 2:18, 19). Sin and freedom cannot coexist. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."

What then is sin? Scripture gives us two answers: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23), and "Sin is lawlessness" or self-will (I John 3:4). On the one hand, following our own will, instead of acting up to light, is sin: on the other hand, going beyond our light, through the same self-will, is sin also. Both in not acting up to, and in

going beyond, our light, we act in independence of God, and this independence is separation from Him. The fall was simply this, that some creature, that is something which is not God, took His place with man; and man, trusting the creature more than God, walked in its light or darkness rather than in fellowship with God. Righteousness comes back when man by faith is brought to walk with God again, and to give Him His true place by acting or being acted upon in all things according to His will. Anything therefore not of faith is sin. And all such sin is bondage. Self-will is bondage, for to the soul of man, which is formed for God, and cannot stand alone, self-will or independence of God means dependence on a creature; and we cannot be dependent upon a creature, be it what it may, without more or less becoming subject to it. What has not been given up for money, or for some creature's love. But who has ever thus served the creature more than the Creator without awaking at last to feel he is a bondman? I say nothing of the worse bondage which comes from our self-will, in the indulgence of our own thoughts, or passions, or affections. Even the very energies of faith, while, as yet unchastened, it acts from self, like Abraham with Hagar, may only bring forth more bondage. Who knows not something of the bondage into which men come, as to days, and times, and meats, and drinks, only because that which is in itself is pure to them through lack of faith is impure? Who but God can set them free? And He sets them free as they walk with Him. All independence of Him is only darkness.

But there is another bondage which also indirectly comes through sin. Sin not only itself enslaves, but for its temporary restraint, and to make us conscious of its presence, it requires law (Gal. 3:19, and Rom. 3:20); and this law, holy as it is, acting upon a fallen nature, itself produces fresh bondage (Rom. 7:9, and Gal. 4:24). The old covenant and the history of Israel are proofs of this. But any of us who have sought to be free from sin by law well know, that, until the spirit of sonship comes, mere law and our best attempts to keep it still leave the soul in bondage. It is indeed true that the extremest bondage of law is as perfect freedom compared with the worse slavery, to which self-will and self-indulgence ever lead us. And I doubt not that the rules and disciplines of varied kinds, under which some have been bound or have bound themselves, with the desire thereby to please God, have really helped, for a time at least, those who have been under such discipline, just as bandages are useful for a broken limb, and that therefore such rules have had their place in leading on to true freedom. Of course the heir, whilst he is a child, needs all these things; but while he needs them, as the Apostle says, he differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all (Gal. 4:1-3). Even so, while we are children, we are in bondage under the elements of the world. Yet such bonds, good in their place, are not freedom; and to put them in the place of, or to exalt them above, the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free, is to mistake a permitted means for the appointed end, and to stay in childhood when we are called to full age. God has sent His Son, to redeem them that are under law, that they may receive the adoption of sons. And because they are sons, He sends forth the spirit of His Son into their hearts. Therefore they are no more servants but sons; and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ.

(ii) This leads us to the next point noticed by our Lord, namely that this spirit of bondage shall be cast out. "The servant bideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever. (Verse 35). Bondage and the bondman have their day; but they shall not abide for ever.

Bondage is not eternal, for sin is not eternal. Abraham's history foreshadowed this to Abraham's sons, in telling how the bondman came into the house, and how, when the true heir had come, both the bondmaid and her son were cast out. Our Lord only refers here to the story, as though its lesson ought to have been understood by Abraham's sons. St. Paul does more. Once and again he goes into the typical meaning of the fact to which our Lord alludes in this saying. "My little children," he says to the Galatians, "of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you, and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman; and he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh, but he of the free woman was by promise; which things are an allegory, for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, is Agar, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; but Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son, for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman" (Gal. 4:19-30). And to the Romans he thus again refers to the same event: "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but, (it is written,) in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Rom 9:7, 8). All showing how there may be bondage in Abraham's house, and even in his sons, and that this bondman must be cast out.

Now this truth has two fulfilments; an inward one, fulfilled in all, for our bodies are a house (I Cor. 6:19 and II Cor. 5:1-4), wherein God works by law and gospel; and an outward one, which is accomplished both in the "great house" (II Tim. 2:20) of the professing Church, and also in that still greater house of this outward world (Heb 3:4), in the ages or dispensations of which we see the out-working of the same purpose. The dispensational fulfilment is familiar to all. We know how when the true Son came, the Jew, the son of the bondmaid, was cast out; not that he should be for ever lost, but as a sign that the spirit of bondage, and those whose life was in this spirit, must depart from God's people. The visible Church witnesses the same. There are still some in the elect house, whose life is the fruit of law rather than of promise, who, though life Ishmael and the Jew of old, called to be sons, yet show that they are the bondmaid's seed, in that they do not abide unto the end, but are cast out, like the unfruitful branch, and men gather them, and they are burnt. These, however, are but the temporary and therefore partial and shadowy fulfilments of our Lord's words, that "the servant abideth not in the house for ever"; and, like shadows, they may distort, and even seem to contradict, the blessed truth of which they are the figure. For the eternal truth and will of God here revealed is, that the life of bondage shall not always remain, but that both that which brings it forth, and that which is so brought forth, shall be for ever done away. A life shall be begotten, not of law, but grace; which is not the fruit of man's energy, but of God's power; begotten in man when the creature-will, like Abraham, has become as good as dead; and which, because it is so begotten, is free; the son, not of the bondwoman, but of the free; and which therefore, as a son and heir, without a doubt can say, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (Psa. 23:6).

And yet the first and outward fulfilment of this truth, as seen in the rejection of Ishmael and the Jew, seems to speak of judgment rather than of freedom. And so it must appear to us whilst we are in the self-hood of our fall. At such a stage the fullest gospel will only be another law. Let the spirit of sonship come, and then the very law becomes the promise, with its assurance of eternal liberty and joy. I speak that which I know. And I know how even the law, which says, "Thou shalt keep the seventh day, Thou shalt not covet,"-- which always at first speaks to man as a demand upon him, requiring what in his weakness he finds it hard, if not impossible, to give, and which in this aspect therefore only condemns him,--to sons of God becomes His promise, declaring that some day, because God says it, we shall have none other gods but one, that after the days of labour we shall surely rest, yea, that we shall neither steal, nor murder, not covet, nor do any other of the wretched things, which only brings us into bondage. Yet all this for years is only read as law, and not as promise, and will always so be read, until the bondman by grace is cast out. So even our Lord's words here may seem to some a threat of judgment. Blessed be God, even if they come as judgment, that judgment is for good. Blessed be His name, that though His children misunderstand Him, His purpose cannot fail, and He has said, "The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever. If therefore the Son shall make you free, then are ye free indeed."

(iii) Thus are we shown who it is that gives, and what is, that freedom. "The Son shall make you free" (Verse 36). The liberty here promised is the Son's free gift, who being heir of all things can make us free indeed. He is specially anointed to this end. "Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and I will give thee for a covenant of the people, that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth, and to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves" (Isa. 49: 8, 9). And He says Himself, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, to preach glad tidings to the poor: He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted: to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bound" (Luke 4:18). Therefore "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive" (Eph. 4:8). And He shall not fail nor be discouraged until He hath set judgment in the earth, and sent forth His prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water (Zech 9:11). The elect are but "the first-fruits to God" (James 1:18; Rev. 14:4). "The creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:21).

But how does He make free? Does He give us something separate from Himself, in which we may boast, as some have done, of being above all forms, and law, and conscience; or does He free us by the communication of Himself? Not by anything separate from Himself, but by giving us Himself, who is the Heir, and thus casting out our selfhood, which is indeed the bondman; so that henceforth we may say with Paul, "It is not I that live, but Christ liveth in me." The free life is Christ's own life in us, and the deliverance in us, even as for us, is wrought by Christ Himself. He wrought it for us by coming into our nature, and taking that nature upon Himself; and thus by the Eternal Word man was united to God, and made a new creature. He works it in us in the self-same way, by the coming into us of the self-same Word, that as many as receive Him may become sons, and freemen, and heirs of God with Him. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The whole mystery is shown in type in Abraham's house. When Isaac comes and is weaned, the bondman is cast out; not without trial to the man of faith; for the dismissal of

Ishmael, like the casting out of selfhood in us, is a parting with what is nothing less than a portion of the elect's self, and therefore for a season "very grievous" (Gen. 21:11). But it must be done. And difficult as it is to speak of all this change from self to Christ, for we have not words to utter, and very few have eyes to see, the stages of this wondrous transmutation,--it is being accomplished every day. Wherever any have attained to be "free indeed," it is because the bondman is cast out, and the Son had made them free. All is His work. He first brings forth, and then manifests in man, the virtues of His own eternal life. Thus is man made free. And henceforth delivered from the sense of guilt, which weighs upon the heart, and from all the errors and illusions of sense, which darken and deceive the mind; from the fear of death; from the bondage of the letter; from words and names of men; free in thought and action and desire; free from mutability and corruption; free as the Lord was free; he can become a servant to all, as a later "Verily, Verily," teaches (See the Seventh "Verily, Verily,"), by his service to free others as he has himself been made free.

Here then is the conclusion of this matter. We are brought to liberty by truth, and to know the truth by continuing in the word, which we first receive by faith on testimony.

Knowledge of the truth is the fruit of faith; not faith the fruit of knowing. For first we are, and must be, babes; and babes, whether in the flesh or in the spirit, must believe before they know; for it is not possible for them at first in their own experience to understand a thousand things, which yet will open to them as they grow up through youth to manhood. So, first believing, they will know the truth. And then the truth will make them free. Let none forget this order: first faith, then truth; first truth, and then in due time freedom. In every age there have been souls, who have thought to be first free, and do as they please, and then in self-will to choose and find the truth. I do not say that truth is never to be so found at last, for men may learn it through judgments. But the way of the New Man is by faith to come to truth, and then by truth to reach to liberty indeed. Self-will can never rest. To live in self-love is to live in bonds: to be free indeed we must live in love, and God is love. The Son is the image of the invisible God. In giving Himself to us He gives us God, and makes us partakers of the divine nature, which is not self-love, but love. The perfect law of liberty is here. He that looketh into this law and continueth therein is blessed; for so beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord he is changed into the same image. Well then might Augustine say, "Love, and do as you will" (Footnote: "Dilige, et quai vis fae." In Epistel. Johannie, cap. iv. Tractal. vii. 5) Love, and love only, is the perfect freedom.

Such is the liberty which the Son bestows, the liberty of the sons of God, yea the very liberty of God, for the Son who makes us free, and who is our life, is very God. Every such freeman is a partaker of the divine nature (II Pet. 1:4), because a partaker of Christ (Heb. 3:14). This is a great deep. Yet a glimpse into it is given in the next "Verily, Verily," which opens, not the liberty only, but even the divinity, of the New Man, who is the Son of God.

SIXTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Divine Nature of the New Man

(John 8:42-58)

I have already noticed of these reiterated Amens, that, like the Four Gospels, the truths they open of the New Man are all so intimately connected with and overlap each other, that it is impossible to speak of them without some repetition, for all are but varied aspects of the nature or workings of the same one heavenly life. Every truth therefore respecting this life involves some other, and each one really involves all. The first, for instance, that the New Man's home is heaven, necessarily involves the next, of the new birth, and that only by a birth into heaven can man re-enter heaven. This involves the next, that, as a son in the Father's nature, he does nothing from self, but only what the Father doeth. This again supplies the reason for the following witness, as to the New Man's heavenly bread; for as the tree lives upon its root, so can this new life only be sustained by that from which it has come forth. This again lies at the foundation of the teaching, as to his freedom, for that freedom is through participation with the Son, who is not a bondman, but the true heir. These are all in substance one truth, and all involve, if they do not assert, that the New Man possesses a divine nature. Here in the Sixth "Verily, Verily," this Divine Nature of the New Man is distinctively taught. He has "proceeded forth and come from God" (John 8:42). Yea He can say, "Verily, Verily, before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Hence He can be the means of communicating to others the seed of the same eternal life: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying he shall never see death" (8:51).

Nothing higher can be said. All that follows touching the New Man speaks, not so much of His nature as of His work, and of the way in which, through toil and sacrifice and death, He is perfected and made the means of others' perfecting. Here our Lord testifies of this Divine Nature, which He has given to us in giving us Himself.

1. First He says, "I proceeded forth and came from God"; "Verily, Verily, before Abraham was, I am" (verses 42, 58); while almost in the same breath He calls Himself "a man," and the "Son of Man;" "a man that hath told you the truth" (Verse 40), and "the Son of Man who shall be lifted up" (Verse 28). The preceding Amens, in what they had said of "angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man," who "shall execute judgment also because He is the Son of Man," who "came down from heaven to give men the flesh and blood of the Son of Man," who even on earth is "the Son of Man which is in heaven," and who says plainly, though it stumbles some, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before," had all implied, that He of whom these things were true, though Son of Man, was indeed essentially divine. In the words before us this claim is only made in plainer words. The Son of Man is both "of God" and also "very God." He is "of God," for He "proceedeth forth and came from God." He is "very God" because "Verily, Verily, before Abraham existed, I am" (Footnote: The marked difference of the words used in the original, which is important [five Greek words] is lost in our Authorized Version.). St. Paul only sums up this teaching when he says, "The

Second Man is the Lord from heaven" (I Cor. 15:47). St. John states it more fully in the well-known words, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; and the Word was made flesh" (John 1:1-14). Christ shows it in fact. In Him we see man according to God's purpose. And in Him man is the Son of God, and the Son of Man very God of God. Let us, like Moses at the bush, which burned and yet was not consumed, draw near to see this great sight, of God in man, and man in God, and the Word made flesh, that our vile body might be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

The mystery then here opened is that the Son of Man is God. Such a subject must be difficult to apprehend, and even more to speak of, not only because God's being and nature transcend our thoughts, but also because few ever attempt even to look into the heights and depths here opened to us. We say indeed that God is spirit, and the Son of Man is God. But we little think what spirit is, or what it is to be eternal. All our thoughts are naturally limited by ideas of time and space. And yet, if the Son of Man is indeed God, He must have been, or rather is, eternal. And eternity, properly speaking, is not time. Time, space, and matter, which seem so real, are but appearances of something which the eye of man cannot yet see,—appearances depending on our present rudimentary state of consciousness. That cannot be eternal which began in time. There is but one substantial, and therefore eternal, though invisible, reality, underlying all visible appearances, and that reality is God, who is a spirit. There is but one Eternal Being; "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4:6). And "of Him, and through Him and to Him, are all things" (Rom. 11: 36 Footnote: It may perhaps be objected that thus evil is endued with eternal pre-existence in the Mind of God. But it should be remembered that evil is not substantial, but the negation of substance [Greek words]. To ascribe substantial existence to evil is Manicheism, because it introduces a second and a bad principle into the universe, as Augustine repeatedly points out. For instance, *De Moribae Manich.* § 11; *Contra Epist. Manich.* § 29; *Opus Imperf. E. Julianum.* Lib. iii. § 159: "Vitium non substantim vaccidens, sed substantiam, putant esse.")

What then is man? What does our Lord here teach of the Son of Man? For He reveals man according to the mind of God. Is he also merely an appearance? I may answer, Yes, and No. What is temporal in him, that is, all that is not divine, may begin, and end, and change. All that is divine in man never had a beginning and can never end. It is quality that constitutes manhood. Love, wisdom, and all divine qualities, never had a beginning, and can never end. Take any of these from man, and he is no longer human; for it is what is divine in him that makes him man. Cut off his limbs, or even take away his outward body, as at death, and he is yet man. There are indeed some in whom no divine quality is yet apparent; but is it not latent still as heat in ice? To put it boldly, therefore, man is man because God is in him in his inmost being; and he becomes manifestly divine when the divine nature, which God implants, has arisen and conquered and brought into unity with itself everything pertaining to our present outward nature.

This is what is revealed in the Son of Man who is the manifestation of perfect humanity. In Him all the outward life is one with the inmost divine life. Most truly could He say, "I proceeded forth from God." "Verily, Verily, before Abraham existed, I am." Jesus is God

in the fullest sense. He is One with the Father. And this oneness is higher than equality, for God can have no equals. In the Son of Man dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9). But in revealing this to us, He shows us what is God's purpose towards us, that we should return out of our fallen and divided life to that which is revealed as ours in Christ Jesus. The perfect state to which we are hasting is, "that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28). The right state now is, that God should be all, for our true being is in Him. All present restlessness is but the fruit of separation from Him, and hell only the non-apprehension of our true being. Not that we are not "in God" even in our present state; for "in Him we live and have our being" (Acts 17: 28 and Col. 1:17). For as the thought of the poet, architect, or artist, is in the thinker both before and after its manifested expression in book, form, or picture, so in the eternal and unchanging One are all: we have been in the mind of God, and therefore in God, from everlasting. But it is one thing to know this as a doctrine or intellectually; another thing to know it in the very life. We may know it as a doctrine, and be lost. The Son of Man knew it in every part of His being, as a living reality. He felt, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (John 14:11). And He came to reveal this to and in as many as receive Him, that they through Him might know the same eternal life. We seem far enough from all this now. How little of it do we even see; even as a child knows not, and cannot enter into possession of its inheritances, while it is yet a babe. Yet all these things are ours in Christ. We are partakers of the divine nature, joint heirs with Christ, and shall at last be made like Him. All things are ours, though as yet we have not so much as to set our foot on (Acts 7:5). When we too have overcome, we shall inherit all.

This then and nothing less is the nature of the New Man. In Him the Creator and the creature are indissolubly one; for by the coming of the Eternal Son into man's nature the fulness of the Godhead has dwelt in man, and the manhood has been taken into God. Oh, what depths of love are here! The heaven and earth were made; and thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, were made also. But the living God is here, before us, made very man for us, that man might be made divine; God's son and heir in Christ Jesus. Nor was this an after-thought of God or brought about as the result of anything which had been unforeseen by His eternal wisdom. Man was in God's mind from everlasting (Eph. 1:3-11). In due time that which from everlasting was in His mind by His Word and Wisdom was brought forth, when man in God's image was set upon the earth to have dominion over every living thing, in that creation which arose out of the dark and formless void of Satan's fallen kingdom (Gen. 1:2, 28). As thus formed, man fell under the power of death, surely not without a purpose, which is fulfilled and manifested in Christ, who, in taking man's place, took upon Him this death, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death (Heb. 2:14), and bring man back in Himself where he should die no more, but should even judge the angels who had brought about his fall (I Cor. 6:3). For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:29). All therefore that fell in Adam rose in Christ; in whom we were chosen before the foundation of the world, to the praise and glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we were in the beginning, far more truly than Levi was in the loins of his father Abraham when Melchisedek met him; for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things. And therefore to one of the prophets He says, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I

sanctified thee" (Jer. 1:5 Footnote: See, too, Wisdom 8:19, 20, and Rom. 9:11-18). For He is our life. And by His coming in the flesh He manifested that Son of Man, who, as He proceeded forth from God, could do the works of God. In Him God's very life and image were manifested in man, free from all fear of further fall and failure. God in Him for ever had become man, that man might be divine (Footnote: The language of the Fathers upon this point is such as we rarely bear at the present day. Athanasius say, [five Greek words]. Deut. de Jacues, Verhi. iv. § 22. We find similar statements in his F____ Discourses against the Arians, i. chap. xi. § 29, and ii. chap. xix. § 47, and in his Defence of the Nicene Denuition, chap. iii. § 14. The words of Hippolytus, in his Refutation of all Heresies, book x. chap. 30, are quite strong: [12 Greek words]. So too Basil, De Spirits Santo, § ix, speaks of [13 Greek words]. So too Augustine: "Homines dix-it deces, ex gratia sui deificatos." In Psalm xlix. So again In Johan, Hom. xlviii § 9.)

But this truth of man's divine nature, though it is nowhere stated as by the Lord Himself, or shown as it is in Him, who said, "I proceeded forth and came from God," and "Verily, Verily, before Abraham existed, I am," was yet in part at least foreshadowed in the Law and Prophets and the Psalms, which speak of man and the Son of Man in terms which seem properly to belong to God alone. For why did the Law command, "Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, who is not thy brother" Deut. 17:15), but because the Anointed who is set over us, (and ___ God is the King over all the earth" Psalm 47:7), is not a stranger but indeed a brother? Why again in the Psalms is one of David's line addressed in words like these, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Psalm 14:6), but because it is God's will that man should be for ever one with Him? And in the wonderful visions of Ezekiel, when "the heavens opened" and he "saw visions of God," when "out of the whirlwind and cloud he beheld a fire, and then a brightness," what was the sight he saw "in the midst of the brightness," but "the likeness of a man." For "above the firmament that was over the heads of the four living creatures was the likeness of a throne, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord" (Ezek. 1:26, 28). The cherubim or living creatures, who are round about the throne, figure all creaturely intelligence, and all the forms which can be apprehended by such intelligence. But man is more than these, summing up all creatures in himself, the patience of the ox, the lion's force, the eagle's eye, and all the rest, which for awhile through sin may be at strife, though to be all united in the kingdom of the Son, but super-adding to all these a mind and will, to know, and love, and hold communion with Him, from whom he came, and whose image he is formed to be. "We are greater than we know" (Footnote: So Tertullian writes "In homo tantum nomen, si intelligas te." Apolog. ade. first. cap. xlviii.) The Man upon the throne is above all in "the vision of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." This is what our Lord here teaches, not by any vision, but by His reiterated "Amen, Amen." "Before Abraham existed, I am." The divine in Him is human, and the human is divine; yea, the more human, the more divine; because of the true life and spirit of humanity are indeed of God, and the Son of Man is very God.

And notice here that the New Man is called distinctively the "Son of Man" (Verse 28. See also ch. 1:51; 3:18; 5:27; 6:53, etc.). It might perhaps have been supposed, considering the promises made to Abraham and his seed, that the divine nature, which is here

declared to be the portion of the New Man, would be his as Son of Abraham rather than as Son of Man. Yet it is always spoken of as belonging to him as Son of Man; for this title goes higher even than that of Abraham's seed, glorious as are the privileges which cluster round this later relationship. Abraham's seed is elect man. But man is more and greater than elect man. For elect man is but a part of man, while the Son of Man is undivided man. The elect is indeed the means, by which, after a fall and division have occurred, the blessing lost, first received by some, shall in due time through them come upon others, who are still remaining in the fall. But the election, with all its glories, tells of division. "Son of Man" tells of undivided and united man, as he came forth from God, before separation of any kind has changed the work of God. "Son of Man" is the heir of man in God's image, before the woman was taken out of the man. Christ too, as "made of a woman, and made under the law" (Gal. 4:1), is the "Seed of the Woman" rather than the "Son of Man"; for from her He took our present form in the divided flesh, where the man is severed from the woman, and the woman from the man. And being thus "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3) for us, He needed to be "made perfect through sufferings" (Heb 2:10), by which He put off the divided form, where He was Son of David according to the flesh, to be declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, no bond nor free, nor male nor female, but where man again is one in Christ Jesus (Rom. 9:3, 24; Gal. 3:28, and cf. I Cor. 11:11). In Him, as Son of Man, the breach is healed; and therefore, in the vision granted to St. John, He saw "One like unto the Son of Man, walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," he distinctly marks, as I have already noticed, the woman's breasts (See above p.31), testifying that the division of our nature is healed in Him, who, "being made perfect, has become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him, called of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedek" (Heb. 5:9, 10). And yet even in the body made of a woman, and which was "prepared for Him" (Heb. 10:5), He was always the Holy One of God, showing, even in the likeness of sinful flesh, the amazing powers of the Holy Seed, and that even here He was the Son of Man who is indeed divine.

Of this Son of Man, who took our place and likeness for us, and who, "being made perfect," is the "priest after the order of Melchisedek," there are many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing that so many yet "have need of milk, and not of strong meat"; but I may perhaps say here, that the priesthood of Melchisedek is the priesthood of the "Son of Man," that is of man as man, as contrasted with the priesthood of Aaron, the Son of Abraham, which is the priesthood of the separation, that is of the elect. Typically, we see the one in the calling of Israel and Levi; the other in spirit fulfills both (Rom. 15:8, 9). He fulfills Aaron's priesthood, which is connected with a temple and a veil, where the high priest enters into the holy place with blood; for "by His own blood He entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:11, 12, 24 and 10:19, 20). But He is no less the "priest after the order of Melchisedek," where there is neither blood nor temple, but only "bread and wine" (Gen. 14:18, 19); which latter priesthood is as much greater than the priesthood of the elect, as Melchisedek was greater than Aaron, who, as the Apostle teaches, in Abraham paid tithes to him (Heb. 7:1, 5). And this priesthood belongs rather to the "Son of Man" than to Abraham's Seed," and rests upon God's eternal purpose respecting man, and upon his being, according to that purpose, a

partaker of the divine nature (II Pet. 1:4). It needs but little insight to perceive that a peculiar peril surrounds this truth; for it may cause us to think of God as altogether such a one as we now are, or to look upon our present fallen nature as divine, and so to consider the voice of our passions as the voice of God. And it is a peril which belongs very peculiarly to this time; for every age has its own special truth and testimony; and the peculiar and growing testimony of this present time is to the universal fatherhood of God; surely a most blessed truth, if rightly understood; yet one liable to the grossest abuse, if men living in the divided life of self-love claim in that life that which only belongs to man in the united life of the Son of Man, which shines out in the cross or death to self in Christ Jesus. This, if I err not, will be the sin of the great coming apostasy, when the last Antichrist, whose claim and boast will be a divine humanity, will assume as man, in the divided life, and in independence of God, that which is only truly ours as partakers of the perfect life which is in union with Him. There is therefore peril as well as blessing in the mystery of the "Son of Man," which, as we have seen, is so closely connected with the "priesthood of Melchisedek," who is priest, not of Elohim, or of Jehovah, but of El Elyon, that is "the Most High God" ([two Hebrew words] Gen. 14:18, 19), a name which implies a series of like natures, who may be called gods, as it is written, "I said, Ye are gods, and children of the Most High" (Psa. 87:6), the God of Melchisedek being the "God of gods, and Lord of lords" (Psa. 136:2, 3; and see Psa. 82:1). And yet, until we know this calling, we shall not understand God's purpose towards us, which is to make us partakers of His own nature, joint heirs with the Son of Man, who is "Son of the Most High," and who, as He proceeded forth from God, could say, "Before Abraham existed, I am"; and "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, ye shall know that I am" (Footnote: John 8:28 and 58. The mystery of the divine nature of the Son is full of wonders. Athanasius more than once before refers to the distinction, and even apparent contradiction, between the titles "Only-begotten" and "First-born," which is closely akin to that which is set forth in the names "Son of Man" and "Woman's Seed." The "Only-begotten" is the Son prior to all division. The "First-born" is "the male that first openeth the womb" (Ex. 13:12), that is the woman's, not the man's, first-born, who might also, though not necessarily, be the Father's first-born; the woman being the figure of nature, in its present state of separation from its proper head. Athanasius' words are as follows: "He is 'Only-begotten' . . . If He is also called 'First-born of the creation,' it is because of the Word's condescension to the creatures, according to which He hath become the 'Brother of many.' For the term 'Only-begotten' is used where there are no brethren, but 'First-born' because of brethren. Accordingly, it is nowhere written in the Scriptures, 'the first-born of God,' but it is 'Only-begotten' and 'Son' and 'Word,' that relate to the Father. But 'First-born' implies the descent to the creation, for of it He has been called 'first-born.' If then He is 'Only-begotten' as indeed He is, the title 'First-born' needs some explanation: as 'First-born' He is not 'Only-begotten'. For the same cannot be both 'Only-begotten' and 'First-born,' except in different relations; that is 'Only-begotten,' because of His generation from the Father, as has been said; and 'First-born,' because of His condescension to the creation, and the brotherhood, which He has made with many." Discourses against the Arians, ii. c. 21, § 9 So also Theodoret on Col. i. 15).

And when as here He says, "I am," thus claiming the name, that is the nature, of Him who is "I am that I am" (Exod. 3:14), by this very name He shows what fallen man has lost,

and what is restored to him, in being made partaker of Christ, and through Him of the divine nature. For that which above all things marks the fallen creature is its unceasing change. Never for a moment does it continue in one stay. It fleeth as it were a shadow. What is was yesterday, it is not to-day. Even the very mountains and the rocks witness that they are not what they were, and that they will be one day other than they now are. And by this change they prove that their existence is not true being. As Augustine says, "Anything whatever has not true being, if it change. If that is not which was, a kind of death hath taken place. Something is made away with there, that was, and now is not. Something is changed and is, that formerly was not. O Truth, Thou only art. For in all the movings of the creature I find two times, past and future. I seek the present. Nothing stayeth. What I have said, now is not. What I am going to say, as yet is not. What I have done, now is not. What I am going to do, as yet is not. Past and future I find in all the motion of things. In the Truth which abideth I find not past and future, but only present, and this without fear or possibility of change. Take point by point the mutations of things. Thou wilt find Hath been and Will be. Take God, and thou wilt and I am, where Hath been and Will be cannot be. Then thou also mayest be, mount beyond time. But who shall do this in his own strength? Thither let Him lift us, who said to the Father, 'I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given me may be with me'" (Tractat. in Johan. xxx.iii § 19). Blessed be God, this is His will; and He is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever," and "as He is, so are we in this world" (Heb. 13:8 and I John 4:17).

But He not only says here, "I am," He further adds, "I know." Thus in reply to the question, "Whom makest Thou thyself?" His answer is, "If I honour myself, my honour is nothing. It is my Father that honoureth me, of who ye say that He is your God. Yet ye have not known Him; but I know Him: I know Him and I keep His word" (John 8:53-55). Here we have fellowship with God, as well as participation in the divine nature. The Son of Man not only is God, but also is with God. To know fully is to have. He therefore that knows God possesses Him, and in due time shall be possessed by Him. To this even are we called, yea to "know that we know Him" (I John 2:3). For God is love, and love is not content unless it gives itself, with all it has, to the beloved. The Incarnation shows how absolute is the union and communion with Himself to which He calls, and will bring, the sons of men. Higher far therefore than the serpent's lie, "Ye shall be as gods," is our Father's purpose; for to "be as gods" would mean at most equality with God, and in effect implies separation from Him. God's purpose, as our Lord teaches, is to make us one with Him, in "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

This indeed is the end and purpose of the truth here opened by the Lord, that we should apprehend that divine nature which He has for us, and in and by it "know," that is, have fellowship with, God. That which was wrought in Christ, when man in Him was made divine, was wrought in Him that through Him it might be wrought in us also. As many therefore as receive the Word, receive the seed of God, and by it a life which has proceeded forth and come from God, which restores God's image in the creature, in and by which it may rise again to re-possess its lost inheritance of fellowship with Him. If we are Christians we must live the life of Christ and God, not in imitation merely, but in very deed, because Christ Himself is formed in us. We are to be one with Him. This is His

will, for which He prays, "that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us,--yea, that they may be one, even as We are one; I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; that the world may know that Thou hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me" (John 17:21, 23). Thus are we brought out of the "Hast been" and "Shall be," to the "I am what I am," and from "not knowing," to "know and to be known" (Gal. 4:8, 9). So that we can say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am" (I Cor. 15:10), because "it is not I that live, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). The life is all of God; but of this life He makes us partakers, even with Him who said, "I live by the Father," and "do nothing from myself" (John 6:57 and 5:19, 20). Oh the mystery of eternal love! Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

2. The divine nature of the New Man being thus declared, we have next the marks by which it may be known. For men are easily deceived, accepting guilt, for gold, and that which is of Satan for that which is of God. Thus Barabbas was preferred to Christ (John 18:40). Thus the brutal Caesars were worshipped as divine (Gibbons Rom. Emp. vol. i. chap. iii. p. 111). Thus when Herod made an oration, the people gave a shout, saying, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man" (Acts 12:21, 22). And thus when the last Antichrist shall come, and the beast which has been wounded unto death by the sword is made to live, that is, when the death and condemnation of the beast-like old nature seems healed by the magic of hell,--tokens and preludings of which, if I mistake not, are even now abroad, in the manifested materializations of departed spirits, who are brought again as from the dead into contact with the living here,--when this culminates, as it will do, in the assertion that man without God is divine, all the world shall worship the beast, which had the wound by the sword and yet lived (Rev. 13:3, 4, 14, 15). Not without reason therefore does our Lord again refer here to the marks of the divine nature of the New Man, by which he may be distinguished from all counterfeits.

Two are given: first Truth; then Love; the very marks of God, who is Himself both Truth and Love.

(i) First, the New Man hears and tells the truth. He hears it, for he is "of God," (John 8:42), and "He that is of God heareth God's words" (Verse 47). And then He tells it as He says, "I tell you the truth, though ye believe me not" (Verse 45); and again, "Ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth" (Verse 40). And He often dwells upon this mark, that He both hears and tells the truth:--"I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me I speak these things" (Verse 28). And again, "The words I speak unto you, I speak not of myself" (John 14:10). And again, "I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, He gave me commandment what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that His commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49, 50). Then He also tells what He thus hears:--"All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you" (John 115:15):--"I have given them the words which Thou gavest me" (John 17:8):--"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (John 18:37).

This is the first mark of the divine nature of the Son of Man. He "hears God's words," which are "the truth"; and then "tells" to others what He has so heard and learnt from God.

Now this capacity to "hear God's words" is distinctive of the New Man. The old man is so sunk in sense that he cannot hear God speak, but is only reached by some outward voice or sign, either through angels or through men, that is some appeal from without and coming through the senses; while yet the Word is very nigh, even in his heart (Deut. 30:14 and Rom. 10:8), and is ever speaking, though fallen man perceives it not. But "he that is of God heareth God's words." This has ever marked the saints. If faithful, the word of the Lord has come expressly to them. So "the word of the Lord came" to Ezekiel (Eze. 1:3), and to Elijah (I Kings 17:2), and to John (Luke 3:2). But let men live after the flesh and be unfaithful, then even saints need a message from without, because if we live after the flesh we cannot hear God. Thus when David is obedient, the word of the Lord comes to him, so that he could say, "The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue" (II Sam. 23:2. See also I Sam. 23:2, 4, 11, 12; and II Chron. 22:8); and "the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, the Lord made him to understand, by His hand upon him, even all the works of the pattern of the house" (I Chron. 28:11, 19). But when he falls, the word of God can only reach him through another. "Then the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad," (II Sam. 24:11) or "to the prophet Nathan" (II Sam. 12:1, and I Chron. 17:3), for David, to tell him what he would have heard himself, had he been in fellowship with God. Only the man of God hears God's words, of which our Lord here adds, "Ye hear them not, because ye are not of God." The words of the world men hear, because they are of the world; or the life of the serpent, because that lie has generated a nature in them which is more akin to falsehood and evil than to truth and God. They do not hear God's word, because in their life they are not His. Hence man's inability to understand Christ's speech. "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word." (John 8:43). The Church is full of proofs of this: men everywhere professing to understand Christ's speech; commenting on it, preaching about it, even fighting for their interpretations of it; who too often only misinterpret and misunderstand it, because they cannot hear His word. And yet they think that they understand His speech. They only understand who hear His word.

And as this New Man hears God's word, he speaks it:--"As I hear I judge," and "tell you the truth." His hearing God's Word is the very reason of his speaking it; even as the falsehood of the old man, who "delights in lies" (Psa. 62:4), is the inevitable result of his listening to the serpent, who "is a liar" (John 8:44). As we hear, we speak. If we hear English, we shall speak English. If we hear some other tongue, that tongue naturally becomes our own. The New Man speaks God's Word, because he hears it. The dumb are so only because they cannot hear; even as the dumbness of all the "dumb dogs" in the Church comes from their not hearing; because they are "sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber" (Isa. 56:10). He that hears God's word must speak, "The word is as a fire in his bones" (Jer. 20:9). He is like one full of new wine (Job 32:19). He must declare the truth. Others may utter clever or pleasing things. The mark of the divine nature is that it must speak the truth. And the New Man speaks it, even though for speaking he is denounced as a deceiver. Let the current doctrine of the Church be, that God either cannot or will not

help the lost,--that He leaves His prisoners in their bonds for ever unvisited,--and that His wrath will never cease to punish men for sins committed in a span of life, which He Himself tells us is "but for a moment,"--the New Man cannot but be witness both for God and man, because His own ear is opened to hear God.

And in thus telling the truth, the New Man communicates to others the same divine nature. Therefore He adds here, "Verily, Verily, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John 8:51. Footnote: I observe that the Jews slightly misquote these words, as if our Lord had said, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death" (Verse 66). A man perhaps may taste of death, without seeing it, even as (to use another's words) "he who walks toward the sun sees not the shadow behind him."). We have already touched this truth (In the Third, "Verily, Verily,"), in considering the gift of quickening others, which is one result of the New Man's "doing nothing from himself." Here we are brought back to the same teaching. The New Man speaks what He hears of God. Therefore "he that keeps His saying shall never see death."

(ii) The other mark of the divine nature is its unselfish love. The New Man says here, "I seek not my own glory" (John 8:50). He makes Himself of no reputation, that by His thus emptying Himself, others may be made partakers of His glory. Therefore He becomes a Jew to gain the Jews, and under the law to gain those under the law, taking even the form and place and curse of others for them; that in so doing, and even at the cost of drinking their bitter cup, lost ones may be found and reconciled to God. All this comes out more fully in the following reiterated Amens, which open the Service, Sacrifice and Humiliation, of the Son of Man, which are but manifestations of God Himself in man's nature. For what is it that makes man give his strength for those who love him not,--nay, even lay down his life for those who do not understand him,--which in the midst of neglect or misrepresentation fills him with peace,--strong to bear and to forgive all,--gladly spending and being spent, as the Apostle says, though the more abundantly he loves men, the less they love him in return (II Cor. 12:15),--what are all these but unfailing marks of God's own life in flesh and blood, and witnesses that even here man is indeed divine.

This then is the nature of the New Man. He must speak truth: He must show love. And by these he delivers man from him who holds the world captive. For the devil, as our Lord adds here,--thus marking the contrast,--was "a liar, and abode not in the truth," and further, "was a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44). The New Man's truth overcomes the lie; his love overcomes the hate; for greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. The whole world yet lieth in the wicked one. But its deliverance is assured. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

(iii) And yet this divine nature is rejected here. Even God's people understand it not, but reply, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and has a devil" (Verse 52). "Then they took up stones to cast at Him," saying, "Why hear ye Him?" (Verse 59). For a beast is as good a judge of what befits a man, as a fallen man is of what befits a Son of God. The Son of Man therefore is cast out. This is the calling of the elect:--"If ye were of the world,

the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19). A divine life still meets poor welcome, for a usurper reigns. But the true heirs will not stumble at this stumbling stone.

Such is the New Man's nature; such are its marks; such His reception here. And as the small spark contains the whole principle of fire; as the least fragment of the loadstone has its two complementing poles; so is each son of God a partaker of God's nature, with its innate truth and love, and of all the powers, though as yet unmanifested, which belong to that nature. If then He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (John 10:35), what shall they be, who by the Word are made partakers of His nature, in whom God's life even now is hid, and in whom that life shall grow, until they are conformed to the image of His beloved Son. When one thinks of such a calling; that this is man's true place; that heaven is his home, and the blood of God his life, and the Spirit of God the power that worketh in him; and that he is called to be free indeed, and to be God's heir, and to inherit all; and then think of what he is tempted to desire and to become; how the devil oftentimes holds him; so that he is content to be a beast, a slave, a very devil; and even glories in all this, and can see no glory in the divine life, and is ready, again and again, like Esau, to sell his birthright for some momentary joy; one can only wonder at the riches of the grace, which can bear with him and bring him out of his fall, to be made again like unto the Son of God. Well may those around the throne cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Well may they cast themselves in adoring worship at His feet, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasures they are and were created" (Rev. 4:10, 11). Well may they "sing the new song, say, Thou art worthy to take the book; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth" (Rev. 5:9-11). For this is the work to which the sons of God are called; a service which our Lord opens in the next "Verily, Verily."

SEVENTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Service of the New Man

(John 10:1-18)

The fifth "Verily, Verily," bore witness to the Liberty of the New Man. The sixth opened the mystery of his Divine Nature. The seventh shows his Service which flows from his freedom as a Son of God, and from participation in the very life of God. For it is not by service that we come to freedom, or to be sons of God, but by sonship and freedom to partake in God's service. He serves, for He is love; and those who share His life serve as His sons with Him, to seek and save His feeble sheep. Thus the service before us is Christ's own service, in which we cannot but take part, just in proportion as He lives in us, and we are anointed with His Spirit.

Our Lord's words upon this subject follow an example of Pharisaic service. A man blind from his birth had just had his eyes opened by the Son of God. This healing was done upon the sabbath, and the Pharisees said, "This man is not of God, because He keepeth not the sabbath day." They cannot see how the need of man is a call on God to work, and a proof that the true day of rest has not yet come. They say therefore to the man that had been blind, "What sayest thou of Him who opened thine eyes?" He answered, "He is a prophet." Then they said, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." He that had been blind answered and said, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not. One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Then they reviled him, and said, "Thou art His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake to Moses; as for this fellow, we know not whence He is." The man answered and said unto them, "Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened mine eyes. If this man were not of God, He could do nothing." They answered and said unto him, "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?" And they cast him out (John 9:16-34). Thus do Pharisees service souls. Full of zeal for the written word; saying again and again, "We know" (Chap. 9:24, 29); boasting to be disciples of one, through whom God's word in past days came to men; yet deaf to that word when it comes to them, and blind to see God working in their midst; all that they can do for one whom they think wrong, because he has received from the living and present Word some light they could not give, and because through this light he is delivered from their power, is to "cast him out." This is the last resource of Pharisaic service; it can only cast the erring out; without a thought of winning them back, or restoring the lost, or of bearing their burdens, like a true shepherd. For the one idea of a Pharisee is to be right himself, whoever else is wrong. The lame and blind are on every hand. The Pharisee can yet thank God that he is not as other men (Luke 18:11). So he "rests in the law, and makes his boast in God, and knows His will, and is confident that he himself is a guide to the blind, and a light to them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, with the form of knowledge and of the truth according to the law" (Rom. 2:17-20); but the erring are yet erring, and the lame and blind still lame and blind, so far at least as Pharisaic service is concerned. Pharisees cannot conceive of a service which sacrifices itself, to save and win the erring and the lost.

In strongest contrast to all this we have the Service of the New Man. Four distinct points in it are brought before us here: first, its marks; secondly, its aim; thirdly, its cost; lastly, its results. In all these it differs from Pharisaic service as much as heaven from earth.

1. Its marks are these:--"Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not in by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice" (John 10:1-4).

The first great mark is, that a true servant, like a shepherd, goes with the sheep, sheepish and animal and prone to wander as they are; goes through the same door as the sheep, and by the way which they can go; even through the door, which is provided for them, because, such as they are, they need a sheepfold for defence, and cannot enter by any other way. If any one "climbs up," showing by so doing that he is superior to the sheep,--if he goes by another nearer or higher way, in which the sheep, being only sheep, cannot follow him,--he may prove that he can do what they cannot, but he proves also that he has not a shepherd's heart. Such an act shows that he is a thief. For in meddling with sheep a man will either be a shepherd or a thief. Men do not meddle with them without intending either to serve themselves or serve the sheep. The true shepherd serves the sheep. Therefore he goes by the way that they can go. If they are in the field, he with them is in the field, consumed by day with drought, by night with cold (Gen. 31:40). If they need a door, he stoops to enter by the door; a ceaseless toiler for lower natures, who knows not what he gives up and bears in such service. In a word, this is Christ's service; such service as the Incarnation shows; that wondrous coming down by which the Son of God stooped to the place of brutal erring men; not helping us far off, but coming to us where we were; sharing our sleeping and waking, our weakness and our wants; that by His humiliation He might meet our folly and our need, and in due time bring us safely home.

Now one would perhaps have thought that such service would have been approved by all, and that religious men especially would instinctively have recognised its beauty and adaptation to our need. But it is not so. In religion perhaps more than anywhere we see the power of the adversary of man. Pharisaic service therefore is approved, while service after Christ's pattern is yet, like Him, condemned as unspiritual and countenancing sin. For it is not counted a mark of spirituality with some, who think themselves religious, that instead of the stronger and wiser sacrificing themselves, or that peculiarity which is their special boast,--generally some form or truth which they suppose they hold more fully and correctly than their brethren,--each Christian and each so-called Church should take the highest possible ground, giving up nothing of what they call the truth for the sake of those who through spiritual infancy or ignorance cannot yet receive it, and to whom therefore such truth or such a standing is, not only at present unattainable, but may even be most unsuitable; therefore never coming down in their Church forms for weaker souls, or, like Paul, becoming a Jew to gain the Jews; but on the contrary all getting up as near to heaven as they can, for their own spiritual profit, and, as they say, for God's glory; with

little thought for those who are still carnal, and who therefore cannot accept or use the so-called spiritual thing, which is presented as the only way which is acceptable to God?

But is this Christ's service? Is this stooping to "enter by the door"; or is it not rather simply Pharisaism still, living and working among those who in word are loudest in their condemnation of the Pharisees of old, while they are themselves repeating the same mistake. For what is Pharisaism? It is surprising to find what mistakes are current upon this point. Pharisaism is supposed by most to be mainly a zealous adherence to legalism and Jewish forms. It is not thought that a converted Evangelical, who rails at forms, can be a Pharisee. Yet the real Pharisee of this dispensation must needs be Evangelical. The word Pharisee simply means Separatist (From the Hebrew [hebrew word], to separate.); one who, when the Church of his age is full of evil, separates himself, with the idea of living more correctly according to the truth, which he believes was given by God at the commencement of the dispensation. Of course in the Jewish dispensation the Pharisee or Separatist, who tried to live more closely according to the truth of his dispensation, was necessarily legal, because the dispensation then was one of law. But the Pharisee of this dispensation is the man who in the Church's fall thinks to be right by his own and others' separation, according to the exact rule or letter of the dispensation, which is not law but gospel; and his aim, often most true according to his light, is to live as far as he can according to the pattern set up at the beginning of the dispensation. This he can only do by separation; and therefore he is a Separatist, in other words a Pharisee. And in all this he may honestly believe that he is serving God, just as Paul did when he lived a Pharisee (Acts 23:6, and 26:4,5). I know how plausible the error is; for I too have thought that it was really according to God's mind to take what is called the "right ground," even though the mass of the Church is left behind in bondage and ignorance. I now see that however good the intention, this is not Christ's path. It has two mistakes: it is untrue, and unloving. Untrue, because unconsciously it stands on pretence, and assumes that, though the Church as a whole is wrong, some of its members can by outward separation, and by taking the original ground of the dispensation, as they say, stand clear of the common shame and failure, thus practically denying the Church's real unity; and it is unloving, because it forsakes sick and erring brethren, teaching men under the guise of zeal for God to consider first their own interests,--in the next world, I allow, still their own interest,--thinking only or mainly to be right themselves, and, if others are wrong, thank God they are not like other men. Not such is the service which our Lord approves. Its first mark is, that, instead of climbing up to go by a way sheep cannot go, or in which only a few of the stronger, the goats perhaps, alone can follow, it comes down to share the weakness of the weakest of the flock, and enters with them into the sheepfold, by the lowly door appointed for their need.

There are other minor marks of this service, but they are all only details of the one great mark, of going like a shepherd with the sheep. Thus our Lord adds, as to the true shepherd, that "the sheep hear his voice" (John 10:3), that is, they understand him, for he is not too far above them. Then "he calleth them by name" (Verse 3). Here is personal acquaintance with the character of each. He "teaches," as the Apostle says, not only "publicly," but "from house to house" (Acts 20:20). Then again "he leads them out," that is, beyond the external constitution of the Church, which is appointed for protection, to

the freer pastures of promise, lying beyond, far sweeter and fresher than the useful but often dry provision of the fold. Further, when he so puts them forth, "he goeth before them"; for he says not, "Go," but "Come": not, like Lot, saying to his children "Get you out" (Gen. 19:14), but "Follow me" (I Cor. 11:1). And "the sheep follow him, for they know his voice" (John 10:4). They know when they are fed. All true ministry sooner or later is recognised by those who profit by it. To such service "the porter openeth," (Verse 3), even the Holy Ghost, the guardian of the Church (Footnote: So Theophylact, and Augustine, quoted in *Catesa Aurea*, in loco.), and the unfailing fellow-worker with the sons of God, who still is with us, in our midst, to open doors and hearts for all who feed the flock of God.

And yet when this was spoken to the disciples, "they understood not what these things were" (Verse 6). The cross and humiliation of the Son of God are still beyond their understanding. Like the Jews of old, they look for a Messiah who is only to be exalted, rather than for One who takes his people's place. In vain are the prophet's words, that God would feed his flock, and carry the lambs in His bosom, and seek and find the lost (Isa. 40:11; Eze. 34:12-16). It is all beyond them, until God's life is stirring in their hearts. We too are slow to see in humiliation for others the tokens of a present God. Even when such service is before us, we understand it not, until the Spirit comes, to make us sharers of the heart and mind of God.

2. From the marks of true service our Lord next passes to its aim, which is to be a "door for sheep":--"then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep" (Verse 7), that is, I am the medium or means to bring them into rest. There is a change of figure here. For the marks of service, the "shepherd's" conduct is our guide, who enters by the path in which the sheep can follow. But to teach the aim or object of true service, our Lord here points us to the "door," as showing that service is a means only, not the end, though without such means the end could not be reached. For a door is not only a witness of an inner fold or chamber, but it is still more the appointed means, by which those who are without may enter in. True ministry, whether in Christ or His servants, is all this. They both are "door," to enable others to enter where without such means they could not come. The eternal Word by taking our nature has become the "door" to "bring us to God" (Footnote: I Pet. 3:18 So Ignatius in his Epistle to the Philadelphians (cap. 9.) calls our Lord [four Greek words]. See too the Shepherd of Hermes, _____ iii. 9, and ix. 19). God is the end; but we come "through Christ," who is the medium or mediator (I Tim. 2:5), and the "new and living way" (Heb. 10:20, 13:21. Footnote: The words "through" and "door" are both simply later forms or corruptions of the word [Greek] which is here used. See Richardson's Dictionary on the word "through" and Tooke's _____ on the same word, p. 180.). When the end is reached, He gives up His office, "that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 11: 28). And His servants too are "doors" or "gates." For "on the gates of the city of God are written the names" of the fathers of the elect (Rev. 21:12 and Eze. 48:31-33; on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, on the west three gates; facing east and west and north and south, with differences of administration, yet in one life, to bring in from every quarter the nations who still are far from God. For there is no entrance into the city, even as there is no entrance into this world, save through fathers who have gone before us, who are as

gates by which we enter in. And yet these firstborn are but means, not ends. Like John the Baptist, they are but "voices," which witness to the "Word," and then are no more heard (John 1:23, and 3:30). Their object is, not to bring or keep souls to themselves, but to lead them in to God, in His presence to be re-made by Him, according to His will. This is indeed the text of our service. Does it lead to God, or take His place? All false ministry practically takes God's place, and therefore has a disposition to enslave, leaving souls imperfect to the end, because afar from God. True ministry, on the contrary, is but a "door," leading souls and consciences to God' feeling that nothing is done unless they are really brought to Him.

Further, true ministry is a "door for sheep," that is for those poor animal souls, who because of their weakness need a keeper and a guide. For the Church, like Noah's ark, contains, not men only, but beasts (Gen. 6:19-21); and in it, according to the law of love, the higher and purer must serve the baser natures. The spiritual are elect, not for themselves, but to be "doors" or mediums of blessing to those outside, who without them could not return to God. This indeed is their joy; for they also all have once been lost; and having been sought and found and brought to enter in, and been made partakers of the life and love of Him who sought and found them, who became a "door" to bring them in to God, they too rejoice to become the means by which others yet wandering may be brought in; though to be such they must, like "doors," be formed, and placed, and used, altogether according to another's will. The Lord has stooped to this: they gladly stoop with Him, "if by any means they may save some" (I Cor. 9:21).

In contrast to all this the Lord then speaks of services of another kind. If, instead of being "doors," men "come before the door," they will rather enslave and hurt, than serve, the flock. For "all that came before are thieves" (John 10:8). In what sense is this true? Some have said that our Lord's words here declare that the whole Jewish dispensation proceeded from an evil spirit (Footnote: This was the Gnostic view of the text. See Hippolytus, Refutation of Heretics, book vi, chap 30. To obviate this error the words "before me" were omitted in the Vulgate and the Douay Version--a notable instance of tampering with the true reading for doctrinal reasons.) This cannot be our Lord's meaning, for He elsewhere teaches that both the Old Covenant and the New, the ministry of death and condemnation even as of righteousness and life, proceed from the same one God, because both are equally required for the work of our salvation. Others therefore have attempted to explain the words by distinguishing "coming" and "being sent" (Footnote: As Jerome, Dial. Adv. Pelag. lib. ii; and Augustine, in Johan., Item. xlv. § 8). All who "come," that is, they say, who come of their own will, instead of being sent of God. But neither can this, I think, be the true sense. "All who came before me," if I err not, means, all who obstruct the way; who, instead of coming as "doors," that is as means, practically make themselves the end, and thus lead souls no further than to themselves. Many, even since Christ's day, have thus come "before Him," that is in His place, blocking the way; "neither entering themselves, nor allowing others to enter in" (Luke 11:52). All who thus come, claiming to be something in themselves, standing on their supposed power and gift, and occupying others with themselves rather than the Lord, will only bring souls into bondage. Such are and must be "thieves and robbers."

Those who come, as nothing in themselves, save as they lead to God, are fulfilling the work, which our Lord Himself is still working through His members.

But how true is it that "the sheep did not hear" these deceivers? (Verse 8). Have not false teachers mightily prevailed? Have true sheep never been led astray? Have we not all listened to deceivers? Surely we have. But even when we did, was there not always something in us, which hated the lie? Even when most erring, was there no longing for the true Shepherd? Let those who have been deceived bear witness, whether there has not been in them a voice condemning what is not of the truth, as soon as it is brought to light. The "sheep" does not love to be deceived. If souls are caught, it is because some lie pretends to be the truth. False apostles, deceitful workers, only prevail by transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ, and putting on something of His likeness (II Cor. 11:13). Errors therefore are continually changing their form; for the sheep, foolish as they are, would not for a moment listen to them, unless the lie bore the appearance at least of truth and love.

3. What then is the cost of such service, and from what motive does it proceed? Our Lord's words here cannot be misunderstood.

First, such a service costs a life. "The good shepherd giveth his life, because he careth for the sheep" (Verse 11); while hireling service ever cares for self more than for the sheep:-- "the hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling" (Verse 12). Service after Christ's pattern springs from God's own life, and therefore gives a life. Only a "good shepherd," who has the life of Him who is good, can offer such a sacrifice. He that is a hireling may do much, but he will never give his life. Mere contract work is always contracted work. He that only works for wages, works for self-interest, not because he loves the work; and with such a motive, wages here or wages hereafter, to enrich himself, how can he for others give his life? Will he not in the time of trial always ask, Is the return worth all this cost? And still more, Am I after all quite sure of getting the reward? Of such hirelings God has said, "Woe to the shepherds of Israel that feed themselves. Should not the shepherds feed the flock?" (Ezek. 34:2). Such service always fails. Not with such a motive does the "good shepherd" serve. Nor is his service to be fulfilled, as a thing by the way, in addition to the pursuit of other aims. Even an earthly trade will not so succeed (II Tim. 2:4). We may indeed play at servants without cost. We cannot serve after Christ's example without giving up a life. Service like His will claim our all. Who can love God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself, without being indeed a burnt offering? Who can help a fallen soul, or bring him back to God, without bearing his burden, and confessing his sin or folly with him? Who can keep even a company of true brethren together in peace, without being a constant sacrifice for them? Christ's service demands all this. He therefore who truly feeds the flock is often, as the Apostle says, "in labours, in watchings, in fastings," for them (II Cor. 6:5), and will find, especially in times of lukewarmness, or persecution, or disease, that his work cannot be done unless his life is given for the sheep. And the spirit of Christ accepts all this, for the spirit of Christ is love, and love must give itself for the beloved (Footnote: A late archbishop of Paris died with these very words upon his lips: "Bonus pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus suis;" shot down in his endeavour to _____ the strife before one of the barricades, in 1848.)

But this service costs yet more. Our Lord adds, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Verse 14). Some perhaps have yet to learn the cost of "knowing the sheep, and being known of them." Let them only "know the sheep," and they will soon understand what is involved in such knowledge. In this world we suffer exactly in proportion to our love. For can I love others, and know their pain, and not be pained for them, especially if those who suffer in any sense are mine? Can I even know of the pain of strangers without a pang? Can a beggar in want stand at my door, and his want not touch me, if I love my neighbour as myself? If there were no goodness in me, I might suffer nothing; but he that dwells in love cannot know another's want, and not feel it as more or less his own. To make known one's wants therefore to loving souls is to cast the burden on them. So Martha and Mary in trouble only say, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick" (John 11:3); for they had learnt that He could not know their need, and stand unmoved. And indeed even the world now acknowledges that if one who is in need can say, "You know me,"--if even he bring a letter of introduction from one who knows the case,--still more, if he has been an old acquaintance,--such knowledge constitutes a claim for help which cannot be denied. The most selfish now feel bound to succour trouble which they know. What then must "knowing the sheep" cost those who have the Master's heart? Must they not often cry, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?" (II Cor. 11:29).

And if "knowing the sheep" cost something, what is the cost of being "known of them"? Can any loving soul be "known," without attracting to himself every case of pain and need around? Will not sufferers of every class turn to such a man? He is "known of them," and as a result they pour out every trouble into his sympathizing ear. They know that he cannot refuse his help, for he is "a debtor to the Jew and Greek," because "the love of Christ constrains him." Surely the loving know what is involved in being "known." They seek not their own. Therefore, as with the Master, "all men seek them"--"All the city is gathered at the door" (Mark 1:33, 37).

Thus the good shepherd "knows and is known." And the measure or pattern of this knowledge is the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son. So He says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine, as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father" (Verses 14, 15), that is in virtue of a common nature, the partakers of which cannot but feel with and understand each other. Christ knows the Father, for "He is in the Father, and the Father is in Him" (John 14:10); and for the same reasons the Father knows the Son. Just so the sheep know Christ, because they are "in Him" (I John 5:20) and therefore have His mind (I Cor. 2:16); and He knows them, because He is "in them" (John 17:23), and therefore shares their thoughts; both being the result of a participation in the same nature. It is only the fallen life of selfhood which makes us slow to understand each other. The key to all knowledge is the life of God, who is in all and feels for all. In it the shepherd knows his sheep, and they know him, even as the Father knows the Son, and He the Father. These words show too that in His sympathy with us the Son is not doing something different from His Father; for His Father's union with Him is the very ground and pledge of His eternal union and sympathy with us. Nor does He call us to anything but what He himself has done; for, like Him, we are to know and to be known, only as the Father knows Him, and He knows the Father. In a word, Christ's knowledge and

sympathy with us rest on the Father's knowledge and sympathy with Him, and our knowledge of Him rests on His knowledge of the Father; all being but outflowings of the same eternal life, which God has given and revealed to men, that in it we may overcome that selfish life which is the root and fruit of ignorance of God, and may henceforth dwell in Him and He in us.

4. It remains to notice the results of such service: first, the results on others; then, on the servant himself.

As respects others, the results of service are that by it some are now saved, but that, besides this, it will ultimately bring home many others who as yet are lost sheep. So our Lord says first, as to present results, "By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (Verse 9). But this is not all. There are wider issues:--"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and there shall be one flock, and one shepherd" (Verse 16). True service first saves those who here accept it, who by it now enter into rest, and are delivered from the countless snares and wants, which the sheep are subject to in the field, that is this present state of labour and temptation. The prophet's word tells us the greatness of this salvation; that it "will bring again that which is lost, and bind up that which is broken, and strengthen that which is sick"; so that "they shall not more be for a prey, neither shall the beasts of the field devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And the Lord Himself shall give them a plant of renown, and they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land; for the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase" (Eze. 34:16, 27, 28, 29). All this for some is present blessing, even here, to be led in and out and find pasture. But the Good Shepherd looks beyond the present, for He has "other sheep, which are not of this fold," who are yet His own, though wandering still, and precious to Him. "Them also He must bring, so that there may be one flock only, and one shepherd." In the primary sense the Gentile world is here referred to, and most blessed is it to see that Christ regards the nations or heathen as His sheep, though as yet lost, and wandering from Him. For indeed the Christ is Son of Man, full of the heart and mind of Him who gave His Son "to save the world" (John 3:17, 12:47 and I John 4:14); Son of that Father who says, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psa. 2:8); who has said, "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isa. 49:6); according to the oath and promise to the elect, "In thee and in thy seed shall all kindreds of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2, 22:18, and 28:14). By nature our selfish hearts may think little of these lost ones. But the Son of Man, who is the Good Shepherd, does not forget them. Even now they are His own, for God has given them to Him, and He has given His life for them.

This is true of Christ's members also, in whom He does His works, who with Him are "ministers by whom others believe," and who "receive their own reward according to their labour" (I Cor. 3:5, 8). These are "labourers together with God," and, "giving heed to themselves and to the doctrine," they here "both save themselves and those who hear

them" (I Tim. 4:16). By them a present work is wrought. But their service does not end here. They too are "heirs of the world" (Rom. 4:13, and Gal. 3:8, 9); and therefore even of those who are yet lost, they may say with Christ, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." A saint may say, I am part of Christ's body, and the world is mine (I Cor. 3:22). People I shall never see in the flesh are mine, for they are given to me in Christ, according to the covenant which cannot be disannulled. He did not fully enter upon His priestly work till He had passed through death and judgment; and so my death shall only introduce me to fuller service to those, who, though not of the present fold, are His, and mine in Him. The "other sheep" shall be brought home. "Them also I must bring." It is laid on me, and I shall do it. For in the coming age those who are Christ's, and win the prize of the high calling, shall be priests and kings (Rev. 1:6), to bring in those who will never enter the present fold, but who, as made partakers, though not among the first-born, of the common life of God, shall be parts of the "one flock," and under "one shepherd." For not for ever shall there be two flocks, of saved and lost. The lost shall be sought by the Good Shepherd "until He find it" (Luke 15:4). Division shall not be for ever; for "God is one" (Rom. 3:30; Gal. 3:20; I Tim. 2:5). All shall hear His voice at last, and these shall be one flock, and one shepherd."

This service has blessed results also on the servant. The Father loves him for it. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again" (Verse 17). Surely the Son was even beloved. The Lord possessed Him in the beginning of His way. He was God's delight from everlasting" (Pro. 8:30). But He took upon Him the form of a servant; and for His service also He is beloved (Phil. 2:7-9); as God's servant, He is His delight (Isa 42:1). We too are loved as sons, even when blind, erring and lame. But we also may please God, and be loved for our obedience; as our Lord declares, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23). Oh could we only think more of the joy our service gives to Him; how precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints (Psa. 116:15), and how the service of His elect is to Him "as grapes in the wilderness, and as the first ripe fruit in the fig tree at her first time" (Hos. 9:10), - could we but remember, that, if wise, we make our Father's heart glad (Pro. 27:11), even as by our unbelief we grieve Him every day,--we should oftener be constrained to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to Him, which is our reasonable service.

And what makes this service acceptable is, that it is both voluntary, and yet the fulfilling of a command. It is voluntary and free:--"I lay down my life: no man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself" (John 10:18). It springs from a heart in communion with Him, who, being love, freely gave His Only-begotten Son. But is also according to commandment, and satisfies the Father's will:--"This commandment have I received of my Father" (Verse 18). Thus is the same service both a free-will offering, yet obedience also, according to a law, even the law of love, which seeketh not its own. The Son wills what the Father wills. And in Him the Father is well pleased, because the Son freely gives Himself for men. Therefore He concludes,--"I and my Father are one" (Verse 30). But they are not more one than Christ and His members. He is the Head and they the body; and they are loved by Him even as He is by the Father (John 15:9). Therefore in the same

life they give themselves, while yet they are fulfilling a commandment. No man forces them to stoop for others. They give their lives because they love; though in this laying down of life they are living out the law of God. Their will desires what He commands. The Law of the Offerings illustrates all this. But the next "Verily, Verily," still more reveals it, in what it tells us of the Sacrifice of the New Man, that others may live through Him.

This is the service God approves; and for something of the spirit of this service He ever looks, not only from His under-shepherds (Eze. 34:2-10), but even from His sheep; for His contention with His flock, when He "judges between the lambs, and the kids, and he-goats," is that the strong have "thrust with side and shoulder, and pushed the diseased and feeble with their horns," "eating up the good pasture, and drinking the deep waters," and only leaving for the weak "that which they had trodden and polluted with their feet" (Eze. 34:17-22). And so when Christ comes to judgment, and all are gathered before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, what is the charge against those who are condemned but this:--"I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink" (Matt. 25:41-43). Their crime was simply lack of love, that is, lack of likeness to their Lord; lack of His life, which He has come to give to all, if we will but receive Him; a life which must live for others, not for self, because it is God's very life, which seeketh not its own, for God is love. All true service is but the outflowing of this one eternal life, which has patience, and labours, and faints not to the end, and whose last works shall be more even than the first. Christ is the pattern of this service. Henceforth may it not be we who live, but Christ only who lives and serves in us.

EIGHTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Sacrifice of the New Man

(John 12:23-33)

The gospel is summed up by the apostle as the "preaching of the cross" (I Cor. 1:18), among other reasons because it is God's revelation of Himself, and God is love, and love must be a sacrifice. In the eighth "Verily, Verily," the sacrifice of the New Man is opened to us. The priest unconsciously foretells it, in saying that "one man must die for the people, that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50). The loving woman feels it, and comes beforehand to the Son of Man, putting oil and frankincense upon Him, as upon a Meat-offering (Lev. 2:15), to anoint His body for the burying (John 12:7). Above all the Son of Man Himself declares it, in words which show that sacrifice is the fundamental law of all increase. All witness in different ways that there must be sacrifice, even unto death, if the world is to be saved, and fed, and made fruitful (Verses 24, 25).

Our Lord's words call attention, first, to the universal law, that all increase is through death, and then to the results or fruit of this sacrifice.

1. The general law is this, written in God's book of nature from the beginning, though our blindness requires that our attention should be called to it by another reiterated Amen: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He therefore that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." Such is the law, that without sacrifice there can be no increase, while through it there is abundant fruit.

These words were called forth by the wish expressed by certain Greeks, who, having come up to worship at Jerusalem, say to one of the disciples, "We would see Jesus" (Verse 21). Their desire is to the Lord, the witness of the world's need, and of its unconscious craving for a Saviour. And His answer at once is, that by His sacrifice their longings shall be met, and that He will draw, not the elect only, but all men, to Him, by His uplifting. It is as if He said, They wish to see me. They have come at the right time. The hour is come that the Son of Man, who is linked, not with Israel only, but with all men, should be glorified. And His glory is, not to be in life and light alone, but to give Himself as seed sown in the earth, out of the dark earth to bring forth much fruit. He is the corn of wheat, the seed of life, which until it is sown abides alone, but which, if cast into the earth, multiplies itself through countless generations. If these Greeks had ever understood the mystic teaching of their own rites, they would at once have recognised in these words the confirmation of all the hopes which the greatest of their mysteries had dimly foreshadowed to them; for the mystery commemorated at Eleusis was that of Ceres and her daughter (Footnote: See Mullet's Literature of Ancient Greece, chap. xvi § 2, and Bacon's Wisdom of the Ancients, chap. xxix., as to the mystic sense of the myth of Ceres and Proserpine.), whom the lower world had seized, that is of the harvest and the seed, which for awhile is held in bondage, under the earth, but which nevertheless returns

to the light of heaven in due season (I Cor. 15:35-37),--a truth or fact of nature again referred to by St. Paul, when writing to these same Greeks, who ought, by what their own religion, and still more by what nature, taught them, to have believed, that what we call death is indeed the gate of life, and sacrifice and apparent loss the way to more increase. Even in its very nature and formation the seed teaches this same lesson. For seed, as naturalists have lately shown us, is simply an arrested and metamorphosed stalk or branch. The stalk or branch in producing seed sacrifices itself, and yields up its own life for another life that is to spring from it. The leaf ministers to the plant itself; the fruit ministers to others; and thus in its very formation is the perfect illustration of the law of self-sacrifice (Footnote: See the Rev. Hugh Macmillan's interesting volume entitled *The Tree Vine*," pp. 95-97.). In the words before us our Lord points us to the still more obvious truth, that the seed itself must die, if it would increase, saying, "Verily, Verily, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Now the first and greatest fulfilment of this law is in God Himself, both in what He is, and in what He has done. But who shall rightly speak of what He is? Only the pure in heart see God (Matt. 5:8). How then shall sinners see or speak of that which His very being says of this eternal law of self-sacrifice. And yet something of Him we may see as in a glass darkly. For, if He is love, the law of sacrifice, that is of giving and going out of self, must be inherent in His very being; and the very going forth of His Word, in the mystery of the eternal generation of the ever-blessed Trinity, be the first illustration of the truth, that without sacrifice or giving out from self one must abide alone. What is sacrifice in its highest form but an offering of love to the object of affection? Must there not therefore have been sacrifice in God Himself from everlasting, and He Himself be the great Sacrificer and the great Sacrifice? But eyes to see and words to utter what God's being says are lacking to us here. What He has done shows Him more clearly both as Offerer and Offering for His creatures, and that, if what He had in Himself had not been given, He might have remained alone, but that by the giving and going forth of His Only-begotten Son He has multiplied His seed, until it is as the stars of heaven, and as the sand upon the seashore. We in our weakness are prone to associate the thought of pain with sacrifice. And there may be pain, if the beloved object for whom the sacrifice is made is suffering. But in all truest sacrifice there is always more joy than pain. Is it any pain to a lover to give himself and all he has to the beloved? Is not such giving up of self to another the greatest delight? All true sacrifice is simply this giving up of self, for love is not content until it can give itself away. And sacrifice in God is just this outflowing of His love; and the sacrifice of Christ, who is the image of God, is but the revelation of this love in all its fulness. To regard it as the mere payment of a debt, though this is also true, is to look on one side only of the subject, and this the side consequent upon the creature's failure and necessity. Sin surely has brought into sacrifice the idea of debt; this indeed is what is presented to us in the Sin and Trespass Offering, where the offerer by his sacrifice comes to meet a debt or wrong. And yet here as much as in the Sweet-savour Offerings, where the idea is simply that of free and voluntary gift, it is love and love alone which pays the debt and makes the sacrifice. In the one case, in the Sweet-savour Offerings, love freely, of its own will, and simply from the delight of giving, gives up its best to the beloved. In the other, that is the Sin and Trespass Offerings, love cannot see

wrong without becoming itself a debtor to meet the need and wrong by self-sacrifice. For need, however brought about, makes love a debtor to remove the need. But in either case, and whatever view we take of sacrifice,--and the marriage tie is perhaps of all the highest figure of this truth, in which love's service may be viewed either as delight or debt and duty (See Canticles ii. 3; iv. 9, 10; vii. 6; and Ex. 21:10; and I Cor. 7:3, 5)-- this at least is true, that without giving forth from self we must abide alone. Only in so giving forth can we increase and bear fruit.

The most perfect manifestation of this law, as I have already said, is in the life and death of Him who is the image of God, in whose willing sacrifice of Himself, according to the Father's will, both as a Sweet-savour and a Sin-offering, we see the substance shadowed by the "corn of wheat," in its coming into the earth, and its death and increase through dissolution. The seed has in it all the virtues of the root from which it comes. So the Seed of God possesses all the fulness of the life and glory of the invisible God. By His holy incarnation He is sown into the earth, that so bringing His life and virtues into it, He may through His death take another body from it, which shall bear His image, and which shall again by the same process of self-sacrifice multiply itself from generation to generation. For by its falling into the earth the seed produces other seeds, each of which, formed in the image of that from which it springs, shall again by its sacrifice and dissolution still more increase until it fill the face of the earth with fruit. But this multiplication absolutely depends on falling into the ground and dying there. Without this death there is and can be no fruit. Had Christ not come in the flesh, the world would still have lacked his life. Had He not then died, there could have been no raising up of others with Him as partakes of His resurrection. It is by His coming into the earth that He brings His life into the earth. It is by His resurrection from the dead that He brings that which He has laid hold of in the earth, as partaker of His life, into His own light and glory with Him. Blessed by His name who took our earthly place and form for us, that so He might make us partakers of Himself and of His quickening spirit. Henceforth as He is, so are we (I John 4:17). And as partakers of His life, who manifested the love of God by laying down His life for us, we cannot but lay down our lives also for the brethren, content, yea debtors even (I John 3:16: We ought, that is we owe [Greek words], to lay down our lives.) with Him to come in the flesh, and to stoop to things which are of the earth, to give to others the life which God has given to us. Thus is continued the life-giving sacrifice of the "corn of wheat." The Church fills up that which remains behind of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24). The world may not know it, but the daily self-surrender of many a meek life, in the common cares and crosses of a very ordinary lot, is winning for God those with whom it comes in contact, who shall be its harvest of joy at the appearing of the Lord. I need not speak of the fruit won by those who have more manifestly laid down their lives for Christ, or of the victory over the kingdoms of the world by the ready sacrifice of the saints, who in time of plague, peril, or want, willingly died even for those who had hated them and hunted for their lives. All this is now a proverb, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." The seed has increased, because the seed has died.

But let us look more closely at the stages, which our Lord tells us must intervene, between "abiding alone," and "bringeth forth much fruit." These are, first, "falling into the ground"; then, "dying" there (Verse 24); both revealing something of the cost which

sacrifice entails, in a world where sinners are to be reached, and where sinners too by grace are called to be partakers of the sacrifice.

First, as to the "coming" or "falling into the earth." Few think what this was to the Son of God. Think of the seed cast into the earth; exposed to wintry winds; trodden under the feet of those who drive the rake and harrow over it; buried out of sight, and left alone, as if cast out by God and man, to endure the slow process of a daily dissolution; then melted by rains and heats, until its form is marred, and it seems useless either to God or man. All this, and more, was but the shadow of what the Seed of God endured, in those days of little-estimated humiliation, when, though He had brought God's life into the world, that life as yet was not manifested. Who shall say what it cost Him to be "sown a natural body" (I Cor. 15: 44); to come from the form of God into the likeness of man; to be made of a woman, under the law; to share the weakness and limitations of a dying, earthly, transitory life; to come into the lot of sinners, and to live with sinners; to live among such all unknown; so little understood even by His dearest, that when, as He increased in wisdom, He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" even His mother "understood not the saying which He spake unto them" (Luke 2:50). And in such humiliation to wear out nearly all this earthly life; all indeed but the last three years, which were still more a daily death. When one thinks that this was only the beginning of the sacrifice, we may perhaps dimly perceive what His coming into the earth must have been to God's dear Son. Some of us for His sake have left bright homes to enter dwellings, reeking with disease, where the stifling air is hard to breathe, and the sights of pain have so oppressed our hearts, that, even when again absent from such scenes, they have still weighed upon our bodies or our minds. But what can any such contrast, which we have known, be to that accepted by our Lord, between what He was and what He became for us, when He came into the earth as the Seed of God, that "truth should spring out of the earth, and our land should yield her increase" (Psa. 85:11, 12). All this however was but a stage to dying in our place. For the corn of wheat, not only "falls into the ground," but must also "die," if it is to bring forth fruit. So not only was "the Word made flesh" (John 1:14), but "being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil 2:8). And in this death He died, not only to this world (Col. 2:20), but also to sin (Rom. 6:10), which had seized and held His creatures captive; because thus only, by taking our death, could mortality be swallowed up of life (II Cor. 5:4), and our bodies, as well as our souls, be brought back to bear His likeness with Him. How He felt all this, or what He suffered, when "the sorrows of death compassed Him about, and the pains of hell got hold upon Him" (Psa. 116:3); when he was "laid in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the deep, like the slain that lie in the grave, and are remembered no more" (Psa. 88:5); what it was for life to die, no mortal tongue can tell. But we know He bore it all. For only so could the life shut up in the corn of wheat be brought forth out of the earth; only so could it spring up, not alone, but multiplied exceedingly. Forever blessed be His Name, who has thus made us partakers of His likeness; emptying Himself to till us; dying to give us life.

Such is the pattern. The Son of God first came where He would have to die. Then He died here. And so must we. To be fruitful, we shall be brought into the place where, before we die, and in order to die, we must often be mortified and suffer a daily dissolution. Like

the old invaders, who burnt their ships, if we follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, and give up, first our money, calling, and ease, and then, what is far dearer to self, our reputation, being counted fools, and even mad, to give to others what we have received, we shall ere long find ourselves in a place from which we cannot then draw back, and in which it only remains for us to die. Folly indeed would it then be to draw back. For just as the seed, cast into the earth, is spoilt for food by being sown, and spoilt for growing, if it be taken thence and not allowed to die, so is he who in following Christ has come into the place of death, but is not yet dead; for by his sacrifice, so far as it has advanced, he is already spoilt for this world, while, if he then draw back, he is spoilt and worthless for the kingdom. If any so draw back, the Lord will have no pleasure in them (Heb. 10:38). Have any suffered so many things in vain, if it be yet in vain? (Gal. 3:4). Alas for those who have followed Christ enough to be spoilt for this world, and yet not so far as to die with Him, to win the crown of sacrifice, and to bring forth much fruit:--

Too good for great things, and too great for good, While still "I dare not" waits upon "I would"

It cannot be so with the true elect, though with them too it is hard to die, harder far than to do a thousand religious things, which yet are short of death to self: for, as one said of old, "All that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job 2:4). They too must die; and, thank God, they are in the faithful hands of One who will carry out the sacrifice to its appointed end.

To bring about this end God uses many instruments, even as the seed comes to dissolution through the varied agencies of frosts, and dews, and sun, and air. But it is ever He himself who brings His children into this death, that He may raise them up again with great power. We are tempted to forget this, when men and devils seem to have their way, and we feel ourselves perishing, and no fruit appears of such sorrow. But the end of self is the one condition of the promised blessing. He that will not die cannot live. It is God Himself therefore who brings us down to bring us up. Faith sees this, and thus can pierce the darkest cloud, and say in all, "It is the Lord" (I Sam. 3:18). It is not man's hand, but thine, my God, that brings me down, "Thou turnest man to destruction" (Psa. 90:3). "Thou has put away mine acquaintances, and has made me to be abhorred of them" (Psa. 88:8). What they do, even when "the heathen rage, and the rulers stand up against the Christ," is only "whatsoever thy hand and they counsel determined to be done" (Acts 4:26, 28). The trial may even come through God's elect, and when this is so, the pain is greater, for nothing wounds us more than the opposition and condemnation of true brethren. Yet this is the royal way. Christ was judged and left by all. And His one answer to perplexed disciples is, "Ought not Christ to suffer these things?" Is there any other way to glory? (Luke 24:26).

The pain and bliss of thus dying none know but those who have endured its pains and felt its bliss. For there is joy unspeakable and full of glory in the sacrifice of self,- in being hidden as God is hidden from the world. Till we can be thus unseen like God, there is little growth in the divine life, which only manifests itself as we pass through this secret death and dissolution. Yet this experimental learning what we are has its own sorrows

also, which force even from the true elect the cry, "Now is my soul troubled; yet what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name" (Verses 27, 28). The trial is indeed sifting. Yet the true deliverance is not in saying, "Save me from this or that"; but in accepting everything, however grievous it may appear, as from the Lord, saying only, "Father, glorify thy name." These apparent forsakings of God are a great deep. It is easier to speak of those separations from our brethren which this sacrifice involves, between those who remain unchanged, and those who through a daily death are being led on to resurrection. They dying and the dead are never pleasant to the living. Only a few loving ones will continue clinging to a corpse. And even they must soon bury it out of sight. To those who walk after the flesh there is a kind of horror in seeing one dying to the joys of the earth, and to the things which make up the business of this present outward life. Let none therefore be surprised if at such a stage they are deserted. Was not the dead Christ buried? Are we not to be buried with Him? Surely, if we are to be conformed to Him, we must die, and be forsaken, as He was. Many things most lawful must be left. But meanwhile another world opens to our view, with its tree of life and paradise of God (Rev. 2:7). And yet even Christian brethren, instead of rejoicing in being partakers of such pains, or in seeing a crossed and wounded Christ in one another, often are in doubt as to themselves, or forsake a brother, when, to make him perfect through sufferings, he too is called to pass the straight and narrow gate. Perhaps it must be so. We must die alone. But though the inhabitants of mortality and time yet misunderstand such pains, and spite of Christ's agony and cross may forsake or shrink from such sufferers; though even dear brethren are perplexed, and question how such a cross should be allowed, if the soul so suffering is really the Lord's; though, as with Christ, there comes a cloud of darkness and desertion; though censure and judgments pass from one to another, and even true disciples say, "We trusted that such a one would indeed have helped the Church" (Luke 24:21); though all this has to be suffered and debated, and all seems lost and the soul cannot move or rise or justify itself: such sufferers need not fear. Those who die with Christ are safe with Him. For His own lifeguard or angels is about them, to watch and roll away the stone, that the dead may in due time rise again.

2. Such is the way. The corn must fall into the ground. But the result of the sacrifice is, "if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Verse 24). For as the grain of corn, through dissolution, is made the root of many seeds, so the Lamb by His once dying as the first-born and the First-Fruits, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence (Col. 1:18), is multiplied into His disciples, who are made partakers of the same life, and who in their turn, through death, will be multiplied again into a still greater number, till the field of the world is full of the seed of God. This is the end of all the trial. The word as to Abraham's sacrifice is still true. "By myself I have sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Gen. 22:17, 18). Increase must follow self-surrender. So the prophet, who most clearly foresees the great sacrifice, declares, "When Thou shalt make His soul and offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" (Isa. 53:10). Fruit shall be borne,

enriching not the offerer only, but also God and man, and shaking to its foundation the power of him who holds the world captive.

(i) First, this self-surrender has results upon the offerer himself. "The Son of Man is glorified" (Verse 23 and chap. 8:31), in and by that very sacrifice which to sense appears to be destruction. Just as with the seed, its dissolution is but a loosing of its bonds, that it may arise out of itself in a new form, and put on glorious apparel, and in its flower hold up to heaven its creaturely image of that sun, whose light and warmth have touched it even in the grave, and so have brought out of the dark root a beauty and glory, of which the seed while it remained intact afforded no indication; so in the elect does the sacrifice even unto death work for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17). The Son of Man is glorified thereby. For what is our shame? Is it not this "body of humiliation" (Phil. 3:21), in which we are "straightened" (Luke 12:50), and "groan being burdened"? (II Cor. 5:2). Is it not the selfish will of the flesh, which lusteth against the spirit, and presseth down the soul, so that we cannot do the things that we would? (Wisdom ix. 15, and Gal. 5:17). Then the cross or sacrifice of this selfhood must be glory, even though to carnal minds, who "glory in their shame" (Phil. 3:19), and to carnal eyes, which see only the judgment of the flesh, it appears to be destruction. Therefore Paul "gloried in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:3-5). The cross is the true sceptre. Things which trouble faith are overcome by death. "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin" (I Pet. 4:1).

(ii) But the sacrifice also glorifies God. The soul which will not say, "Father, save me from this hour," but only, "'Father, glorify thy name," is met at once by a voice from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (Verse 28). Therefore "now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him" (John 13:31). For as surely as self-will and self-pleasing, as we see in Adam, always rob and dishonour God, so does self-surrender, even unto death, as we see in Christ, bring glory to Him. For self-surrender is the most perfect expression of our love. Can I give myself away? Can I wholly trust myself, in a path where I see nothing, to another? Can I so yield to Him in all, that He may do with me what He will? In no other way can I so express my estimate of Him, in whom I place such perfect confidence. Thus it is that self-surrender glorifies God. He looks upon a world, where the serpent's lie, that God cannot be trusted, rankles deep in every heart. He sees some weak one who can so trust Him, that, let the darkness be what it may, he will not even say, "Save me from this or that," but only, "Father, glorify thy name." And He is glorified thereby. For as unbelief makes Him a liar (I John 5:10), so does faith, which yields itself to Him, above all else do honour to Him. Well then may the partakers of Christ's sufferings rejoice, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon them. By the world He may be blasphemed; but in those who suffer with Him He is glorified (I Pet. 4:13, 14).

(iii) Nor is this all. Sacrifice not only has results on him who makes it, and upon God, but it also acts directly on the world, freeing it, as nothing else does, from the power of him who holds it captive. So our Lord adds here, "Now is the judgment of this world: now

shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me" (Verses 31, 32). For the world is captive in its self-will. The judgment therefore is its salvation, when "the sword of the Lord shall be drawn out, against all flesh, that every heart may melt, and all hands be feeble, and every spirit faint, and all knees weak" (Eze. 21: 4,7), that they may thus come into the place of blessing, and be among the "faint," and "feeble," to whom the promise is for ever pledged (Isa. 40:29), and learn, even as the elect, that Christ's strength is only perfect in man's weakness (II Cor. 12:9). This is the purpose of the judgment; and the judgment itself is such as He himself enjoins, who says, "Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. 1:17); accomplished when orphan souls again cry, Abba, Father, and those who have lost their strength and stay are united to their true husband. Thus with righteousness does He judge the poor, and smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His mouth destroy the wicked (Isa. 11:4) And there are many stages in this judgment. He who by His own submission overcame the tempter, little by little, as we can bear it, draws sinners to His cross, first by this or that involuntary sacrifice of their own will, and then by the willing acceptance of whatever He may lay upon them. And in the fires they find that the flames have only burnt their bonds; that, though cast in bound, they thus are made free (Dan. 3:24, 25). This is the "judgment of this world," by which "its prince is cast out," and "all men are drawn to Him" who died for them. Well therefore may the Psalmist call upon all creatures to "rejoice before the Lord, because He cometh to judge the earth" (Psa. 96:11-13).

(iv.) For the sacrifice at last much touch and draw back all to God: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me" (Verse 32). Evil is not eternal: it is only disorder; the creature's will out of its true place. Sacrifice restores the true order. It was the fall into self-hood which divided man from God and man. It is by sacrifice, and by sacrifice alone, that they can again be reunited. For sacrifice is simply the law of the divine life, that going and giving out of self, which is love's inmost law and instinct. It was thus, by His own sacrifice of Himself, that God united Himself to us. It is thus, by our sacrifice through Christ, that we are united to Him and to one another. The blood of the cross reconciles all. It can unite the most opposed, and heal every breach, whether in heaven or earth (Col. 1:20). The reconciliation and union is already wrought in Jesus Christ. It shall be wrought in the world through Him, till the last rebel is subdued, and the last wanderer found. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me" This is the end, shadowed of old in type, partially fulfilled in the calling of the Gentiles, to be consummated when at the name of Jesus knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; when every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10, 11). And as in Himself, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, the breach between God and man, and man and man, has been for ever healed,-- as in Him God and man are one,--so by the continued sacrifice of His body, through the sufferings of His members, which are His sufferings in them, is He conveying the grace of His own life and love to those who yet are strangers to it. Whether therefore we are comforted or afflicted, it is for others' consolation and salvation, which is made effectual in them through the enduring of the same sufferings (II Cor. 2:6).

Thus do the elect fill up what remains of the joys and sufferings of Christ (Phil. 2:17 and Col. 1:23). Little do we think how each unknown sufferer's daily cross is serving in God's hand to bring about the promised restitution. We quote as a doctrine, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one are many made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). But it is a daily fact also. Every act of disobedience and refusal to submit to the law of love, which is the law of self-sacrifice, still makes, and must make, many sinners, even as every act of obedience makes many others righteous. The fact which is daily becoming clearer to scientific men, that the universe is one, and that the least things in our little world are related to and influenced by the sun and distant stars, and probably are influencing them also in return, is no less true of the spirit-world, of which as men made in God's image we form a part, and in which Christ as man has already effected such wonders. His incarnation and entrance into heaven as man necessarily affect all, in heaven, and earth, and hell. For there is in His humanity an eternal link with all, which knits together those who as yet are far apart as death from life and heaven from hell. He has tasted both for all (Heb. 2:9); and, because He died and rose and revived, He is Lord both of the dead and of the living (Rom. 14:9). Wherefore He is able also to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him (Heb. 17:25). Because He lives, we shall live also (John 14:19).

Such is the Sacrifice of the New Man. Shall we not ask, how much we know if that death to self, which our Lord here announces so unequivocally. Those especially who count themselves to be disciples should see to it that in this giving up of self, their life is conformed to Him who is the pattern. For never perhaps was there more light than now as to what becomes a son of God; never greater temptation to indulge ourselves, even while we admire and confess the truth, that self-sacrifice is most godlike. And our very nearness to Christ may help deceive us. Simon the Cyrenian is the witness, that it is not some favoured disciple, but a poor stranger, who really bears Christ's cross (Mark 15:21), while better instructed disciples, for a time at least, only see and shrink from such suffering. God knows who now are bears of that burden which was first laid upon the Lord. Who now are cross-bearers? Are they still gathered from among strangers to Him, who are "compelled to bear" the daily cross of poverty and pain, and the other varied ills which are sin's just penalty; or are they to be found among those, who, with greater knowledge of the Lord, shrink from and stumble at the cross, when, in its full bitterness and shame, it comes to overthrow their preconceived and mistaken notions of the way into the kingdom? Are there not still many, whose so-called faith, instead of leading to the cross, has been the directest way to gain the things of this world? Such is not the sacrifice of the New Man. Now as of old the corn of wheat must die, if it is indeed to bring forth much fruit.

It may be asked, How can such a life of daily death go hand in hand with a due attention to the claims and wants of our earthly callings and relationships, where there must be worldly care and interest in those outward things, not only for the supply of our own but even others' wants. This is a question which has often exercised the saints of God. And God alone can answer it so as to meet the varying growth and need of each believer. For we have each our special calling, depending on our growth in Christ, and the sacrifice which is proper to one stage may be unworthy of another. Our Lord's life is the real

answer. From the first it was a life of love, and therefore could not but be a life of sacrifice in everything, whether as a carpenter, or preacher, or sufferer on the cross. But the form of the sacrifice varied as time went on. Its first form was coming in the flesh: its last was dying in and to the flesh: the one quite as much as the other being indeed a sacrifice. And so the saints have ever felt that their coming or abiding in the flesh, stooping to carnal forms for carnal souls, continuing with them in the earthly life, because it is more needful for them (Phil. 1:24, 25), is quite as much a sacrifice as the dying to this outward life, whatever may be the form or pains of so dying. In either case, whether we leave the outward world for God, or seek to live for Him in the common toil and relationships of ordinary life,--"whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause; for the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that, if One died for all, all died in Him, and that He died, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again" (II Cor. 5:14, 15). If we only live out Christ's life, we shall be conformed to Him in all, both in His coming in the flesh and in His dying to it; and shall prove that dying is more than doing, for "if we die we bring forth more fruit." But whether we live or die we are the Lord's (Rom. 14:8).

NINTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Humiliation of the New Man

(John 13:1-38)

We come now to the ninth saying of our Lord, marked by the reiterated Amen, in which by act and word He sets before us the Lowliness, and still more the Humiliation, of the New Man. Four times here does He repeat "Amen, Amen." Only on one other subject, namely the Support or Meat of the New Man, do we find this very remarkable reiteration. In either case the reason is the same. On both these points there is much to learn, and very slowly do we understand and receive this testimony. Especially to the old world was the very idea of lowliness contemptible. Even now that the cross has altered men's estimate of so many things, and the Spirit of Christ has shown, that, if we would "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called," it must be first of all, "in all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love (Eph. 4:1,2), even now humiliation is with many harder far than death, and some, who could for others freely lay down their lives, find it difficult to take a lower place. For indeed even after the mystery of the cross is opened to us, and we have learnt, in word least, that "the corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, if it is to bring forth much fruit," pride may still remain, the very strength of hell, to bring us, if it remains, spite of every gift, into the condemnation of the devil (I Tim. 3:6). Not in vain therefore does our Lord so often here repeat, "Amen, Amen," and gird Himself to wash His disciples' feet, that we through Him may learn to stoop with Him.

For pride is the crowning sin of the old man. Fallen from God, self makes itself a God, and at all cost, whether of wrong to God or man, openly or in secret seeks its own exaltation. Slowly do we learn, even when through grace we have left much for Christ, and have, like the disciples, followed Him in the flesh for years, not without some shame and loss embraced for His dear sake, how even in following Him this desire to be the greatest still cleaves to us, and may come out, as in the scene before us, at that very feast of love, which tells of His humiliation. It was this pride and self-seeking, even at His table, to which this ninth "Amen, Amen," directs attention. At this very feast "there was a strife among them, which should be accounted greatest" (Luke 22:19, 24). And then it was that the Son of the Father, who had come from God and went to God, and of whom the greatest of the prophets had said, "I am not worthy to loose His shoe's latchet" (Chap. 1:27), Himself stoops lower than this, even to wash the feet of those, who, as He well knew, within a very few hours would forsake, deny, and betray Him, saying to them, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought to wash one another's feet; for, I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, Verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord, neither is he that is sent greater than He that sent him" (Verses 14-17). Oh blessed contrast between God and man. For with men, the servant washes his lord. With God, the Lord bows down to wash the servant (Eze. 16:9).

Now it is remarkable that St. John, who records all this as occurring at the last feast of the Passover, says nothing of the institution of the Lord's supper, but instead gives us this washing of the disciples' feet, and the varied words and acts which grew out of it. But the two are one, and in what is here recorded we have the essence of the Lord's supper. For what is that supper but sacrifice and communion, showing Christ's fellowship with us, in taking our flesh and blood and burdens on Him; that we should have fellowship with Him, by taking His flesh and blood, and thereby doing His works of lowly love towards others with Him. And what is this washing of the feet but sacrifice and communion. First, the Perfect One strips Himself, and stoops to take away our defilements; and this is His communion with us, which is humiliation and emptying to Him; and then He calls us, as partakers of His life, to communion with Him, to serve others in the same spirit of divine self-sacrifice. He takes and takes away our infirmities, stooping to wash our feet, that as His members and in His life we may do the like for others. The one thing is "to be as the Master;" to represent Him and His works on earth, even as in His humiliation He represented and did the works of the Father who had sent Him.

1. Let us look at this humiliation.

(i) First, He stoops to the place of a servant, by Himself washing His disciples' feet. Every step in the process is significant. "He lays aside His garment;" then "He girds Himself," to serve; then "after that He pours out the water" for His disciples' cleansing (Verses 4, 5). The outward act is humbling enough; yet the outward act is but the sign of the far deeper and more wonderful humiliation, which the Son of God has accepted for us in coming in the flesh, and in stooping to all those sacramental forms, which are extensions of His incarnation, by which, as in this supper, He may reach and remove the defilement which we contract in our necessary contact with the world. This costs Him a coming down, which, if we could but see it as it is, would appear to us, as it did at first to Peter, too much even for the Son of God. For to do this He must lay aside His garments, that is, must strip Himself and put off His glory, and empty Himself, and then gird Himself with a napkin, that is, must take our flesh, which like the girded napkin is the badge of service (So Augustine, Tract. In Johan. lv. 7). Only thus does He pour out the water by which He takes away our defilements, and makes us, like Himself, "clean every whit." Only by laying aside His glory, and putting on our likeness, could He do this for us. And He accepts this humiliation, to make us partakers of Himself, and like Him cleansers of others. For He does this that we may do as He has done. But the water is not poured out, either by Christ, or by His members, until they strip themselves, that by their humiliation others may be made whole. Not till we suffer for them and humble ourselves for others can we really cleanse any.

What is this water and this cleansing? The cleansing is the washing of the feet, those lower members, which are soiled by contact with the world, even though the body has been cleansed by the one washing of regeneration. The water is the Spirit, as He said, He that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (Chap. 7:38). Even after the washing of regeneration cleansed souls contract defilement, though "he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet" (Verse 10); and this second washing is effected by the humiliation of Christ's members, who, unasked and unthanked, still stoop to wash

their brethren. Is it no stooping to be occupied with the defilement others contract? Let those answer who have thus tried to wash others. Such know what this service costs, and how few will thank him who points out their defilements, or be willing to receive the "washing of water through the word" (Eph. 5:26). Nevertheless Christ and His members thus humble themselves, and so minister the Spirit, as the grape its juice and the olive its oil, by the very pressure which the sin and need of others put upon them, which brings out the grace which is in the saints, even as the evil of the world brings out of the old man that pride and wrath, which until the trial comes is all unseen. And by this spirit of Christ others are cleansed, though they seek not the cleansing, and even reject it for awhile, as unworthy of Him who at such a cost thus brings it to them.

(ii) For the humiliation of the New Man comes even to this, not only to take a servant's place, but to have His service rejected, because He stoops so low, by some for whom He thus humbles Himself. Thus when He comes here to Peter, that disciple answers, "Thou shalt never wash my feet" (Verse 8). Through a self-willed humility, the loving act is for a time shrunk from. So much harder is it to receive than to give all. Men therefore will "suffer if a man smite them on the face, if he take of them, if he bring them into bondage" (II Cor. 11:20). All this men will submit to, for it does not shame their pride. But real loving service, which becomes nothing to serve its loved ones, men will reject, because they feel that it involves a humiliation, which they are not prepared to follow. Carnal and selfish ministers therefore are on all hands praised and welcomed. The man who humbles himself for others is rejected, even by those for whom he humbles himself; for his humiliation is a tacit rebuke of all self-seeking and self-exaltation. Men do not want such service, because they feel that it demands a like humiliation.

And in the same spirit some yet shrink from those outward and sacramental acts, which our Lord uses to reach the carnal and defiled, with the honest but mistaken notion that such forms are unworthy of the Lord, and a degradation to Him, if not also to those to whom He offers them. True souls yet err thus. Some things they think too low for Christ--too carnal for a spiritual Lord, and for disciples who are called by Him to be spiritual. So do even some of Christ's truest disciples stumble at the humiliation of the Eternal Word, when He yet comes in sacramental forms, which are perhaps His greatest humiliation. But the Lord's grace is not turned aside by His servants' mistake. He yet stoops to the rejected form, saying, "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter" (Verse 7). Let but His spirit so fill us that we do His works,--for it is only like that understands like,--and then we too shall see how such stoopings to carnal men are not carnal, but most godlike, and therefore spiritual.

But can we thus cleanse others? I know some stumble here, and say, "Christ of course could cleanse His disciples, but we who are sinners can never do the like." Yet the words of Christ are very plain: "Ye ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (Verses 14, 15). If Christ lives in men, He yet must do His works by them. If they are His members, they cannot but fulfill His will. And as a matter of experience we know that the love of brethren does act upon us; that they do really cleanse us by their self-denying service. They serve us in the strength of Him who dwells in them, who by them communicates His own virtues and His very

life, so that they can, not only quicken and judge (Chap. v. 21, 22, see above pp. 71-80), but also cleanse others. Thank God, there yet are some whose life is a "ministration of the Spirit" (Heb. 1:14, and II Cor. 3:8), who therefore as angels thus serve us, though we thank them not.

Thus does the New Man humble himself; and then again comes the "Amen, Amen," which so uncompromisingly calls us to the same humiliation: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord, neither is he that is sent greater than He that sent Him" (Verse 16). Can we misunderstand such words? But do not too many still think it a shame to do as He did, and to endure what He endured? Do we not rather all seek by fleshly place and power to do the work which our Lord only did by humiliation? If we try to help others, is it not too often by some earthly superiority, either of gift or station in the world, rather than by the self-abasement and gentleness of Christ? Who thinks that self-humiliation is the way to cleanse others? Yet this is the royal road, witnessed to by every act and word of Him whom we profess to follow, "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet made Himself of no reputation, and took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself yet more, and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8); and who, lest we should not see what all this meant, even at the supper which spoke of His shed blood, bowed Himself down to wash His disciples' feet, saying, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. Verily, Verily, The servant is not greater than his lord. If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them."

2. What then is the ground or motive of this humiliation? Love, first; then knowledge of the truth. Love is the first motive. So we read, --"Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (Verse 1), and therefore stooped to serve them. But the knowledge of the truth, that He is the Son of God, no less moves Him to this self-abasement. Therefore it is added, "Knowing that the Father had given all things unto His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God, He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garment, and took a towel, and girded Himself" (Verses 3, 4). No motives can compare with these to make us willing to come down. Love is as strong as death (Cant. viii. 6). What is it but a mother's love which makes her stoop to wash her babe, and to delight in every menial toil, if only by it she can serve her helpless loved ones? And what is it but the knowledge of their high birth, and that they can claim and prove it when they will, that makes the noble of this world ready to stoop to men and things in a way which others of lower rank so often stumble at? They can come down because they are high. They are so assured of their true place, that they need not everywhere and always be asserting it. This is the secret of self-abasement. Christ can stoop because He loves, and because He knows He is the Son of God.

And the motive power to stoop like Him to the defilements of the weak, is us, as in the Lord, lies in the possession of the life of God, with all its knowledge that all things are ours, for we have sprung from God and go to God, so that he that receiveth us receiveth Him. These words declare that even in our humiliation we are the dwelling place of God: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me, and

he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me" (Verse 20). It is this assurance which will enable us to follow His steps, according to the words, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (Verse 15). The power to do so flows from the fact that He is one with us, while yet also He is our Lord. It is because he is our Lord that we must be humble as He is humble. It is because He is in us, and "he that receiveth us receiveth Him," that we can do His works and wash each other's feet.

But will not the assurance that we are heirs of God lead us to high thoughts of ourselves? Will not this belief of union with the Lord minister to pride rather than to meekness and humility? Are not the dreadful things which have been done by some, who have claimed to be vicars and ambassadors of Christ, proofs of the peril and evil which results from men believing that they are sent from God? That there has been an awful perversion of this truth is, alas, too plain. But the pride of some "who say they are apostles" (Rev. ii. 2), and then act unlike men sent of God, or who even "say that they are Christ" (Matt. 24:5), and then do before our eyes the works, not of Christ, but rather of devils and antichrists, while it forces us to try all such pretensions, cannot annul the truth, that it is in the full knowledge of their divine worship and mission that men are most lowly. It is not the belief that Christ is in them which causes pride, but rather the thought that they are to take His place, and act for Him as though He were not present. Who so humble as the Lord? And who so emptied of self as those who feel that the word they speak is not their own, and that for the works they have to perform, they have no goodness, power, or light, save that which comes from Him, who stooped to show in flesh and blood the grace of God. Not in vain therefore, when our Lord here says, "Verily, Verily, the servant is not above his lord," does He add at once, "Verily, Verily, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me." For so long as he thinks himself separate from his master, the disciple may be tempted to set himself above his Lord. When he feels that it is Christ who lives in him, Christ must be all in all. It is the sense and assurance of His indwelling that can make us willing to be nothing here, that He and not we may be seen in all our ways.

3. And what is the return which the Son of God receives for this humiliation? He is betrayed by one, and then denied by another, of His disciples. We read here, "When Jesus had said this He was troubled in spirit and testified and said, Verily, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me" (Verse 21). And then to His foremost disciple He says, "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice" (Verse 38). These are all drops in the cup of the humiliation of the obedient Son, which He uncomplainingly drinks of and empties to the end.

(i) First He is betrayed, and by a disciple. To be betrayed is pain enough,--to be given up into the hands of those who hate, and are thirsting to destroy us. But to be betrayed by a disciple, to have one's confidence abused,--this more that doubles the humiliation. Therefore He says here, "Verily, Verily, one of you," whom I have called to be partakers with me in my temptations and my kingdom,--one of you, to whom I have opened the mysteries of the kingdom of God,--one of you, whose feet I have washed, and with whom, in the confidence of love, I sit here, to make you, if you will indeed receive me,

partakers of my very life,--"Verily, Verily, I say, that one of you shall betray me." "For it is not an enemy, that hath done me this dishonour; then I could have borne it: neither was it mine adversary that did magnify himself against me: for then I would have hid myself: but it was even thou my companion, and my familiar friend" (Psa. 55:12-15). The very disciple whom He singles out for honour, by giving him the portion of a distinguished guest (Footnote: It is yet a custom in the East for the host to hand or send some portion of a dish to the guest whom he desires to honour. Compare Gen. 43:34, and Ruth 2: 14), is the one who repays the kindness with betrayal. Yet the elect must come even to this,--to be forsaken in His distress,--to be betrayed, and then to be denied, by those who He has trusted.

(ii) For He is not betrayed only, but denied, and by one who had been most forward to confess Him,--one who had just said, "Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Even this disciple denies Him. "Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." It is even so. Thou, Peter, who has confessed me to be Son of God, and who now sayest, "I will lay down my life for thy sake,"--thou, my chosen disciple, wilt not only deny me, but wilt forsake me. "For behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (Chap. 16:32).

Words surely are not needed to show the humiliation of such a denial. We more slowly understand that the same lot may be ours, as His joint-heirs, if we "apprehend that for which we have been apprehended" (Phil. 3:12). Paul at least had reached this. Just before his death, he says, "This thou knowest, that all they of Asia have forsaken me" (II Tim. 1:15). "At my first answer no man stood with me" (II Tim. 4:16). Where then were the Ephesian elders, who once "fell on his neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more"? (Acts 20:37, 38). Paul the aged now writes, "All they of Asia have forsaken me." Surely they did not wish to turn from Christ; but they had forsaken him to whom to live was Christ (Phil 1:21), because his self-sacrifice was too high for them, and he too, even as his Master, was "now ready to be offered" (II Tim. 4:6). Brethren therefore who had really loved him leave him to his fate. They are as yet unprepared to share his cross. He must pass alone through His humiliation.

And yet the disciple who thus denied his Lord meant what he said, even that he would lay down his life for Christ. But he knew only what he would: he knew not what he could. And our Lord, by His exact repetition of Peter's words, "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake" seems to look onward to the end, when Peter's words should be fulfilled, and he should indeed lay down his life for Christ's sake. Therefore while He says, "Verily, Verily, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." He immediately adds, "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions" (Chap. 14:1, 2). The answers of Peter and Thomas, which are here recorded, in reply to our Lord's words as to His going away, show the two mistakes of disciples as to the one appointed way. Confident Peter thinks that, because he has walked with the Lord in one stage of the way, he can at once follow in all. When therefore our

Lord says, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now," he replies at once, "Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." He does not see that there are many courts or mansions in the Father's house, and that a disciple may be fit for one, and yet unfit at once to pass to what is higher. Doubting Thomas, on the other hand, who in answer to the words, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," answers, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" (Chap. 14:4, 5), does not understand that the beginning of the way leads surely to the end, even though as yet we may be unfit to tread its higher stages. To him therefore the word is, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me" (Chap. 14:6). As much as to say, I am the Way, and I am the Whither also, for I am God as well as man. Knowing me therefore you know the Way and Whither also, though as yet you know not that you know it.

So journeys the New Man. Those for whom He has stooped and toiled, and who, till He comes to His last trial, spite of many failings still follow Him, stumble at the cross by which He passes into a higher sphere, where in their present state they cannot follow. His humiliation is the signal for their all deserting Him. Let a man of God, who has gathered souls, by walking with them where they are, only pass on in the appointed path to that suffering in the flesh, which is the necessary result of daily self-sacrifice, and he will find how those who love him are offended, for awhile at least; some will betray, and some deny, and all will shrink from him. For in all suffering there is ever something of abasement. All martyrdoms are said to have looked mean when they were suffered. And the pride of the natural heart, which is always ready to claim connexion with what is high, and to shrink from or disown relationship with what is low or humble, cannot bear to seem even to be linked with that which is rejected and despised, lest it should share the shame of such rejection. So the New Man is forsaken. He must be tried as silver is tried; more deeply wounded by being thus forsaken by his own, than by all the scourging and reviling of the outer world, who never knew him. But he accepts the trial, by his shame to shame men's paltry pride, and by his humiliation to show them who is true nobility. For there is glory in this shame. The cry, "De profundis," is a "Psalm of Degrees" (Psa. 130:1 See title. The "Psalm of Degrees," Heb. [Heb. word] are all of this character. I cannot but connect [Heb. words], that is the Burnt Offering), that is a Psalm of Ascension or Going up. God is bringing up His children when He brings them down. Their humiliation is the one way to exaltation.

Therefore our Lord adds here, even of this humiliation, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him" (Verses 31, 32). Pride and disobedience dishonour God by putting self in the place of God. Lowliness, which gives Him His true place, brings Him back to man and with Him brings back the lost glory. He "dwells with him that is of a humble heart" (Isa. 57:15), and where He dwells, there must be glory. And indeed it is glory to share His lot, while He is rejected,--to be partakers of His reproach,--to be "as the Master," while He is dishonoured here. In all this trial and humiliation Christ was simply sharing God's experience, which his the one appointed way to share in God's glory. He was treating others, as God treats men, with perfect

grace; and was treated by others, as men treat God, that is with thorough ingratitude. Well might He say, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master (Luke 6:40). Christ's members therefore, when they can bear it, must expect, like Him, not rejection only from the world, but betrayal and denial also at the hands even of those for whom they humble themselves. And hard as other portions of Christ's lot may be, -- difficult as His service is, as set before us in the seventh of these reiterated Amens, or His sacrifice, as set before us in the eighth,-- this humbling of oneself is perhaps the most difficult for us of all, for old Adam hates nothing so much as humiliation. Self can find its own in service, and even in suffering. Self can find very little to boast of in that which is before us here, the humiliation of being betrayed and denied by loved brethren. Little remains to be done or suffered on earth by the elect, when this is, not a matter of faith only, but of experience. Then of such a servant it is true, as of our Lord, when He said these words, --"Yet a little while I am with you" (Verse 33).

And if such a path is too high for some, let them, whilst humbled that they "cannot follow now," take comfort from the Master's words, "Thou shalt follow me hereafter." With us, as with Peter, there may be much which we have yet to learn of our own hearts, before we are prepared to come where our Lord has gone before, or able to follow where He has promised that we shall come in due season. In some way or other we must be delivered from our innate confidence in self. Better to learn ourselves, even by the humiliating experience of denying and forsaking Christ, than remain in self-delusion, unhumiliated and unbroken, and therefore strangers to all the grace which the Lord can give to those who trust Him. For indeed, painful as it is, it is in this discovery of self that we are brought from self to Christ, to find, that, whatever may be our wretchedness, His grace is yet sufficient for us. His will is in due time to conform us to Himself; to make us partakers of His own experience; even to come, from being deniers of Him who loves us, to be like Him, ourselves denied by those we love, when we in His life and footsteps are called to bear our witness to some truth (John 17:14), which the Church and world as yet are unprepared for. Blessed be His name: He has promised "Thou shalt follow me hereafter." And He is faithful that has promised. And just in proportion as we trust Him we shall find that we can walk where He has walked. To sense the way may seem too high. Only let us follow on, and we too shall be made partakers of His experience. Then we too shall know what it is to wash weak brethren's feet, and to be rejected by them and then forsaken for a season. Such things must come if we ever reach in very deed to "the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings."

Meanwhile, "whereunto we have attained, let us walk by that same rule," that is according to the light already given us. And if in anything some are otherwiseminded,--if they think that the humiliation which Christ passed through is too great for us,--let them be faithful to their measure, and then even this perhaps, when they can bear it, shall be revealed unto them (Phil. 3:15, 16).

TENTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Glory and Power of the New Man

(John 14:8-14)

The ninth reiterated Amen brought before us the humiliation of the Son of Man, and showed that even in His humiliation He is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. For God dwells in the humble heart. Lowliness and humiliation therefore are glory, because they give God room to show Himself in man. The tenth "Verily, Verily," tells us what this glory is. The Glory of the Son or New Man is to reveal the Father. And He does this in virtue of the Father's indwelling, even as those in whom He dwells in virtue of His indwelling, glorify Him, and so themselves are glorified.

This is our Lord's testimony here: --'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake. 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 be done because I go to the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Verses 11-13). This is the New Man's glory, -- to manifest God to man, and to do His works, in the power of union and communion with Him. The perfect example is the well-beloved Son. Our calling as His members, is to manifest Him as He has manifested the Father.

Now, here, as in all that marks the New Man, He stands in contrast to the old. Old Adam ever delights, not only to live according to his own will, but to show himself, by displaying any gift he may have received, as if it were his own. His final manifestation, we are told, will be, that "as God he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (II Thess. 2:4). This is what he strives to do in all. Even in God's temple, and service, he can "show himself," and take the credit of any good that may be wrought through him, forgetting that all things are of God, and that of His own we give Him (I Chron. 29:14, 16). The New Man's glory is that He reveals God; that the Father who dwelleth in Him, He doeth the works; that therefore those who see Him see the Father, because He is in the Father, and the Father is in Him. In a word, He lives here to manifest the Father. For "no man hath seen God at any time"; therefore "the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1: 18). And Christ's members live for this same end; for in this, "as He is, so are we" (I John 4:17); set to shine as lights in the world (Phil. 2:15); to "show forth His virtues" (I Pet. 2:9. See margin, Gr. [*aretay*]); that through His sons the world may know God. The Holy Scriptures are indeed His witness to the Church (John 5:36). But the Church is His "epistle known and read of all" (II Cor. 3:2). This is her calling to reveal the Father to a world which knows Him not, and to do His works, though men regard them not.

All this is brought out here. Our Lord first speaks of Himself, then of believers. And what He says of believers, that "they shall do His works," is His proof that they are in Him, and He in them, even as He is in the Father, and the Father in Him.

1. First our Lord speaks of Himself. He declares that He is the manifestation of the Father; this is His glory; and that His works are not His own, but the Father's; this is the secret of His power.

The thought is repeated several times: --"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. How sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believeest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak, I speak not of myself, but the Father, that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Verses 9-11).

Such is the truth touching the Son, confessed by all the Church. She knows that God is light (I John 1:5), and love (I John 4:8, 16), and spirit (John 4:24); and that without measure all these may be revealed, for they have been so revealed, in One at least who walked here in flesh our likeness; -- yea, that wonderful as is the revelation in outward nature, where God shows something of Himself in the broad earth, for "His righteousness is as the great mountains"; something of Himself in the wide sea, for "His judgments are a great deep"; "something of Himself in the quiet heavens, with their innumerable lights; something of Himself in the creature forms, in the eagle's eye, in the lion's force, in the lamb's gentleness, and in the ox's strength and patient toil for others; and not less in the vine and oil, which make man's face to shine, and in the bread-corn, which strengtheneth man's heart; so that Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory; yet that the revelation of Himself in the flesh of Christ is infinitely greater than in all these, for He is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person (Heb. 1:3). Man is the true Shekinah (I Cor. 11:7), the very dwelling place of God; and God has been and shall be seen in him, as He cannot be in any other. Even the mystery of the Trinity shines out in man, as we see it nowhere else, manifesting, will, reason, and love, in one spirit; seen above all in Him who said here, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," in whose ways man has seen the living God. It may be well to pause here for a moment, and to consider this great sight, for there is none other like it in the universe.

(i) First then "God is light"(I John 1:5). All who have eyes or know something of light, and what it discovers and works on every hand. Light swallows up darkness; light shows things as they are; light frees us from mistakes, and fills our hearts with gladness. From its source in heaven it comes to earth to change all things. It comes on all alike, not spoilt by the foulest thing it falls on; and sooner or later, more or less, it changes all on which it comes. It comes on the young plant, and gives it a new colour. It comes on the sour fruit, and both bud and taste at once begin to change gradually. It is not a thing we can call our own. We may shut it out perhaps; we cannot shut it up, as something with is our own property. It shines from east to west, free as the air we breathe, the inheritance of all the sons of men. And "God is light," and His Son reveals Him as light, that is as truth, which comes from heaven to show us all things as they are; thus to free us from the misconceptions, both of God and of ourselves, which the darkness of the serpent's lie has thrown around us. When we think what Christ has done, in banishing idols and exposing lies, or how He has transformed dark earthly souls, so that, like the pastures under the sun, "they shout for joy and also sing" (Psalm 65:13), -- we may see that He is light, "as

of a morning without clouds, or as the clear shining after rain" (II Sam. 23:4). He that hath seen Him, hath seen the Father. "Truly the light is sweet, and pleasant thing it is to see the sun" (Eccl. 11:7).

(ii) But "God is love" (I John 4:8, 16), as well as light. And as love too He is revealed in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the revelation we most needed. For man had ceased to think of God as one who was loving, and therefore ever to be loved. The lie was in our hearts, that He was grudging. He might be power; He might be light. But in man's eyes He was no longer love. 'He might destroy and judge; He really cared not for us.' This was the lie which ruined man. And therefore creatures were turned to. Man needed help, and the powers around or within him, the powers of nature, or of mind, or gold, seemed to promise help and were therefore worshipped everywhere. Let them forget that God is love, and they will ever bow to some of the forces, in heaven or earth, which threaten evil or which promise good. The worship of powers is man's resource when he has lost the faith that God is love. But "God is love," and the Son came forth to show Him as He is. By His holy incarnation, by His meekness, by His words and deeds of love; by His stooping to share our weakness, and our pains, and death, with us; in cleansing lepers, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, raising the dead; in overcoming every form of Satan's power; in meeting lost ones with perfect grace; in sitting with publicans and sinners, whom the world cast out as lost; in taking little children into His arms; in His compassion for mourners; and not less in His rebukes of sin, with words like a two-edged sword (Rev. 2:12, and 19:16), smiting the lies which hold His people captive;--for "love is strong as death: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement heat" (Cant. viii. 6);--in every act He manifested God, showing that "many waters cannot quench love" (Cant. viii. 7), and that, even when He is "a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29), "God is love." For indeed love is a consuming fire. Blessed be His name who has thus unveiled Him, and shown that love is the king and lord of all; able as fire to melt and unite what is unchanged by light, to form bright crystals out of our clay, and again to transform these into what is still brighter and more enduring. Those who have seen how crystals of alum are by fire brought out of Whitby shale, and how these crystals again by fire are transmuted into aluminum, have had before them one of nature's witnesses of the changes which in a higher sphere God is working as a consuming fire. The Son has thus revealed Him, by whose all-transforming love dark souls in every age have been made new, to bear His image evermore.

(iii) Further, "God is spirit" (John 4:24), that is a power unseen but felt, like the wind which moves the forest and the sea (Isa. 7:2; Psa. 107:25. "Spirit" and "wind" are the same word, both in Greek and Hebrew.); which fills all vessels and all spaces, if only they are void; pressing with greatest force into those which are most empty and exhausted; coming sometimes like the tempestuous gale, which rends the rocks (I Kings 19:11); and at others the balmy breath which makes the waters flow (Psa. 147:18); now blowing upon the gardens, that their spices may flow out (Cant. iv. 16); and again breathing upon the sick, as the breath of life (Gen. 6:17), that they may live (Eze. 37:9). Such is the wind, whose sound we hear, though we know not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth (John 3:8); in all its operations the appointed witness of Him who works unseen, because He is a spirit. As such the Son reveals Him; now breaking hearts; which

are like rocks; now moving them as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind; casting the mighty from their seats, yet filling the empty with good things, and breathing on the sick and dead that they may live; at last sending His spirit as a mighty rushing wind, to make His carnal disciples henceforth like Him, ministers not of a word only, but also of a spirit. In all He showed that God is spirit, as well as light and love, and therefore that what He approves can be no mere empty form or outward letter, but a spirit which like Himself can fill all forms, while in itself it is not form but spirit. Before Christ came to show us God, man's thought of cleanness or uncleanness was that it was something from without, by the observance or neglect of which we might be approved or unaccepted. The Son revealed that "God is spirit,"--that to the pure all things are pure (Titus 1:15), -- that nothing from without can really defile a man (Mark 7:15); that the unclean thing is the selfish spirit; the clean thing, the spirit of love, that is God's own spirit come again to dwell in man; and that in this spirit His elect must be as salt and light (Matt. 5:13, 14); as salt sinking into that which it preserves, yet not corrupted by it; as light coming even upon a dunghill, without contracting defilement from it; that therefore any outward form or place or circumstance is secondary, and even unimportant; the vital question being; Is the spirit in me loving and true, or is it false and self-loving? If loving and true, it is of God, and therefore pure; if self-loving and untrue, it is of hell, and therefore must be unclean. This is the revelation which the Son has made; and he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father. God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Such is the glory of the Son. He is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:13). Love, light, and power ___ shine out in Him, for He is love; and, as was well said of old, "Ubi Amore, ibi Trinitas" (Footnote: Readers of Augustine will remember the ixth, xth, xith books of his De Trinitate.)

2. Our Lord does on then immediately to speak of those "who believe on Him," who share with Him this glory, of doing His works, and thus revealing God. The words are so wondrous that they seem almost too high for us: "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; and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Verses 12, 13). Two things are brought out here: first, the glory of believers; and then, the spring or secret of it.

(ii) The glory is to do Christ's works: "Verily, Verily, 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." Believers, like Him, and by Him, are to be prophets, priests, and kings: as prophets, to give light; as priests, to manifest love; as kings, to rule and show power. For He was prophet, priest, and king; and "He hath made us kings and priests" (Rev. 1:6), to "open men's eyes and turn them from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18); in a word, to do the works He did, and to manifest Him, as He has manifested God. And as in nature the sun and air, the one with its heat and light, the other with its breath of life, which is drunk in by all creatures, whether high or low, and also giving to all something of their universal bounty, so do believers, with their love and light and spirit, which are not their own, but Christ's both rule and serve all, after His pattern. Gentle but mighty as the light and air,

which rest upon the fields and make them bud, is the work of God's elect, though men esteem it not.

But is it not the grossest presumption to think that men can do Christ's works? Does not at least the thought that we can be priests, and offer sacrifices for others, as Christ did, interfere directly with His priesthood? Some think so. Since the Church's fall and division for her sins, --not least for the dreadful abuse of the precious gifts committed to her, by which here bread became as poison to so many of her children,-- there have been two schools of doctrine among professing Christians, as to the offices and relations of the Lord. The first speaks thus: Any work or office, held by Christ, cannot be held by us. It usurps His rights if we pretend to share them. The other, which is the old doctrine, answers thus: If the Incarnation means anything, if Christ and His Church are really one body, all Christ's offices, first held and exercised by Him, on behalf of men, must likewise be held and shared by His members, because He lives in them, just as they apprehend that for which they are apprehended. The former view, which I feel assured is a mistake, arises from a misconception of the first great truth of "Christ for us," to the denial of the still greater truth of "Christ in us," and "We His members." The latter opens the "riches of the glory of the mystery, which is now revealed, which is Christ in us, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:26, 27). The latter is the Church's faith, which, however abused or caricatured, cannot be denied without sore loss to the deniers. For this faith confesses the Incarnation, that the Lord still dwells in flesh and blood, and that because He dwells in us, though in ourselves we can do nothing, we can yet do all things through Christ, who is the power in us (I Cor. 1:24 and Phil. 4:13); for it is not we who live, but Christ in us (Gal. 2:20); and because He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8), if He live in us, He will yet do His proper works, in and through those who grow up out of self to live in Him. Is it presumption to believe this? Is not this faith rather the cure for all presumption? Is not this faith too the defence from all Antichrists? If Christ fills us, we want no more. If Christ does not dwell in and support us, we must have some thing else instead of Him, that is some Antichrist (Footnote: Elliot, in His Hora Apocalypa, p. 839, has sufficiently shown that Antichrist means primarily "in the place of Christ," rather than "against Christ"; c.g. [Greek word] (Acts 13:7), the deputy or pro-consul; [*anthupatos*] (Dionys. Halicarn.) a viceroy; [Greek word] (Strabo,) one in the place of a slave; [Greek word] (Sirabo,) one in the place of a servant; [Greek word], (Gregor. Nax.) a vice-bishop, or one acting for him.) Therefore we believe in Him and His indwelling, that by Him we may yield our selves to God, so that, as He said, "the works which He did, we may do also."

What were His works? First, He was prophet. All felt, as they heard His words, that "a great prophet was risen up among them" (Luke 7:16; Matt. 21:46; John 4:19; and 9:17). The Gospels witness how He fulfilled this office. "He opened His mouth and taught them" (Matt. 5:2). "He spake the words as they were able to bear it" (Mark 4:33). He witnessed for the truth; but, as with the prophets who had gone before, Him whom God sent Israel believed not. For to be a prophet is to see and know the mind of God; to speak the truth, which the Church is trampling under foot; to witness for God against those who in His name are corrupting the treasure committed to them; to tell the elect that for their sins they shall be judged even as the world; that privileges give no immunity from

judgment, but rather add to the condemnation of those who abuse God's house and name to work evil; yet to comfort the mourners, and preach glad tidings to the meek, and heal the sick and brokenhearted. Is such work easy? A martyr answers, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers slain?" (Acts 7:52) A prophet is, and always will be, a victim. Yet to this are believers called, just as they grow up into Christ; indeed this is one of the first works of those, who having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore have I spoken (II Cor. 4:13; Acts 4:20), cannot but speak what they hear of God, and who therefore are always rejected by the blind guides, who cry, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace (Jer. 6: 14). Christ witnessed for the truth, as a prophet sent from God. He that believeth on Him must do the like, according to his measure.

Are all then called to speak? Is not prophecy a gift? Does not an apostle ask, "Are all prophets?" (I Cor. 12:29) the Lord's words here answer the question. He says, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." It is according to a man's faith that he can do Christ's works. He is our life; and all His members by grace are called to live His life. But the measure in which we are dead to self, and live in Him, is the measure in which He works in each. Thus to one is given more, to another less, though all may say, "All things are ours, for we are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (I Cor. 3:23). For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge through the same Spirit; to another, prophecy; to another divers kinds of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every one severally as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ (I Cor. 12:8-12). To every one is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ (Eph. 4:7). While therefore some have special gifts, all are called to fulfill the will and work of Him who is their life. All have not tongues. But by that which every joint supplieth, the body maketh increase (Eph. iv. 16); and those who may not speak in the Church (I Cor. 14:34, 35; I Tim. 2:11, 12), may, and must, if they believe, each in their own sphere, by deed and word, speak to teach and comfort those around; and thus, though not prophets to the Church, be prophets in their own house; for he or she prophesieth who speaketh to edification, and comfort, and consolation (I Cor. 14:3).

But Christ is also priest; and as such His work is to intercede, and ever to keep alive that fire, by which alone men's sacrifices can lose their first and carnal form, and so ascend to God from his altar (Lev. 6:12, 13, and Luke 12:49). And though, strictly speaking, this office commenced in resurrection, --"for if He were on earth, He should not be a priest" (Heb. 8:4),-- yet inasmuch as by His coming through baptism to opened heavens, which was a mystic death and resurrection, and even more by His raising up the eternal life in man, through His emptying of Himself and being made in the likeness of men, He manifested the eternal life, and proved by conquests over death that He was indeed the Son of God, in this relation He was ever priest, for "He testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek" (Heb. 7:17); and again, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee" (Acts. 13:33). For He is made priest, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (Heb. 7:16). Thus in this eternal life, even whilst in the flesh, we see His priestly acts; kindling in men's hearts the fire of God's

spirit (Matt. iii. 11); forgiving sins; discerning between the clean and unclean; having compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way (Heb. 9:25; 5:1, 2); and at last offering Himself as a sacrifice for all. Thus He touched the leper; thus He cleansed the temple; thus He spoke for man to God; making intercession for transgressors; first for His elect, that they might be with Him and see His glory (John 17:24); and then for all, saying, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). And to this work also He calls believers, that having been consecrated with Him, they may by Him also become priests to serve and help others. Every fresh grace received is but an added lamp in the tabernacle of God, to burn and shine around us, even when we sleep.

Oh, blessed and holy service to which we are all called. But who fulfills it? Who now by the same ministry of the Holy Ghost and fire is standing beside the altar of the Lord? Who cleanses the temple? Who sacrifices for others? Who offers and eats the offerings made by fire unto the Lord? (Lev. 21:21, 22). Who touches lepers? Who carries others' sins, and bears their sorrows? Who makes intercession for the transgressors? As to our calling we are priests; for all in Christ are priests. In Him, whether babes, young men, or fathers, we are blessed with all spiritual blessings, dead and risen, and sitting in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:4, 6). And yet all the while in our experience we may be carnal (I Cor. 3:1, 3), and know little or nothing of the heavenly fire, which makes us partakers of the sufferings of the Lord. For Christ may be and is in us, when we yet know nothing of a daily death, and heaven is not opened, and the priestly life, though it is ours by right, is not yet apprehended; just as, if we are Christ's, the prophetic life also is in us from the first, though it may be unperceived and unexercised. Still in their measure all believers must be priests in Christ; all must offer praise to God, that is the calves of their lips, giving thanks to His name; to do good also, and to communicate, they cannot forget (Heb. 13:15; Hosea 14:2), even though "the daily sacrifice be taken away" (Daniel 8:11); for the Truth Himself has said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also."

There is yet more glory. Christ is also king, to show God's power, until He hath put all enemies under His feet; and here too, as He is, so are we in this world. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign (II Tim. 2: 12); and even now we are, not only priests, but rulers with Him. The elect must be both light and love, but no less power also; ruling themselves, ruling their lusts, thus overcoming the world, and prepared in due time with Christ to rule all things; one over five cities, another over ten (Luke 19:17, 19); not by violence and wrath, but in the might of that love which beareth all things, and so conquers all. For strength is proved in what a man can bear without complaining. And love has royal wisdom too, like Solomon of old, to discern at once between the true mother and her who falsely claims to be so; to know that she who consents to division, though she call herself true mother, is but a liar; that she is true month who will give up all rather than divide her son (I Kings. 3:16-28). And the New Man receives this power to judge even in his humiliation, loosing and binding like a king (Matt. 16:19), though his kingdom is not of this world, and speaking words to govern hearts, which cannot be disobeyed without peril. The world, the flesh and the devil may fight against him; but he must conquer all; for his work is to "subdue and have dominion," as God's vice-regent in the world, and the promise is, that "all things shall be put in subjection under him" (Heb. 2:7, 8). Like the

Master, he may be mocked and slain on the earth; his royalty will be seen when the saints shall judge the world.

Now in all these ways, as prophet, priest, and king, as truth, and love, and power, he that believeth must do Christ's works, and show Him as He has shown the Father; nay, He even says, "Greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father" (Verse 12); for the spiritual works since Christ's resurrection are greater, as the heaven is higher than the earth, than the works wrought upon the flesh by prophets of old, and even by the Lord in the days of His flesh among His fleshly people. For which is greater, to give cleanness to leprous flesh, or to a sin-stained soul, --to heal palsy of the outward man, or to cure that inward helplessness which makes man cry, "The good I would, that do I not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:19), -- to restore the life of this world to a dead body, or undying life to a ruined soul? So long as we are in the flesh, the fleshly work may seem the greater. The spirit-world will teach us better to measure what is small and great with God.

(ii) It remains to notice the secret of this power. Three points are dwelt on by the Lord, -- first the spring, then the means, then the reason of it. The spring is Christ Himself: He does the works in us. Twice does He repeat here, "That will I do," and again immediately, "I will do it" (Verses 13, 14). For He is our life. It is He who works. Without Him we can do nothing. If we are prophets, priests, or kings, it is only because the one great Prophet, Priest, and King, is working in us by His might to do His will. We are simply vessels. But faith and prayer draw all from Him. "He that believeth on Him shall do His works" (Verse 12); "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do" (Verse 13). Faith gives spiritual title-deeds, which make us sharers in all the possessions of our Father, and which pour into our lap a wealth of things, which it is our joy again to give to all. All therefore that Christ did and reached, we may do and reach, if only, and just in proportion as, we can believe in Him. He is the pattern of the capacities, and capabilities of man as God would have him. And God would have man one with Him; and faith is the link and means of this union. To believe is to live by (Footnote: This is the chronology of the word "believe," as given by Richardson in his Dictionary.) Then all things may be done by man; for "all things are possible with God" (Mark 10:27), and therefore "all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). Therefore the Lord bids us, "Have God's faith" (See margin; Mark 11:22: [*ekho pistis theos*]); for faith, like love, must be of God, an element of His very nature, which comes with the seed which quickens His life and nature in us, which therefore enables us, after the pattern of Abraham, to be "like unto Him whom we believe, even God, who calleth the things which are not as though they were" (See margin, Rom. 4:17: [*kale-ho*]). For "we understand that by faith the worlds were formed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3. Footnote: I believe that the translation given above is the correct one. I find that Dr. Upham, in his Treatise on Divine Union, (Part II, chap. I § G,) adopts it as the true sense of this passage.) God spake, and doubted not, but believed that those things which He had said should come to pass; therefore He had whatsoever He said (Mark 11:23). And we are called to the same faith, by it to do like works, because it is God which worketh in us to will and to do, of His good pleasure.

Therefore our Lord says here, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do"-- "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name," that is in my nature; for things with God are called according to their nature. We ask in Christ's name, not when at the end of some carnal and selfish request we say, "This I ask in the name of Jesus Christ"; but when we pray according to His nature, which is love, which seeketh not its own, but only the will of God and the good of all creatures. Such asking is the cry of His own spirit in our hearts, hungering for God and for the things of God, that we may be transformed into His likeness. Christ's own prayers reveal it all. His cry was "glorify thy name: Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 12:28 and 17:5). In a word his askings are for God. Thus asking in His name or nature, we must receive, and so receiving we must bless all; for nothing comes upon a man from God, without opening the way for the like blessing sooner or later to descend on all. Such prayer is almighty, because it is according to God's will. It is Christ's own prayer in us; and Him the Father heareth always (John 11:42).

Our Lord yet adds the reason for the "greater works," which should be done by those who believe. The reason is, "Because I go unto the Father" (Verse 12). It is this going to the Father which gives all power in heaven and earth, over spirits as well as over flesh and blood. For by going to the Father man returns to his true source. There had already been preliminary steps leading to this blessed end. The opening of heaven at baptism had witnessed that man in Christ was acceptable to God. But His going to the Father did far more. It was man's perfect return to God, by which he came back to reunion with Him from whom He came forth. Even while in the womb of fallen nature man is quickened with his Father's life; but, to see his Father and to do His works, he must go forth from the dark and narrow bounds of the "lowest parts of the earth" (Psa. 139:15), in which he has been quickened and begotten. And Christ's so going to the Father is man's return to his long-lost glory; for humanity is one; and His going to the Father is our return to the source and spring of all. Man in Him now has all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). We are sharers with Him in all that He receives as victor over death. From this point therefore our Lord goes on to speak of the Spirit, which He would send as the witness of His glory, enabling us in deed and word to testify of Him (See John 14, 15, 16). Well might He say then, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto the Father."

Such is the glory of believers. They reveal the Lord, as He revealed the Father. They reveal Him, because He lives in them, and their works are His, who is in us, and who is greater than he that is in the world (I John 4:4). Therefore they do His works. But where now is He thus revealed? Priests without fire, prophets without a vision, kings without power, are on every hand. The Church and world are full of them. But where is a living Christ revealed? Is that a revelation of Him, which is ceaselessly saying, "Here is Christ,"--"We are the body of Christ,"--while yet it shows none of His works, but only imitations, all in the flesh, of that which is not of the flesh, but of the spirit; which quenches any light beyond its own, and calls the darkness light; which stifles love, and casts out brethren, and still says, "The Lord be glorified" (Isa. 66:5); and which by earthly might would do the works of God's spirit, and judge all who still sigh and cry for better things? These are not His works. They are not even such a broken reflection of Him, as

some unquiet river gives of the sun, when it bears his confused and distorted image upon its moving bosom. Alas! Too much that is in the Church is not even a reflection of the things of Christ, but rather the direct working of that evil spirit, which would turn God's house into a den of thieves, and make the very city of God the stronghold of his adversary. What are all the strifes, and falsehoods, and uncleannesses, which are rife among the bearers of Christ's name, but witnesses that Satan has entered into and defiled the Lord's inheritance. But if he, in his usurped dominion, can do such works, and set his mark on those led captive by him (Rev. 13:16), what may not be accomplished in us by our rightful Lord, who has all power in heaven and earth, if only we yield in all things to Him. When we think what He has wrought in some, who once were like us, --how He has made His light to shine out of their broken earthly vessels, even in days of gross darkness, when "all the world wondered after the beast,"-- when we remember He is ever the same, and that His joy is to save and bless, and that He is faithful who promised "Verily, Verily, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also,"--what may we not expect, if only we so abide in Him, that it is no more we that live but Christ who liveth in us. Surely He still lives in His elect, though He is ever the stone which the builders disallow. He cannot fail. He yet has living members, proved and tried even as silver is tried. In them even to the end He can and will be glorified. And the trial of their faith, much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though carnal men esteem it not, shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

ELEVENTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Sorrow and Joy of the New Man

(John 16:16-24)

We come now to the Sorrow, which all the elect must know, as they pass from the first and carnal, to the higher and more spiritual, knowledge of their Lord.

In the preceding "Verily, Verily," our Lord had referred to His departure from His disciples, and to one result of this, namely, that it would add to their power, --that "greater works should they now do, because He went unto the Father" (John 14:12). Now He goes on to tell them how this going to the Father would affect their intercourse with Him. Hitherto this intercourse had been in the flesh; but henceforward, after and through a brief interval of deep sorrow and desolation, they should know Him in a new way, even in spiritual communion, which should fill them with greater light and gladness. This is the burden of this eleventh reiterated Amen. A little while, and they should not see Him; and again a little while, and they should see Him; because He now was going to the Father. And the result would be, first sorrow, because for a little while they should lose Him in the flesh; and then fullness of joy, --the joy actually resulting from the sorrow, --because through the sorrow they should reach that which He too reached through sorrow, even perfected communion, not in the flesh, but in the spirit with the Father.

The subject then before us is the experience of disciples, in passing on to a higher knowledge of Christ, and through Him to a fuller knowledge of the Father. Hitherto they had only known Him after the flesh. Even so knowing Him, everything was theirs; a heavenly home, heavenly sonship, and heavenly bread; liberty, service, sacrifice, glory, and humiliation with the Lord; all these were theirs, as the preceding reiterated Amines have shown us, just as everything was His also, even while He was yet here in the flesh. But by going to His Father through death, He who had been the Son of David, according to the flesh, was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:3, 4); and so entered, beyond all sin and straitness, for He was straitened here (Luke 12:50), upon His true inheritance as Lord of all (Acts 2:36, and 10:36; Heb. 1:4). And so His disciples, through the same cross, by which He was severed from them in the flesh, and which cost them, as it cost Him also, sorrow and anguish for awhile, came to know Him in a far more glorious manner, when He could be in and with them always, as their very life, --where their sorrow should be turned into joy. The various stages of this experience are here all opened to us, that we may know, not our calling only, but the way to enter into all its fullness.

For this experience of the disciples of old was for all time a pattern of that which those must know who pass from knowing Christ after the flesh to knowing Him in spirit. There is only one path for the elect, the same now as of old, for God and man are yet the same; and this path the Gospels open to us in the particulars which they record of our Lord's intercourse and varied relationships with His disciples. He yet deals with us exactly as He did with them. We, like them, all first know Him after the flesh (2 Cor. v. 16), that is, in

some aspect or form exterior to us, which while it brings Him near us, so that we may receive and trust and love Him, yet veils His glory, and presents Him, for us indeed, but not as yet in us. Even this is an immense step beyond our natural state, even if, like the Jews of old, whose place Gentile Christendom has taken, we, as grafted into that same olive-tree (Rom. 11:24), have from childhood received the oracles of God, and the covenants, and the service of God, and the promises (Rom.3:2;9:4) for all these things may be and have been ours, while yet, like those to whom Christ came, we may know nothing of a present Lord, and walking with Him. Then either through the ministry of some bright and shining light, who, like John the Baptist, points us to the Lamb of God (John 1:29), or by some providence which gives us a glimpse of Him and of our need (Luke 5:8-10), or by some special call from him (Matt. 9:9), we become, not only what we have been, parts of His outward Church, but henceforward His disciples. So we try to walk with Him. But though we may have given up much for Him, and have become fools for His sake, and like Peter have confessed Him to be Son of God, --though by Him we may have been called to preach; and to cast out devils in His name,--yea, though we may have seen Him transfigured in the Mount,--all this may be, with us, as with the disciples, while we only know Him in the flesh, for us surely, yet not abiding in us.

But the day comes when He who has thus come to us in the flesh, in sacraments, or doctrines, or the letter of His word, seems to fail us in this form. We are left awhile alone, without the comfort which we had in earlier days. Then comes the trial here described, which still perplexes those who in following Christ have reached this stage; for many who are true disciples have not yet reached it. And then comes the answer to the puzzle; "Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Verily, Verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (Verses 19-22).

Here we have, first the sorrow, and then the joy, of true disciples, which are indeed the sorrow and joy of Christ; and always come in this order; first, the darkness, then the light, like the "evening and morning" of the six days (Gen. 1:3, 5, 13, etc.); first the "weeping for a night," and the "joy coming in the morning" (Psalm 30:5); first the "chastening for the present," and then the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby (Heb. 12:11). It is so here: --"Verily, Verily, ye shall be sorrowful but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

1. As to the sorrow, its cause is "not seeing Christ" after the flesh; the period of it is "a little while."

(i) The cause is this. "A little while, and ye shall not see me," that is, not see me as you now do, by observing step by step my outward manifestation; for the word (*[theo reo]*) here is not the same as that which is used where He says, "A little while and ye shall see

me," (*optanomai*)), when their present seeing should be changed into a new kind of sight, by which they should see more fully what He really is. For a little while the disciples were to lose sight of their guide. He is now no longer to be known by them as they had known Him hitherto. It seemed as if He failed them. It was indeed a sorrow. But it was in substance the very sorrow of their Lord. God was to Christ here in the flesh what Christ is to his disciples. "The head of every man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God" (I Cor. 11:3). Christ's joy in our nature was to walk with God. He says, "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8 and Acts 2:25). We little see how unbroken the communion was, or how, when rejected by men, He could rejoice in spirit, and say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight" (Matt. 11:26; Luke 10:21). Yet He was in the flesh, in which for our sakes He was straitened; and "to go to the Father" He Himself had to pass through the "little while," in which He should be "sorrowful even unto death" (Matt. 26:37, 38). If we see how He came to us, we may see also how He goes to the Father. By coming in the flesh, He came from God; and, as in the flesh, His thoughts of God were as of One above and separate from Him; though all the while He was the "brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person" (Heb. 1:3), and could say, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30), and "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (John 14:11). By dying in the flesh, yet in our nature, He went to God, thus through death destroying him who had the power of death, that is the devil (Heb. 2:14). As Augustine says: "By taking flesh He came within the reach of eyes of flesh and hands of men, still remaining where He was in heaven: by it He went, not leaving that whereto He had come, His flesh being the way, not only for us to come to Him, but for Him, who did never let go Himself, to come and to go back unto Himself" (Augustine, Tract. In Johan, lxxix § 3). Therefore He too was troubled, and cried out in anguish, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me" (Matt. 27:46). For a "little while" he saw not the Father's face (Psa. 88:6, 7, 14). But through this sorrow in our nature He returned to God, and to all power in heaven and earth. Thus was His sorrow turned to joy.

There is no other way for His disciples. Their sorrow is the same, and this even while they know that they are His. For a little while they lose sight of Him who is their head. We know this was experienced by the first disciples. The Old Testament is full of illustrations of it (Job 23:8-10; Psa. 69:1-3 and Lam. 3:1-19). It is the truth here taught us by the Lord Himself: "A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go unto the Father." And yet some think that they can come into the promised joy without personal experience of the intervening sorrow, supposing that, because the first disciples came to their Pentecost eighteen hundred years ago, therefore every believer now has reached the same. As yet knowing Christ only after the flesh, feeling His presence with them, and seeing Him as He reveals Himself in words and works of truth and love, they are, not perplexed only, but offended, when told that He will go away, that they may know Him in a higher way, no longer without or separate from, but thenceforward ever in and with, them. Like the disciples of old they say, "What is this that He saith, A little while? We cannot tell what He saith" (Footnote: The words, "A little while," are seven times repeated here, either by our Lord or the disciples, showing what a riddle they were to those who first heard them.)

It is hard to speak of this so as to make it intelligible to those who have not passed through this experience. The difficulty of the disciples shows how little even words from the Lord's own lips can teach us, so long as we are carnal (I Cor. 3:1). Our Lord Himself here must say, "Verily, Verily." For words hardly convey ideas which transcend our present knowledge; and the great majority of believers are still at the stage figured by the walk of the disciples in the Gospels, espoused to Christ, but not yet married to Him (Compare II Cor. 11:2, and Rev. 19:7), or come, as we see them in the Acts, to know Christ in and with them by His Spirit, so that in the power of that presence they can do His very works. They may be walking with the Lord, and sent forth like those of old with power to preach and cast out devils (Mark 3:14, 15); they may have been taught by Him in word the doctrine of His cross (Matt. 16:21; Luke 18:31-34); they may have believed His promise that He will send the Spirit to them (John 14:16, 17, 26) and yet all the while they may be unprepared for and stumble at the cross, when it really comes (Matt. 26:31), and have no personal experience of the Spirit's power, or of a Pentecost with tongues of fire and a mighty rushing wind. Nevertheless these days of first enlightening are delightful days; sweet as the days of our first love, when the Bridegroom is with us, and we fast not (Matt. 9:15). They are indeed the days of conception, when we receive the seed of God. We may expect them always to continue; but they bring pain to flesh and blood. The word is sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly (Eze. 52:3, 14; Rev. 10:9, 10). For the soul, after it has received the seed of God, requires the separation of the new life from the old; and by this we are brought, as through travail pains, often we know not how, through that, and to that, of which our Lord speaks here, when He says, "A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me." We may have known seasons of communion with Him, when we have asked Him questions, and heard Him speak, and felt that He was with us; all which may be in the flesh, a thing of the senses, more than of the spirit, though at first we do not know this, because as yet we know not the "dividing asunder of soul and spirit," which is wrought in us by the same Eternal Word (Heb. 4:12). We shall some day come to another stage; when we do not see the Lord; when we speak but seem to get no answer from Him; when He appears to fail and even forsake us; while we are the reproach of men, and are mocked by evil spirits as deluded creatures, who have followed and trusted One who could not save. And through this "little while" of sorrow we shall be led to the joy here promised, of knowing the Lord in and with us for evermore. All this was the experience of the first disciples. All this, when they can hear it, is the experience of disciples now. Nothing good is here brought forth, either for time or eternity, without pain. The *Benjamins* must all be first *Benonis* (Gen. 35:18. See margin. [Son of my Sorrow]).

(ii) But this sorrow is only "for a season" (I Pet. 1:6); "a little while," like a woman's pangs, which "she no more remembereth, for joy that a man is born into the world" (Verse 22). For a new life comes out of the sorrow. The pains are travail pains, which bring forth the man from the womb of nature into the light of God. Now "a man is born into the world"; a man and not a beast: something better than the imperfect beastlike life, which ever precedes the man in God's image (See Gen. 1:25, 26). And the result is a new life, with greater power, and with fresh blessings for the world, when the "sorrow is turned into joy."

2. This brings us to the joy, which is beyond all words, for as St. Peter says, it is a "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Pet. 1:8). The joy is that Christ appears again (Verse 22). The disciples' sorrow had been not seeing Him. Their joy is in His return and presence with them. Unlike the world, which rejoices to be quit of Christ (Verse 20), because the truth ever appears at first only as a check upon its ways, --which therefore seeks by outward things to satisfy the heart, which, as it was made for God, is never really satisfied until He Himself fills it, --those who have known Christ, even after the flesh, must wait for Him, mourners it may be, yet seeking no joy or rest apart from Him. So they wait, and not in vain, for He has said, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." Those who have known what it is to love, and to have one with them, whose presence halves every sorrow and doubles every joy, may understand something of the gladness of disciples, when He appears who is their Lord, their life, their salvation, their righteousness, their all. Words cannot tell it. For as the heart knoweth its own bitterness, so can no stranger intermeddle with its joy (Pro. 14:10). It is the joy of regaining Him, who, in giving us Himself, completes our nature with that which we lost in the fall by separation from Him. Without Him we are imperfect--only half our proper selves. With Him we are complete, even if in the world, like Him, we are poor, and mourners, and acquainted with grief. With Him we can be sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; having nothing, yet possessing all (II Cor. 6:10). He, when all things seemed against Him, "rejoiced in spirit" (Luke 10:21). So the disciples, even in the midst of persecution, were "filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 13:52). So Paul and Silas, in the inner prison, and with many stripes laid on them, could "sing praises to God" (Acts 16:22-25). So the Hebrews "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and more enduring substance" (Heb. 10:34). And we are called to the same joy, to find in a risen Christ all and more than all that heart can wish, or tongue can tell.

Some glimpses of the fullness of this joy come out in our Lord's words here, confirmed again with His reiterated Amen: "And in that day ye shall ask me no questions (Footnote: Gr. [Greek words]. Compare verse 5: [Greek words].) "Verily, Verily, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, He will give it to you in my name" (Footnote: Gr. [Greek words]. Osterwald's French translation preserves the distinction between the two words here used in the original: "En ce jour-la vous ne m'interrogerex plus de rien. En verite, en verite, je vous dix que tout ce que vous demanderex au Pere en mon nom, il vous le donnera.").

Three distinct blessings are here, each of which adds to the joy; first, perfected knowledge: "Ye shall ask me no questions"; then, perfect fulfilment of their desires: -- "Verily, Verily, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, He will give it you in my name" (Verses 23, 24); and lastly, perfected joy: "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name. Ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be continually full" (Footnote: So the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS). (Footnote: Gr. [Greek words]. This, I think, is something more than the [Greek words] of chap. xv. 11.)

(i) Perfected knowledge comes first: "In that day ye shall ask me no questions"; that is, all that now perplexes you will then be clear. Hitherto, though walking with Him, they had little understood Him. Again and again had their questions proved how much of

darkness still remained with them. Such words as "Wilt thou that we call down fire from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" (Luke 9:54). "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" (Matt. 18:21). "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matt. 18:1). "Lord, whither goest thou?" and "Why cannot I follow thee now?" (John 13:36, 37). "Why could not we cast him out?" (Matt. 17:19). "Lord, and what shall this man do?" (John 21:21). "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matt. 24:3). These and countless other like questions, though quite proper in their place, are evidence sufficient of the disciples' partial light, and of their very imperfect communion with their Lord. All this is to be changed. Even such a question as that which the disciples asked after they knew the resurrection of the Lord, but before the Spirit came, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts. 1:6) is as day to night when compared to the light which Paul pours forth, when he opens to the Romans the mystery of Israel's fall, and the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things (Rom. 11:25-36). How different too is Paul himself, when, though Pentecost had come to others, he as yet only knew Christ after the flesh, and asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6) compared with the same Paul when he knew no man, not even Christ, after the flesh (II Cor. 5:16), and therefore could say, "I have judged already to deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh" (I Cor. 5:4, 5), and again, "If I forgave, for your sakes I forgave it in the person of Christ" (II Cor. 2:10). What a contrast between early questions and the later knowledge of the Lord. At the one stage perhaps we say, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" and then, like Peter (Luke 22:49), without waiting for the Lord's answer, we act according to our own impulse. At the other, we come, like the Lord Himself, to know the Father's will, and by His Spirit to find our heart's desire fulfilled in asking according to that will.

(ii) For this is the second blessing which gives addition to the promised joy. Disciples are to have perfect fulfilment of their desires in asking of the Father: "Verily, Verily, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, He will give it you in my name" (Verse 23); that is, He will give it me in you, and give it you in me. For "in that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). Instead therefore of asking Christ questions, which discover how full of self they are, they shall henceforth offer petitions to the Father, and whatsoever they shall ask, as children yielding up their will to His, He will give it them in the name or nature of His own Son. For through sorrow they will be brought out of the self-willed life, to live in Christ, and Christ in them. And then their asking will be His asking, not the will of the flesh, but the will of God, and so "whatsoever they ask they shall receive." Living as we so much do in the fallen life, which is ever wanting this or that, and which, whatever it may receive, is never satisfied, because self-will can never rest, and which, even when we begin to desire good things, needs often to be crossed, that from the independent and divided will we may be brought to the one will wherein is perfect rest, we can hardly imagine what it is to reach the joy here promised, when "whatsoever we shall ask" we shall receive, and every desire be perfectly satisfied in the name or nature of the Son of God.

And what a lesson it is for disciples, that even here our Lord can say, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name." Asking in His name is asking in His nature (See above page

231); and of those who had followed Him thus far our Lord declares, that, whatever their petitions had been, --and some of them had asked much of Him, even that He would "show them the Father" (John 14:8), and "grant them to be near Him in His coming kingdom" (Mark 10:35),--hitherto their asking, even for good things, had been in their own nature, not in His; for self ends rather than in the unselfish love, which is the very life and nature of the Lord.

I suppose it must be so, for we are by nature fallen out from God, and our first prayers, if they are true, will be a cry to be delivered from the present evil in us, rather than for the better things which are our true portion. It seems to me that the words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost" (II Cor. 13:14), shadow forth this growing experience of a converted soul. For first we felt that we need grace, and that without it we are lost. Till we come to Christ, God is practically a stranger to us. As poor lost creatures we come to Christ, that is to God in human form, as He is revealed in His Scriptures, in His Church, and in His Sacraments, which are extensions of His incarnation. We do what the poor creature in the Gospel did--the lepers, the palsied, and the blind. We seek or are brought to Him; and the "grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" meets all our present need. But how much there is beyond this first reception of His grace. Jesus is the way to God. He makes known to us the Father, and His love; that if He smites, it is to bless; that our very sorrows are to bring us nearer to Him. So we learn the "love of God." And then comes the "fellowship of the Holy Ghost," when we are made partakers of His fulness, and channels by which His gifts and virtues may flow forth to all the world. Thenceforth we ask the Father in the name and nature of the Son. We are one with Him, and He with us. Words fail to utter this joy, in receiving from the Father, in one will and heart with Christ, all that He gives to His beloved Son.

(iii) For, lastly, the joy is "fulness of joy": "joy completed and continually full." "Ask and receive that your joy may be made full" (Chap. 16:24. We have the same words in chap. 17:13, and I John 1:4). It was joy indeed to see Him again. But the "fulness of joy" is more. It is the joy of ever knowing His abiding union with us, closer than the bond which links the husband to the wife, even to have Him in us, filling us with His fulness, as He is filled with God. For joy is an import and exchange. It calls for two to make it full, when the two indeed are made one. So our joy is in continually receiving Him. He says, "Ask and receive." Receive, and receive again, and receive yet more and more. It is the old truth, "Take, eat; this is my body" (I Cor. 11:24); receive of my fulness; yea, receive me; for "if any man open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20). Some of us have learnt that to receive all is harder than to give all; though we must also give all to receive all; for we must be emptied to receive His fulness. When we are so emptied, we can receive Him through whom our joy is full. He Himself is the joy. He gives Himself to us, "Henceforth we are no more twain, but one."

This then is the crowning joy of the elect, which swallows up all sorrow, and dwarfs all other joys. Surely the elect have other joys. There are joys which spring from the many gifts which the Lord puts into our hands, to use as talents for Him. There are joys too which flow, not only from our service, but even from the sacrifices which we willingly make, whether for God or man, for ends within our view. But the deepest joy is in that

union which comes through yielding ourselves wholly to Him, when, after we have been stripped and humbled, without any apparent profit either to ourselves or others, through our self-despair and humiliation we are brought to know the Lord, and to be one with Him, as we never were before. This is the foretaste of the marriage-supper of the Lamb, where He and His shall be no more twain, but one for ever. Therefore let us trust Him through the darkness. It is but "a little while," and then "in His presence is fulness of joy; at His right hand are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. 16:11).

Few, however, reach the fulness of joy on earth, for few will accept the sorrow which is the appointed passage to it. We rather strive to free ourselves from the appointed grief, seeking to dispel it by a carnal application to ourselves of that which only belongs to those who through faith and patience have gone through the needed trial. But sorrow must be known, if we are to know the joy. Only "if we suffer with Christ shall we reign with Him" (II Tim. 2:12). The elect are those who mourn and suffer with Him. Blessed are such mourners, for they shall indeed be comforted. And the joy of the elect, and their trumpets of praise, which they shall blow in the day of their gladness, over their burnt-offerings and the sacrifice of their peace-offerings (Num. 10:10), will be but preludes of the heavenly music of the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, calling upon all creatures to rejoice, because the darkness is past, and the kingdom of God is come.

For the joy of the elect is for others, as well as for themselves. They are but "a kind of first-fruits of God's creatures" (James 1:18). And "if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy" (Rom. 11:16). In "Christ, the first-fruits" (I Cor. 15:23), man has already come out of the sorrow into the joy. By Christ all men shall come in due season; first the "sealed" elect, the firstborn, who are "first-fruits to God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 7:4, and 14:1-4); then the "great multitudes of all nations, which no man can number, with palms in their hands" (Rev. 7:9), witnessing that the last great "feast of the Lord," the feast of Tabernacles, is come, (for every stage of man's salvation is indeed a feast to Him (Footnote: The seven great feasts or holy seasons of the Jewish dispensation are all called "feasts of the Lord": "These are the feasts of the Lord" (Lev. 23:2, 4). On this a saint has said, "*Habet ergo Deus dies festos Habet. Est enim ei magna festivitas humana salus.*" Origen, in loco)), when not only the Paschal and Pentecostal first-fruits, but all the harvest, shall be gathered in, and the "branches of palm and of goodly trees," and the "booths" or "bowers," shall show that paradise lost is now regained (Footnote: The first fruits were gathered at Passover and Pentecost (Lev. 23:10, 17). (May I refer those who have not studied this subject to my little volume on The Restitution of All Things, pp. 34-50?); and regained, by the last as by the first, by grace alone; through the same one narrow gate of death, either with Christ, or as inflicted through His judgment. For this "great multitude" also, who are not the "sealed," "came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." They too out of, and through, the sorrow have reached the joy. For there is no other way. "Therefore they also are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more; neither shall they thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. 7: 15-17).

TWELFTH "VERILY, VERILY"

The Perfecting of the New Man

(John 21:18-23)

The last reiterated Amen comes from the lips of the risen Christ, and belongs to the Forty Days, during which our Lord was with His disciples after His resurrection, while as yet His Spirit had not come upon them, to fill them with power according to His promise. These Forty Days are the appointed figure of that stage or period of our Christian life, when, having followed Christ to His cross, we have, not faith only, but personal experience, of His resurrection, --when the Lord appears and breathes upon us, as He never did before, still commanding us to "wait for the promise of the Father," which now ere long shall come upon us (Acts 1:4). At this stage we hear our Lord's last reiterated Amen, testifying, that while we are in the flesh we must still be crossed, and, like Himself, can be made perfect only through sufferings. It is a blessed stage, though it yet falls short of that coming of the Holy Ghost, which thenceforth conforms carnal disciples to the image of their Lord.

This is not understood by all. On the contrary, it is assumed by some, that, because those who walked with Christ of old received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire at Pentecost more than eighteen hundred years ago, therefore all believers now have reached the same. As well might the Apostles, when first called, have concluded that, because at His baptism the Spirit like a dove rested upon Christ, therefore they all had equally received the same blessing. It is this assumption of being spiritual, while they are yet carnal, --that they are rich and increased with goods, while they are miserable and poor, --which keeps so many believers blind and wretched as they are (Rev. 3:17); just as the same assumption in the world keeps the unrenewed from seeking for the grace, which the Lord so freely gives to all who ask Him. Surely the Spirit has been given, and the work been wrought in Christ for all; but to enter into possession of the blessing, whether as disciples walking with Christ, or as further "enlightened and made partakers of the Holy Ghost" (Heb. 6:4), there must be a personal application to the Lord for the grace He has to give, which He still gives as of old, "here a little, and there a little," as we can bear it (Isa. 27: 10; John 16:12). At first we can only receive the Word made flesh. Therefore He gives us the Word made flesh. Then by that Word we are led to wait for and receive the Spirit. True souls are conscious that the descent of the Holy Ghost on others is a very different thing from the coming of the same Spirit on themselves,--that others may be spiritual while we are yet carnal,--that the promised rivers of living water do not yet flow forth from us (John 7:38), though our calling is to expect and wait for them. Let such yet wait on God. If they wait for the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire will come in due season. But of how many is it yet true, that "the Holy Ghost is not yet come, because that Jesus is not yet glorified" (John 7:39) in them.

It was to souls at such a stage that the last "Verily, Verily," was first spoken. To souls at a like stage it still comes as the needed word in due season. In it the risen Lord opens the process of the perfecting of His elect, that only through the crossing of their own will,

though this may come in different ways, can even His dearest disciples attain that perfect union with His will, which is their true calling. Blessed are they to whom the Lord thus speaks. When this truth is learnt in deed, the glorious end is not far off.

This then is the subject of this last reiterated Amen. It sets before us the way of our perfection. For even the New Man, when first formed in our nature, is not perfect. The first form of Christ here in the flesh was not His perfection. He is first made in our likeness, that, hearing it and dying to it, He may bring us back through death to God's likeness. Thus He was "made perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2: 10; 5:8, 9). In Himself He was indeed perfect. As the Son of Man, who is in heaven (John 3:13, and 6:33, 38), the division which is in us was not in Him; and this undivided nature He comes to give to those who eat His flesh and drink His blood. But He came into our divided nature, to be man, "made of a woman, under the law" (Gal. 4:4), and in and to this nature He had to die, to bring us back in Himself through death, from our present divided state, to that where the "two are one," "man not without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord" (I Cor. 6:17 and 11:11); "where there is neither male nor female, but Christ is all and in all" (Gal. 3:28, and compare with this the remarkable passages in Clement of Alexandria Strom. book iii. chap. 10, and 13.) And so when Christ is formed in us, the new man first grows in our likeness, and then must suffer and die, like Christ for us, to reach perfection. "Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master" (Luke 6:40). And to be like Him we must give up our well, and even our life, into the hands of God, in the faith that when He "turns us to destruction," it is that He may say, "Return as sons of Man" ([Hebrew words}, Psalm 90:3). The last "Verily, Verily," testifies to the process by which this end is reached.

I have already noticed the time when this was spoken by the Lord. But the details given are no less instructive, as showing exactly the state of the disciples. Our Lord, for the third time after His resurrection (Verse 14), had just shown Himself to them. There were together seven; Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples. The number and names are mystic, figuring the completeness of the Church, and the varied forms of life which work in union with it. "Simon Peter saith, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee." This is rightly enough disciples' work. But the words fall upon the ear as if they were uttered with more or less of self-will. They are the words of those who propose to do what they like, rather than of men who look and wait for guidance. For at this stage, in passing from the carnal to the spiritual knowledge of the Lord, the tendency of our old nature often comes out, still prone to fulfil even our appointed work more according to the will of the flesh than of the spirit. Then follows a night of fruitless toil, during which the Lord's presence is not seen or felt. But when the morning comes, Jesus, standing on the shore, begins to direct the labours of the disciples. At first they do not know Him; but when a draught too large to be received into the ship follows obedience to His word, they learn who it is that has been speaking to them. John first recognises the Lord; Peter first hastens to Him; after which the other disciples slowly follow; all showing the dimness of our first vision of a risen Christ, and by what imperfect glimpses of this risen life we are gradually led to the higher knowledge of the Lord. Then comes the feast with Christ, -- communion with Him in what He has prepared, the fish and the bread, both well-known

figures of Him (Footnote: See Augustine, Tractat. cxxiii. § 2. All are familiar with the early Christian use of [*artos*]. I need not speak here of the "bread".) After which he utters this last reiterated Amen, testifying how to the very end disciples must be crossed, for only through this crossing of their will can they be perfected.

The process of this perfecting comes out in our Lord's words to Peter and John. Here are two men, most unlike each other, though both are near and dear to Christ. Each represents a distinct form of Christian life, whose perfecting therefore, though according to the same one law, to outward eyes may seem very dissimilar. Christ Himself is the one pattern of the whole life of God in man. In Him that life is in all its fulness, union, and proportion, as all the coloured rays are one in white light. In the apostles His fulness is divided. In each we mark some special grace. The three chief, Peter, James, and John, respectively reveal faith, hope, and charity. Peter is the active life of faith, which longs fully to follow Christ; which therefore comes into very peculiar trials and distresses; which steps out to walk on the troubled waters, where it sees Christ walk, and fails, and then, rescued by His hand, comes back into the ship, to continue the voyage with brethren, who, if not less trustful, are more cautious (Matt. 14:25-32); which follows the Lord into scenes which others never see, and yet denies Him in the time of trial more than all the rest (Matt. 26:58, 72). In John we see another life; that of passive love and contemplation; content to be loved, more even than to love; and who in this passiveness is able to receive far more of the Lord's mind, and to see in Him from the first what others little understand. The one says, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love thee:" (John 21:15, 16) the other delights to be called "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). "These two lives," as Augustine says, "the Church yet knows; the one in faith, the other in sight or revelation; the one in the work of action, the other in the gain of contemplation; the one fighting, the other reigning; the one curbing fleshly lusts, the other wholly given to spiritual delights; the one scourged by evils that it be not unduly exalted by its good things, the other with such fulness of grace that without pride it cleaves to the chief good. Therefore the one is good, and yet distressed; the other better, and blessed. The first is figured by the Apostle Peter; the last by John. The first here finds an end; the last yet waits, and in the world to come has no end. Therefore to the one it is said, 'Follow me;' but of the other, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee'" (Augustine, Tractat. cxxiv. § 5.); words which show how each must suffer for a season, that they may be made perfect even as their Lord.

Speaking generally, the perfecting of both proceeds according to one law. Each with Christ must learn to say, "Not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42). In each the will has to be erased. But the words here respecting each show in what very different forms this cross may come; for the forms of self-will vary greatly, and the discipline which crosses the will of an active soul will be very unlike that which is required by the man who delights in passive contemplation. But be the form of our nature what it may, self-will must be crossed in all, if they are ever to be made perfect as the Lord. To the active soul therefore the word yet is, "Lovest thou me?" then "feed (Greek [*bosko*] John 21:15.) my lambs." "Lovest thou me?" then "tend (Greek [*poimanio*], vs. 16) and feed my sheep. Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou art old, thou shalt stretch forth thine hands, and

another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. And when He has spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow me." Of the other it is said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"--words which were first supposed to mean "that this disciple should not die," but which found their fulfilment in his remaining to see the old dispensation pass away, after all his fellow apostles had been taken to their rest. Thus the one, in the active life, is called from blessed work to sudden death: the other, in the passive, from his wish at once to follow Christ to long waiting and the martyrdom of life. The one receives the outward cross; the other, the inward sufferings of Christ, and the revelation of the coming of the Lord: the one, who when he was young girded himself and walked whither he would, is crossed by being girded by others and carried whither he would not; called to give up self-strength in an early participation with Christ's death, and to leave his work for Christ's sheep to other under-shepherds; while the other, who without a word follows the Lord (Verse 20), and leans upon His breast, who would rather depart and be with Christ,--for it is ever the desire of loved ones to be with the beloved,--to whom the struggle and battle of life is a daily cross, who fain would follow now to the heaven which so often opens to him, must tarry here, amid the cares and toils of the earth, long after others have finished their course with joy. So John, who instinctively "follows," must "tarry," while to him who "girds himself" to labour here, the word yet is, "Thou shalt be carried whither thou wouldest not." Each is crossed in his own will, whether to work for, or to be with, Christ; the one by being taken from his work by death, the other by being kept from his rest by long and weary life; and this, not to mar, but rather to perfect, God's work in each, that the will of both may only be the will of God.

But the words deserve a closer consideration. Both the active and contemplative soul may here learn much as to the way in which each is to glorify God.

1. First, the word to Peter. It begins with directions as to his proper work, --to "tend Christ's sheep" and "feed His lambs,"--thrice prefaced with the question, "Lovest thou me?" which marks the one requisite for those who "watch for souls" (Heb 13:17); and then going on, as we have seen, to foretell the cross, by which, being "carried whither he would not," the active worker should be brought to his appointed end. Thus this word to Peter calls him first to doing, then to dying; for by both are we led on, though it is only by the last that the active life is truly perfected. Surely in doing Christ's will there must be some giving up of self. Who can tend Christ's sheep and feed His lambs, without some self-denial? Yet in all doing an active nature may find some room for its own self-will. For such therefore dying is the appointed way to reach perfection. And yet the doing also is most blessed, not only in its fruits toward God and man, but even as supplying the very discipline which such a soul can bear in its earlier days, to check its natural proneness to self-will and self-sufficiency. Each stage is good, doing and dying. Both are appointed for us. In both we may offer ourselves a sweet sacrifice unto the Lord.

We shall see this better, if we look at the work here laid on Peter. It is a shepherd's work--"Tend my sheep," and "feed my lambs." Who can do this without having his self-will crossed again and again? Sheep are silly creatures, prone to wander, often needing to be brought back; tender creatures, subject to many forms of sickness, which require unceasing care; weak creatures, wholly unable to resist the wolf which seeks their life;

ready to follow each other into unknown perils, where, but for the shepherd, they would be often lost. With such the shepherd goes, like Jacob, watching while they sleep (Gen. 31:40), or, like David, fighting the lion and the bear for them, that they may dwell safely (I Sam. 17:34). Who has ever watched for souls, going in and out among them for their good, ceasing not to warn them night and day with tears, yet seeing them leave him and forsake the Lord, without having his own heart pained and his self-will broken, as he cries, "Surely I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought" (Isa. 49:4)? Yet the toll is not for nought. The worker at least profits by it all. And in spite of all failures the sheep are gainers too. There is indeed a work with sheep, which is, not for the flock, but for the fleece. The Labans and Nabals and Absaloms, now as of old, are famous for "sheep-shearing" (Gen. 31:19; I Sam. 25:2, 4; II Sam. 13:23, 24). Like the kings of Moab, they are "sheep-masters" (II Kings 3:4), without a pastor's heart. But good shepherds care for the sheep, because they love Him whose they are. And in their service they themselves are served; for by it, little by little, they are being freed from self, while their thought may be only to serve the Lord and feed His sheep.

For this work is the fruit of love, the practical answer to the question, "Lovest thou me?" and love and self-love are directly antagonistic. Love seeketh not her own (I Cor. 13:5): love counts all self-sacrifice as nothing for the beloved. An independent life for lovers is impossible. They who love give up themselves. Therefore our Lord here asks for love, that in the exercise of it we may be freed from the self-will which by nature holds us. For love like self-love grows by yielding to it. The self-indulged man becomes daily more self-loving: the loving, self-sacrificing soul, by its toil for others becomes wholly more loving. And this love is shown in deeds. The lover's acts show that he loves. He may be absent from, but he gives his strength for, the beloved. Unlike the "lovers of their own selves," of whom the apostle speaks, who, because lovers of themselves, are also "covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers" (II Tim. 3:1-4), those who love the Lord will suffer long and endure all to serve His flock; they cannot but serve, because they love; and in this love, feeding Christ's sheep, not as their own, but His; seeking His glory in them, not their own; thinking of Him, whose they really are; they too also are being changed, even if they know it not, and show, to other eyes at least, that they are putting off the old man, and putting on the new.

Such is the work and its results. But it is by dying that the worker is perfected after the pattern of his Lord. Now, therefore, comes the last reiterated Amen: --"Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow me (Verses 18, 19). Here we have all the inter stages of the path set before us: first, in the promise as to the worker's end; and then in the final command which he receives, which contains in itself all counsels, of perfection. As ever there is a promise and a command (Compare Gen. 12:1, 7; Matt. 4:19; 11:28; II Cor. 6:17, 18). The promise is, that the worker shall be freed by being "carried whither he would not"; the command, in obedience to which the promise is fulfilled, is "Follow me."

The promise here then is the cross. This shall conform Peter to Christ. The active soul, who once had said, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now: I will lay down my life for thy sake," and had then with oaths denied his Lord, now shall reach by grace to that which he had thought himself able to accomplish in his own self-will. But this end shall be reached, not in self-will, but in being "carried whither he would not." The promise is the death of self, and this is not attained through any self-willed penance, or self-inflicted cross, which too often increases men's high thoughts of themselves, but rather by meekly accepting the real humiliation, which obedience sooner or later always brings with it. Our Lord declares this in the words in which He marks the contrast between the past and future of this active worker: --"Verily, Verily, when thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou art old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." For we act at first as if our wish to work for God were a sufficient guide; we speak and pray as if we could direct Him, instead of yielding in all to be directed by Him. And this self-will may work even in our wish to live and die for Christ; even in saying, "I will lay down my life for they sake." Slowly we learn that self-love may be strengthened by our active service, and that we yet need suffering to free us from ourselves. Therefore we have to be humbled by the discovery of what we really are, till by failure we have no confidence in self.

At first, indeed, while we are in the flesh (Rom. 7:5), all is done from self for self: self is the spring and end of all our works. Even after grace comes in, what is done at first is still from self, though it is for Christ; for we are yet but babes in Christ, and therefore carnal (I Cor. 3:1). At last we reach the stage when what is done is all from Christ for Christ. None reach this, while, even in good things, they "walk whither they would." None reach it without often being crossed and "carried whither they would not." In outward appearance the appointed cross may vary. It may come as some outward loss, either of health or earthly means, which deprives us of the power of doing the good we would; or it may be the inward sense of darkness and distress, which for a season keeps our spirits bound, mocked by devils, even as the Lord in the presence of His accusers. It is always something which really crosses self, and thus frees us from our selves and from our own self-will. And in this path, in resigning ourselves to God, in leaving Him to do in us and with us as He wills, in submitting all the more to things which displease us, as seeing in them our appointed cross, in utter submission and dependence on Him, be the trial what it may, God can accomplish His own far better will in us, and by our very helplessness and death lead us safely and surely to a better resurrection. There is no other way to be made perfect. In one form or another all must be crossed who are to be conformed to Christ.

And strange as it may seem to flesh and blood, in this crossing there is a rest such as the soul has never known before. In doing our own will there is never rest. Even when the aim is good, our very eagerness keeps us in constant unquietness. In yielding to the will of another there is rest. Therefore the time comes when by some cross our own works cease, and we pass from the days of labour to the day of rest. In being carried whither we would not, an inward rest is found which passes all former understanding. Our Lord's words here seem to mark this; for in following his own will the worker "walks": and he who "walks" can never fully rest: when at last he is girded by another, he is "carried" to

an outward cross indeed, but no less "carried away in the spirit" by it, as John was (Rev. 21: 10), to see that heavenly city, whose name is "vision or possession of peace" (Footnote: Jerusalem means simply the "vision or possession of peace."), where there is rest and joy for evermore. Certainly there is a heart-rest in being utterly unable to do as we will, which is never reached in any other way. Some sufferers know it: the peace beyond all thought: the rest of being freed henceforth from any care. And the pain by which it has been bought is felt to be unworthy to be compared to the present joy, unspeakable, and full of glory.

But in this last word to Peter there is more than promise: there is also a command, -- "Follow me," and again, "Follow thou me" (Verses 19, 22). Strange that these last words should be but a repetition of the words of his first call, the very words which years before had come to him from a voice then strange and new, which said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). But these same words, "Follow me," now heard from One who has passed through death, convey to him who again hears them volumes more than when they first fell upon his ear. So it ever is. Words open to us. The self-same words which at one stage seem to say so little, or are so dimly understood, at another shine out like fire, piercing our hearts. The lesson is indeed repeated in the old form; but it now comes to us with a deeper meaning. So to Paul in the storm a message comes, which is but the repetition of a former word (Compare Acts 27:21; and 23:11); but how much more does it now say, both as to present deliverance and future work and suffering for the Lord. And so these old words to Peter, "Follow me," as now spoken by the risen Lord, convey to the disciple who has followed thus far, and seen the cross, lessons which at an earlier stage he could not have understood.

For at first we think that all following must be active work. By Christ's cross we slowly learn that the highest following may be in passive suffering. These simple words contain every Counsel of Perfection, Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience. All are contained in "Follow me." For can we fully follow and not be chaste? Can we fully follow and not be poor? Can we fully follow and not be obedient, even to being "baptized with His baptism" and "drinking His cup." A time comes when our Lord's teaching, of which He says, "All men cannot receive this saying: he that is able to receive it, let him receive it." whether as to marriage, or to selling all, or to entire submission and obedience, in being baptized with His baptism and in drinking His cup, speaks to us as it never did before (Footnote: In the Gospel according to Matthew, after the section, (chap. 16:13 to 18:35) which declares the mystery of the Church, we come to a section which opens the Evangelical Counsels of Perfection, Chastity (chap. 19:1-15), Poverty (chap. 19:16 to 20:16) and Obedience (chap. 20:17-28). Of the first Christ says, "All men cannot receive this saying; he that is able to receive it, let him receive it." Of the second, "If thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast." Of the third, "Are you able to drink the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptised with?"). We need not antedate the day. There is a time for every purpose under heaven (Ecc. 3:1). Not only is there no use in seeking to do some things before the time, but the very attempt to do so may itself hurt us. Children may come into light too soon, or, when brought forth, may try to act as men, while they are yet children, with consequences of lasting pain and weakness for them. God never hurries. When we are prepared, all opens to us. Counsels of Perfection,

which were once too high, seem now the very food our souls long for. Then when, like Peter here, we have learnt ourselves, -what poor untrusty creatures we are, who deny Him whom we really love, and forsake Him whom we desire to follow,--when we have known His cross and resurrection, and He has come and breathed on us, and said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21),--old words, which once meant little, come to us again, with a far deeper sense, and things, which once seemed impossible, by grace become easy. Then we too, like Peter, can rejoice so to follow Christ as to be "carried whither we would not," and in being so carried find our perfect rest.

Such is the way for Peter, that is for active souls' but the mere knowledge of the way, -- the appointed toil by which self-will is first broken, and then the promised cross and the "following" of Christ, by which the active soul may in due time be made perfect,--may be held as doctrine by souls who know nothing really of the promised cross, or of that humble following of our Lord, to which again He here calls us. Some with all their knowledge in the letter are, only more and more self-willed, doing all they can to gird others and lead them whither they would, instead of yielding themselves to be carried, if the Lord so will it, whither they would not. And even when we have heard these words, and understand our calling, and wish to follow Christ, the old nature may show itself in us, and we may still be busy with questions about others, rather than with our own appointed cross, saying, like Peter here, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" (Verse 21). Self-willed curiosity may still be active, after sad experience of ourselves. And in stead of pondering in silence the solemn words just heard as to our appointed path, our minds, like Peter's may be far more busy about our brother's way, than in walking humbly in that which is set before us as our own. Hasty acts may cease, yet hasty words may still remain, and curious questions which concern us not. Blessed be the Lord, He too remains, our Saviour to the end; and to our questions His unchanging word comes once again, now in tones almost like a reproof, but as ever bringing further light, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

2. It only remains here to notice those words respecting John. They are much briefer than the words to Peter; for contemplative nature needs less outward teaching than active souls, whose energy requires constant crossing and direction. These words too respecting John are not said to him, but of him to another; for the passive soul, even when no outward voice directly addresses it, ever hears the inward word, and does unbidden, as men would say, the very thing which more active workers only do through some express command. For John here was already "following" (Verse 20), that is doing, without another word, all that Peter more slowly does through a reiterated command. There yet are souls, like John, between whom and Christ many words are not needed, because all is understood as it were without a word; while there are others, like Peter, to whom everything must be expressed, and who always seem to think that others need as many words as they do themselves, to the very end full of questions for their brethren. Yet both are loved, and both are crossed. And the words here spoken as to John sufficiently indicate the nature of the cross ordained for passive souls, whose delight, like Mary's (Luke 10:39), is, not so much to work for Him they love, as to be near Him, in quiet meditation upon His words, and contemplation of Himself and all His coming glory. For

such the cross is to "tarry" here, if Christ so will: --"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

This then is John's cross, that, while his joy is in things within the veil, in meditation on the Word of Life made flesh for us (John 1:14), which he has seen, and looked upon, and handled with his hands (I John 1: 1), or in entrancing revelations of the present service and coming glory of the same Lord, either as priest walking amid the golden candlesticks (Rev. 1:12-16), or as Lamb of God opening the seals (Rev. 5:5-7), or as the Word of God, with the two-edged sword, going forth to rule and conquer all (Rev. 19:11-16), his appointed lot is to "tarry" here, amid the strifes of time, seeing the shaking and passing away of all that can be shaken, his early companions, one after another, taken before him to their rest, while he, to whom that rest is perhaps dearer even than to them, is left to struggle on through weary years, a pilgrim still, not yet at home. But this too is love; for if self-pleasing can enter into active work, no less can it steal, still less perceived, into the joy one has in visions and revelations of the Lord. Souls, therefore, to whom such visions are vouchsafed, require a sorer cross, some Egyptian prison, as with Joseph (Gen. 37:5-10, and 39:20), or some longer waiting, as with John, or some thorn in the flesh, some messenger of Satan, as with Paul (II Cor. 12:1, 7), to keep them low, till they too are delivered from the even subtler self, which may be built up in us by gifts superior to our brethren. Waiting is harder than working and the Johns must wait. Waiting is harder than service also, for "they also serve who only stand and wait." So the Johns serve to advanced old age. The self-pleasing, self-willed, life is the curse from which we must be freed, if we are ever to be perfect. In one way or another it must be cast out. Hence all the toils and judgments laid upon all, on the most gifted not less, generally, far more, than on their weaker brethren, that by all means they may be delivered from themselves, and from that self-will which so inveterately clings to all. For nothing really perfects but that which lays us in the dust (Footnote: It is sure instructive to notice that the two words [Hebrew word] and [Hebrew word], used in Hebrew to express destruction, signify also and are used to express perfection.) All, therefore, must be brought down, till God's will, and not our own is done in all.

Meanwhile the blessing is that all is according to Christ's will. It is only "if He will" that any "tarry" here. "If I will." Here we may rest. Our times are in His hands. His will is perfect love, and must be far better than our own. Not blind chance, but wisdom, determines the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation, for us all (Acts 17:26). If He will that we tarry, even until He come, there must be blessing for His elect in such tarrying.

And in a certain and very real sense the contemplative soul does tarry till Christ comes. John tarried, not only till he saw the revelation of Jesus Christ, which opened all, but till the whole carnal dispensation, with all its bondage, passed away, and he saw new heavens and a new earth, and the New Jerusalem, coming down from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:1, 2). And so like souls still tarry till they see new heavens and a new earth, which, real and present as they are, are yet unseen by all. They are, therefore, not troubled at the shaking of things which can be shaken, knowing that there are things which cannot be shaken, but must remain (Heb. 12:27). And though what

is revelation to the Johns may yet be darkness to the Church, though their visions may be but dreams to many of their brethren, "though Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence, may not receive them" (III John 9), their long waiting is not fruitless, either to others or to themselves. They at least are gainers by being "sharers in the tribulation and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9 [five Greek words]).

Such then is the perfecting of God's elect. Nature must die and pass away, in whatever form, whether active or passive, it may show itself in a disciple. Till we so die with Christ, our very religion may but add to our delusions. As William Law said long ago: -- "Would you know whence it is that so many false spirits have appeared in the world, who have deceived themselves and others with false fire and false light, laying claim to inspirations, illuminations, and openings of the divine life, pretending to do wonders, and to extraordinary calls from God? It is this. They have turned to God without turning from themselves. They would live in God without dying to " their own fallen self-will." (Law's Spirit of Prayer Part II. p. 19). Therefore "we which live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (II Cor. 4:11). The life of God must be brought forth and made manifest in us (Col. 3:3, 4); while that which is "first and natural" (I Cor. 15:46) must be swallowed up of life. This is only accomplished by the cross. And this cross is our priestly consecration (Footnote: The same word is used in Holy Scripture to express "perfection" and "consecration". See Heb. 7:28, margin), the true perfecting or "filling of our hands" (Footnote: The word [Hebrew word] used in the Old Testament to express consecration, is literally to "fill", translated in the margin of our Authorized Version to "fill the hands." See Ex. 27:41; 29:9, 33; Lev. 21:10; Num. 3:3, etc.) for God's service; that, being first emptied of ourselves, we may be filled with God, and so minister His Spirit unto men. Thus was Christ made perfect (Heb. 2:10; 10:9); thus were His apostles consecrated to Him; and thus, and thus alone, can we be made like them. Not till we are stripped and cleansed can our enlightening come: not till we are enlightened can we fully know the union to which the Lord calls us, So long as self-will remains, there can be no perfect union. The more of self-will there is in any, the more of hell. By the appointed cross therefore, and by it alone, do we come to the blessed end, where all are one, and One is all.

CONCLUSION

The New Man and The Eternal Life

(Col. 3:10)

We have thus gone through the series of our Lord's reiterated Amens, each of which has opened some further truth distinctive of the New man and his eternal life. I would in conclusion sum up the teaching thus brought before us. For God, in giving us His Son, has given us this life. And just in proportion as we receive the Son is His life revealed in us. And though at this day, more perhaps than ever, when earthly advantage is so keenly sought, he who chooses this life of Christ, does it at the risk of being cast into the fiery furnace of the world's scorn, as a poor feeble fool and mystic dreamer, there is yet a seed to whom God's kingdom is a present joy, and the life of Christ the one unfailing reality. For such I gather up the distinctive features of this life, that we may more fully see our calling in Jesus Christ our Lord. But first a word as to the connection of these Amens with Christ's own life. Christ Himself is the fulfilment of them all. In them we have as doctrines the self-same truths which come before us as facts in the life of Jesus Christ. These reiterated Amens describe the working of the life of God in flesh and blood, and Christ is the life of God in flesh and blood. But our Lord calls attention to these truths by words, lest our blindness should not see the facts as they are set before us in Himself under the veil of His flesh. For indeed Christianity is Christ, and Christ is Christianity. He is the Word made flesh. Therefore He is the fulfilment of every true word which ever was or shall be spoken. He is the fulfilment of the law. He is the fulfilment of the prophets. He is the fulfilment of all those hopes and traditions of the ancient heathen world, which were dim unconscious prophecies of Him that was to come. He is the substance and fulfilment also of every good thing which outward nature sets before our eyes, for nature also is a sacramental word. He is the bread, the vine, the water, and the rock, and the way, and the husband, and the tree of life, and the firstfruits, and the morning star, and the sun, and the kinsman-redeemer, and the prophet, and the priest, and the physician. For He is the fulfilment of His own words. Fallen man may say one thing and do another. The New Man is and must be what He speaks. So in reply to the question, "Who art thou?" He answers, "I am that which I speak from the beginning" (John 8:25); for what He said was what He was: His life was the perfect expression and fulfilment of His own teaching. And so, if only He lives in us, His words, even though we know it not, will be fulfilled in us, because His life is the fulfilment of His doctrine.

For what is the Gospel but the manifestation of the New Life which is formed in man by the reception of the Word and Spirit of the Lord. What does it tell us but that a New Man has been brought forth out of our divided nature, in whom the breach is healed, because God has come to dwell in man, that man through death may dwell in God. Is this the mere tradition of something which only once happened, in a far off country, eighteen hundred years ago, or is it the glad tidings of a fact which is through grace for ever true, that by the coming of the Word of God an eternal life is formed in man, even a "new man," "Christ in us, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27; 3:10; Gal. 4:19), who bears the cross, that man may die to his old life, and rises again, that man may live in God for ever. All

this was first accomplished for us in Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the First-born Son, first out of life (Col. 1:15, 16, 17), first out of death (Col. 1:18); and in and by Him, by His life and death, the work was wrought for us, for in Him God is one with man, and man is one with God. But the work wrought for us in Jesus Christ is the sign and pledge of the self-same work, which God has ever been working, and still works in man by His Spirit. In His thirty years we have all the stages of the one eternal life, as it may be and has been brought forth in human nature. His infancy shows us the eternal life as it was known in Patriarchal days; His youth, the same life as it grew throughout the Jewish dispensation; His baptism opens our Christian position, how through a mystic death heaven opens, and man passes into a spiritual world, and the Spirit descends, and the Father's voice is heard, acknowledging man on earth to be His son. Lastly, Christ's death and resurrection show how man is made for ever one with God, not merely filled with His fulness here, but brought out of the limitations of the fall to be king of kings and lord of lords. Christ's life reveals it all. In Him God's purpose is declared for ever. But to share with Him in all this, He must be formed and grow in us. Then we too shall know something of all these same stages: a time, in infancy, without law; a time, in youth, when, though heirs, like Israel of old, we are under tutors and governors; then the time when heaven opens, and we come to death and resurrection. "The thing that hath been is that which shall be, and there is no new thing under the sun" (Eccl. 1:9). At each stage the New Man is son of God. These reiterated Amens, even as Christ's life for us, only call attention to some of the marks or stages of the appointed way.

Let us then briefly recapitulate this teaching.

First, the New Man's home is heaven. Heaven, shut to the fallen old man, is reopened to the New. So we are first assured that man shall see again his long-lost home, and angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man (Chap. 1:51). But how can these things be? Only by a heavenly birth; for the only way into any world is by a birth into it. To enter heaven therefore man must be re-born. A new life must be received, even the life of heaven; for so only can we live in heaven. And this new life comes through Him who gives Himself to be our life, even the Son of Man who is in heaven, who comes to earth that as many as receive Him may become the sons of God, and by the same way which He has gone for us, "born of water and of the Spirit," that is through death to present nature, and through quickening of the Holy Ghost, may return with Him from earth to heaven, from death to life forevermore (Chap. 3:3, 13). But what kind of life is this eternal life? It is a life of rest, the sabbath of the Lord, because the New Man does nothing, and can do nothing, from himself, but only what the Father doeth. Therefore, instead of bringing death into the world, he rather quickens and gives life; instead of being judged, like the old man, he is ordained to judge others. And both by quickening and by judging he fulfils the Father's will, which is to overcome the curse, and to give to others the rest which they have lost through their own self-will (Chap. 5:19, 30). Is then this life self-supported? No. It lives by heavenly bread, even by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man who is in heaven; living by Him, as the branch upon the vine, and as the vine upon its root, by the continual communication and reception of the life which through the Son flows ever from the Father (Chap. 6:26-38).

Then this life is also light; and its light frees man from the bonds which darkness ever lays upon him. It comes indeed into our darkness, but it breaks its chains. If we keep the word, we shall soon know. And then, if we know the truth, the truth will make us free. The Son, because He makes us sons, shall make us free indeed (Chap. 8:31-36). This leads to the opening of the divine nature which through grace is ours. For the New Man is a son of God. In Him the Creator and the creature are indissolubly one; for by the coming of the eternal Son into our nature the fulness of the Godhead has dwelt in man, and the manhood has been taken into God. God has become man, that many may say, "I am." The Son of Man is very God (Chap. 8:51-58). Then, because God is love, this life must go forth to serve others, in a service which brings it unto the place of erring needy souls, for whom the New Man gives himself, first like a shepherd walking with his sheep, and then laying down his life that they may live (Chap. 10:1-15). For the New Man serves, not only by spending his strength for those who little understand him; he even becomes a sacrifice for them, content, like a corn of wheat, to fall into the ground and die, that by his self-sacrifice he may unite that which through a man's self-will is disunited, and so may bring forth much fruit (Chap. 12:23-32).

What all this costs then opens to us. The eternal life is tried by a humiliation such as mere flesh and blood could never bear. But the New Man knows that he comes from God and goes to God. Therefore he can stoop, not only to wash the feet of those who know not what they receive, but to be rejected for such humiliation, even to be betrayed by one, and denied by another, of those for whom these things are done, and who as yet are unprepared for such self-abasement (Chap. 13:1-38). Yet in this very humiliation there is glory, for God is glorified thereby, and therefore glorifies even with Himself the soul which can thus humble itself, making it a vessel for His own manifestation. The New Man therefore can say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, for the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." Light, love, and power, shine out through him. Henceforth he must be prophet, priest, and king, for the very works of Christ are the New Man's works, and even greater works are done, when man in Christ goes to the Father (Chap. 14:9-14). But to the crowning joy the way is through sorrow. Through not seeing after the flesh, --for He says, "A little while ye shall not see me,"--man comes to that seeing where the sorrow shall be turned into joy, even fulness of joy, which no man taketh from us (Chap. 16:16-24). Then the perfecting is reached, that perfect union with the Lord, where the will of the creature is swallowed up and lost in God's will; where therefore there is perfect rest, for only one will rules; the two are one, and One is all (Chap. 17:21).

Such is this life, and such its end. We see at a glance how widely it differs in every distinctive characteristic from the way of the fallen old man.

In the first place, this life throughout depends on God, living by Him, and with Him, and for Him, in all things. Unlike the old man, who in his fall would live without God, if he could, --not really without Him, for no creature can be thus independent, but looking to self or creatures more than God, and choosing a path in self-will rather than obedience, --the New Man's strength and joy are all in God, and his highest glory is to know and do His will. When he comes into the world He says, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God"

(Heb. 10:9); and as he departs, his words still are, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46). Throughout it is a life of faith, guided not by self, but by God, in all; and at every stage receiving from Him, depending upon Him, and giving of Him. Thus its Home is not self-made; its Birth is not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; its law is not to do its own will, but what it sees the Father do. So again its Meat is the Father's gift; its Freedom, to be as a son in a Father's house; its Service, in the life of God to spend and be spent for others in the uttermost. This entire dependence and self-surrender mark it throughout. Therefore in all things it can rest. God is its strength, and God can never fail.

Another characteristic of this life is its attendant cross. Joy also it surely has, and rest of heart, and peace with God, and a hope ever full of immortality. But with all this there is present pain. The life of love must suffer here, and be nigh to sorrows, and acquainted with grief. It seems strange that he who cares for all should himself be uncared for. But in this world it must be so. Love suffers here; and the eternal life is the life of love, and not of self-love. In all it sacrifices itself, bearing other's burdens, even dying for them, while yet, like God, it is rejected for a season. And these reiterated Amens, even as Christ's life, though at first disciples cannot understand it, make no secret of the fact, that the cross must be our portion, if we will live the life of God. What is the very first stage but a passage through the waters; and what is the last but a participation in Christ's cup, to make us perfect as our Lord. And all the teaching as to the New Man's service, and his dying, like the corn of wheat, and his Humiliation, and his sorrow, and his utter self-surrender, only repeat the same one truth, that the elect must suffer, for only thus is nature overcome, and transmuted into that which can rise to and abide in God for ever. Man as he is must be consumed, that he may be re-made in God's image. This can only be accomplished through the waters and the fires. Not only therefore must the old man die, the new man, who is brought forth out of the old, as he first grows in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in the place and nature of the old man (Footnote: In a note on the statement of Athanasius, that "the Saviour, in taking our body of humiliation, took a servant's form and put on that flesh which was enslaved to sin." Dr. Newman, in the Oxford Translation of the Fathers, edited by Dr. Pusey, says, "It was usual to say against the Apollinarians, that, unless our Lord took on Him our nature, as it is, He had not purified and changed it, as it is, but another nature. It may be asked whether this doctrine does not interfere with that of the immaculate conception; but that miracle was wrought in order that our Lord might not be born in original sin, and does not affect, or rather includes, His taking flesh of the substance of the Virgin, that is of a fallen nature. If indeed sin were of the substance of our fallen nature, as some heretics have said, then He could not have taken our nature without partaking our sinfulness; but if sin be, as it is, a fault of the will, then the divine power of the Word could sanctify the human will, and keep it from swerving in the direction of evil." Athanasius' Four Discourses against the Arians, i. ch. xi. § 8, p. 241, note G. The whole note, which is quite a Catena of authorities upon this questions, is well worth turning to.), must bear that old man's curse, till by the fire of God that curse is turned into a blessing. The altar of the Lord reveals it all, where the creature dies and is consumed, to ascend in a new form, as "an offering made by fire unto the Lord."

One other point I notice in this life, that while it is from first to last the same, the very life of God in human nature, yet as here revealed it passes through stages, in which it goes from strength to strength (Psa. 84:7), changing its form as its varied virtues come out into manifestation through the veil of the flesh which for a season hides them. Saints of bygone days were wont to speak of three great stages of this new life, as, first the Purgative Way, then the Illuminative Way, and lastly the Unitive Way, which are but the varied phases through which the spirit passes from conception to manifestation, each having its distinctive form, but all equally workings of the same one life, the differing forms being the result of the varying growth of the new man at different stages. Not that at any one of these stages there was not always something of all these marks of the one life, but rather that at each stage one or other mark preponderates; the first being specially distinguished by separation or purification, the second by illumination, the third by unbroken union and communion with the Lord. This series of reiterated Amens has the same advance. Though all are aspects of one life, one can hardly overlook the growth or progress in them. In the first four, in the Home, and Birth, and Law, and Meat, of the New Man, the preponderating idea is Separation or Purification. Need I point out how in the first there is separating from the world, in the second, separation from the flesh, in the third, separation from the devil, for there is nothing in man more devilish than self-will; to come instead, first to that which is of heaven, then to that which is of the Spirit, and then to that which is of the Father, both in rest and action. But is there not like purification also in the New Man's Meat, which by giving new blood makes a new creature, free from the diseases and defilements of the fallen old man. The next four sayings trace the Illuminative Way. All that is said as to the Liberty, and the Divine Nature, and the Service, and Sacrifice, of the New Man, speaks not of life only, but of the growing "light of life," which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (John 8:2; Prov. 4:18). And then in the last four sayings we have what is Unitive, in the Humiliation, and the Glory, and the Joy, and finally in the Perfected Union, which is the end of all. And yet the varied stages are but one life, as it grows from earth to heaven, and from divided nature to know and rest in God. And yet the varied stages are but one life, as it grows from earth to heaven, and from divided nature to know and rest in God.

Now Christ, as we have seen, is the perfect pattern of the way. In His own life He lived through all the stages by which man comes from earth to heaven, His life is the witness of God's purpose towards the world, and a type of man as God will one day make him. Believers are indeed firstfruits, pioneers in the path of man's return to God, and pledges of that which through Christ is coming to their brethren. But man as man, that is the world, is the creature which is redeemed in Christ (I Tim. 2:6; Heb. 2:6-9; I John 4:14), and destined to come by Him where He, the Head, has gone already for us. Where then is man at the present day in the path figured for us in Christ? What remains for him to learn, and do, and suffer, here? What is the next great step which he has to take? It is to this point I would call attention. For the days we live in have tokens that some great change is close at hand, and that our race, which step by step has reached its present state, is about to pass, not surely without a crisis, for every advance is through some crisis, into some new and we may believe some higher experience. Does Christ's life give us no light here? Does it not rather show us the appointed way to the consummation, which has indeed been individually experienced by the elect, who, as God's first-fruits, ever lead the way,

and of which they are the witness and example, but which, unless I misunderstand Christ's life, is to be reached at last by the race whose nature He has redeemed, and already brought in Himself through death from earth to heaven. If I mistake not, this great change even now is coming on the world. The veil, already rent in Christ, shall pass away. Not the elect only, but man as man, shall see the heavens open, and the revelation of the kingdom and power of our God and of His Christ (Rev. 12:10).

For Christ is man according to God's mind. In Him we see what man can be as requickenened and remade by God's Spirit. All through His life there was growing revelation, that is unveiling, of God's life and truth, which through man's fall were hidden from us. From the beginning He was God's heir: but he grew in wisdom and stature here. His circumcision, baptism, and transfiguration, were stages in the path of man's return to God. Was not His death also an advance? Does it not show us the one way by which the world is to be brought to God and heaven? Assuming, as I have said, that Christ's infancy figured the Patriarchal age, which was without law, and His youth and circumcision the Jewish dispensation, and His baptism man's coming to the present Christian ground, even to the knowledge of God's fatherhood, through a mystic death and resurrection; what do Christ's actual death and resurrection and ascension witness, but that there is something for the world beyond man's present state, even a passing through judgment and dissolution, to the things which flesh and blood can never see (Footnote: The Hebrew word for age is *elam*, which is thus explained by Furst: "That which is wrapped up, covered over, or concealed. Specifically time, the end of which is hidden, whether in relation to the past or to the future. Hence also eternity, the extremities of which are veiled. From this word comes the Latin _____, and thence again _____." (Heb. Lex. in loco.) Parkhurst gives the same explanation of the word.) Saints in bygone days foresaw that the Church would come in tribulation, which should make her cry, like Christ, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Footnote: Speaking of the Church, Nicholas de Lyra says, (Comment on Psalm 21,) "*Videbitur a Deo derelinqui;*" and he adds that "it is the Church, as Christ's body, which will then say with Him, 'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" So again, (on Psalm 101,) speaking of the time of Antichrist, he says, "*Tanta erit tribulatio, quod videbiture aliquibus de ecclesia, quod fides Catholics debeat totaliter delicere.* Therefore it is added, in the person the Church, 'O my God, call me not away in the midst of my days,' by taking me away out of this present life, before the end of the world.") out of which, through the "consumption which is decreed" (Isa. 10:22), she shall be raised to another state, and like her Head, even through judgment, be yet more blessed and made a blessing. Individually each believer has thus advanced with Christ. But there will be a world-fulfilment of the story, when man as man through judgment shall attain to that which Christ as man through death has entered for us.

To me all things seem to witness that this change is at the doors, that Christendom is even now on the very eve of judgment, and yet that the break up of the Church, like that of Israel of old, will raise the world another step, and lead, not only to the departure of the fleshly forms of Christ, but to an outpouring of the Spirit, such as hitherto has not been known, and to an attainment by the race of an opening of heaven and the things of God, which as yet has been the lot of very few. Christ shall be revealed. It will not be what so many are expecting, the continuation of that which now is seen, but the bringing in, or

rather bringing out, of that which still is hidden, which, while it will surely shake all that can be shaken, will reveal also something which shall not be moved (Heb. 12:27). But the thought that another and better dispensation will succeed the present is as offensive to many in the Church as the idea that the gospel should succeed the law was to God's ancient people Israel. Those who counted themselves the elect could not believe the passing away of that which had stood so long, and been confirmed by such divine sanctions. Yet man grew out of the Jewish to the Christian stage. And now, if I err not, by the Church's judgment, and through a process very similar to that which happened to the Jew, man is not only to extend what he now has, --much less to retrograde, as some believe, to Jewish ceremonies,--but rather to advance by the development of the life of God within to something still higher and broader and more spiritual. Man progresses, not merely in extension, but in development; for the progress of life is the progress of development; and Christ's life and death are the pattern of the way from flesh to spirit, and from the lowest parts of the earth to the highest heaven.

Meanwhile and ever the life which can pass unhurt through all is the eternal life which is already ours through Christ Jesus. It burns as light in the kingdom of darkness, unpolluted by it, and even transforming all that it illumines by its meek yet mighty power. It is the hope of the world, which unconsciously waits for the manifestation of the sons of God; for the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:19, 20). It is called to judge and save the world, though the cross yet presses on it, and the veil yet hides its true glory. The elect can bide their time, though the cross is still an offence. Our real shame is not the cross, but that we so little know it; --not our temptation and humiliation, but that where Christ was rejected and despised we are rich and reign as kings without Him. We are so easily contented to be saved, and not be saviours (Obad. 21; I Tim. 4:16); to be converted to Christ, as people say, and not also converted into Christ, as God would have us. For He has called us through the cross to be conformed to Him, that it may not be we, but Christ who liveth in us (Gal. 2:20); to see only with His eyes, and to hear only with His ears; to be like Him, quickening spirits (I Cor. 15:43), by whom He works His will; to know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and that we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ (I John 5:20). This is the New Man, and this is the true God, and this is the eternal life.

Such is our calling. Man is God's heir in Christ Jesus. And although the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; though we too, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; it is no less true, that, when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, *Abba*, Father. Wherefore we are no more servants, but sons; and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ (Gal. 4:1-7). If then nobility of ancestry in this world lays an obligation upon the heirs, not to disgrace the name they bear by any act unworthy of their high lineage, --if a king's son cannot be mean,--what should they be who know their calling, and their Father's purpose towards them; that they are called with Christ to judge the world, and that, when He shall appear, they shall be

like Him, for they shall see Him as He is. Unbelief may still keep thousands strangers to their true life, and to God's purpose towards them. Every one that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself even as He is pure (I John 3:3).

This then is the sum of the whole matter. The powers of the heavenly life, lost in Adam's fall, have been raised up again in Christ Jesus, and may be brought forth, in like manner, even out of the body of this death, by the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the overshadowing power of the Most High, by whom that "holy thing" is formed in sinful man, which is, and therefore is truly called, the Son of God (Luke 1:35; Gal. 4:19; Col. 1:27). This is the mystery of the Gospel, that the incorruptible seed is still brought forth from our weak and fallen human nature. And the children of this miraculous generation must be like their Head, lambs and sacrifices to God, having the seven horns and seven eyes (Rev. 5:6), that is the sevenfold powers of His meek life, which, through the death of self, come forth as rays out of the life and light which He bestows and brings forth in us. These are the seven spirits of God, which, though once quenched and lost in Adam, when he sunk under the dominion of the serpent's lie, to be as a beast where he was set to have dominion, have been restored in Christ, in the tabernacle which He raises up, where the "seven lights" again are burning, and the "bread of faces," that is the bread which manifests God, is again upon the table (Ex. 25:30, 31). Without this sevenfold spirit, which is the witness that the New Man has come, who concludes the days of labour, and ushers in the day of rest, none can be complete with the double completeness which God has purposed for us; not only to be built up a holy house, in which He may dwell, but to show His virtues and His glories, when, through the rending of the veil, the holiest of all is opened, where light is swallowed up of light, in the glory of the cloud which dwells upon the mercy-seat of God (Lev. 16:2). Such a temple God has already raised up in Jesus Christ our Lord. Such will He make those who by grace in all things wholly yield themselves to Him, that in them, as in the Head, His image and likeness may be seen, with all the "lights and perfections" (Ex. 28:30. Urim and Thummin mean simply "lights" and "perfections".) which belong to the kingdom and priesthood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Unless this seed be quickened in us, we cannot enter the kingdom. Nothing but the Spirit of life, through Jesus Christ, with all the powers of His heavenly life, can make us like Him, or bring us where He is gone before. He must be in us, or we cannot live His life. He must clothe us, as the woman was clothed with the sun (Rev. 12:1), or we shall be naked. He must enrich us with His seven-fold gifts, or we shall be helpless to serve in His service. He waits at the tent-door of our mortal flesh to fill us with His fullness, --to bring forth in us the precious things of which the carnal service of the temple, with its vessels of silver and gold, and its outward water, fire, and blood, and its lamps, and incense, and fine raiment, were but a passing shadow; even to give us His own flesh, to make us clean like Him, and to kindle in us the true fire, which shall transmute and make us light in the Lord (Eph. 5:8). But the gate is strait which leads to the manifestation of the glory of the Lord. Self must die that Christ may be revealed. The cross alone opens the kingdom. By it the serpent's head is bruised; by it the image of the beast is judged and broken; by it we pass from our poor house of clay to the fulness of the glory of the New Man, even to the

house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Christ's life and death still open all.
May we be found in that New Man, and in His eternal life for evermore.