Articles by Fred Squire

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The Glory Of His Countenance (Feb 1955)

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F. J. Squire

This exposition of 2 Cor. 3 and 4 is greatly amplified by the use of the references to Ex. 31:18; 34:1-7; 34:28-35; Deut. 10:4; and Jud. 7:15-23. A careful reading of these passages will repay the earnest Christian. Ed.

The covenant of the law provides the apostle the ground upon which the precious truths of these two chapters are based. The stone tables of the law are compared to the fleshly tables of human hearts; the glory which shone in Moses' face is replaced by a greater glory; the veil which Moses used to cover his face, as a type of Israel's blindness, becomes the portion of all unbelievers; and Moses' veiled condition is contrasted with the unveiled condition of those who have been enlightened. All this leads up to the glory which shines in the face of Christ Jesus.

An Unveiled Epistle:

Although, as far as we know, our Lord wrote nothing during His ministry on earth, here we see how He regards those whom He has brought from death to life. "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:… manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ…" (2 Cor. 3:2-3). By His Spirit He has written upon our hearts His lovely Name and all that that Name stands for, and, as an epistle is primarily a means of communication, so we are to consider ourselves an open

letter from our Lord to be read by all. We are to display Christ as we live before men. What our Lord has to say to those for whom He died, He wishes to say through us. So if we are His living epistles, we shall bring Him before the thoughts of those about us.

The tables of stone, written by the finger of God, were a proof to Israel that Moses had been with God in the mount. In like manner, the believing Corinthians were a demonstration to all men that Paul was an “able minister of the New Covenant” even as Moses was of the Old. They were his living credentials. In them, was fulfilled the prophetic word by Jeremiah in which God promised that He would write His law in their hearts. (Jer. 31:33). The same “Finger of God,” His Holy Spirit, Who wrote on those tables of old, had written in their hearts, thereby constituting them “the epistles of Christ.”

A Veiled Prophet:

It was written of Moses that he was known of God “face to face,” (Deut. 34:10). He spent much of his time in the immediate presence of his Lord, seeing and hearing those writings which God had to show and to teach him. Moses could never have been the great man of God that he was, had not this been the case.

During his long communion with God, Moses received the law from God’s hand, but, until he rejoined the people in the plain below, “he… wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him.” The effect of Moses’ reappearance among the people was that “… they were afraid to come nigh him,” so he veiled his face while he was among them. The glory which shone in the face of Moses was associated with a “ministration of death,” the law, which was temporary. Although Israel

was not aware of it, the advent of the law placed the nation under condemnation. The apostle Paul testified to this as it applied to him personally when in Rom. 7:9 he says, " when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." However, in contrast to this, the "glory that excelleth" (vs. 10) is the eternal, life-giving grace of God.

A Veiled Nation:

Moses' veil hid the reflection of the glory of God from Israel in the wilderness. The veil is still there, hiding the true interpretation of the writings of Moses from them and fulfilling the words of the Lord Jesus. Does He not challenge them with these words, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.

And ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life," (John 5:39-40)? Not until the veiled heart of Israel turns to the Lord, an event which will one day surely come to pass, will they see that Blessed Face and recognize Him as the long-expected Christ of God. The preaching of "Christ crucified" is still "… unto the Jews a stumbling block," (1 Cor. 1:23).

That salvation for the Jew is bound up with his seeing the Christ of God in Jesus of Nazareth is clear from 1 John 5:1, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God …", for that faith can only come by the Holy Spirit. When, at Caesarea Philippi, Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God!" The Lord answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven…" (Matt. 16:16-17).

A Veiled Gospel:

But what was, and is, true of Israel is also true of every individual who still remains in unbelief! Here we see the reason why men fail to see the beauty of our Lord Jesus. Paul explains that if there were still any who had not been enlightened it was not that he had concealed anything from them. He had used “great plainness of speech” in preaching Christ Jesus the Lord, in Whom all darkness is abolished. Darkness was on the part of those unto whom due to the blindness of unbelief he preached. He says, “If our gospel be hid (veiled), it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them.”

A Veiled Saviour:

As the Lord Jesus Christ walked among men, His glory was veiled, veiled by the flesh of the Man of Nazareth. Only those whose eyes had been opened by the Spirit of God could see anybody in Him but a son of man. “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary…? And they were offended at Him.” (Mark 6:3). They sought to stone Him, giving as their reason “… because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God!” (John 10:33). Later, they crucified Him for the same reason. (John 19:7).

Yet there were those who “… beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father …” (John 1:14). John: who wrote these words, was one of those “… eyewitnesses of His majesty” when, on the holy mount, “… His face did shine as the sun,” (2 Pet. 1:16, Matt. 17:2). For a brief moment His glory was unveiled. This was no reflection, as was the light which shone in the

face of Moses, but a revelation of the inherent glory of Him who is the Light of The World.

The Unveiled Christ:

“Nevertheless when it (the veiled heart, whether of Jew or Gentile) shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,” (vs. 16, 17). Omitting what appears to be a parenthesis, (Chap. 3:14-17) we read verse 13 and 18, “And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look… but we all, with open (unveiled) face beholding, as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Thus the apostle directs our eyes to the glory of His countenance.

The sight of our Saviour, dying for us on the cross, brought life to our dead souls and sight to our blinded eyes. Being enlightened, we look into the face of our risen Lord and our eyes find rest. Solomon wrote long ago, “The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.” (Ecc. 1:8) The eye which is filled with the vision of our Beloved Lord Jesus has found abundant satisfaction. After a sight of the beauty of the Lord all other sights are not worth looking at; for the glory of His face, shining into our hearts by the operation of the Holy Spirit, is able to transform our lives from glory to glory, from one degree of sanctification to a greater one, so that we may become more like Him.

It is His will that those who bear His Name shall also bear His character.

The contemplation of His face is to be the occupation of a lifetime, and to continue until that day when, with a body of glory, we shall see Him face to face. In that day we shall be like Him, fully conformed to His image, and with Him for all Eternity. How significant it is that the blessing of the Lord to Israel emphasized this aspect of His grace! (Num. 6:24-27).

The blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich, is imparted to us as we look into His face. So it was at the first in salvation, so it is now, and so it ever shall be until we see His face literally in glory.

The Unveiling Of Blind Eyes:

Paul could never forget that day on the Damascus road when, in spiritual blindness, he encountered "… a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun," and heard the voice of the One Whom he was persecuting, (Acts 26:13). Is it not likely that the source of that light was the face of the One Who spoke? The message by Ananias to him on that occasion was: "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard … delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God…" (Acts 22:14-15; 26:17-18).

Truly it can be written of Paul, as it was of Moses, that he was " … faithful in all His house, as a servant," (Heb. 3:5). Some of the experiences involved in the execution of Paul's commission are recorded in verses 8 to 18 of the fourth chapter: "But we have this treasure in

earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us," (vs. 7). No doubt Paul had in mind those "… empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers," with which the men of Gideon were equipped when they fought the host of Midian, (Judges 7:16). As those pitchers were made to be broken, that the light of the lamps might shine out, so Paul would have us realize that what matters most in our lives is that the light within us, placed there by God's hand, must shine out in this dark world. The more the world sought to break the frail vessel which was Paul, the more the excellency of Christ shone out, demonstrating how our Lord's words in Luke 14:26-33 work when actually lived out as they are intended to be. To Paul, it was not the earthen vessel that was important but the treasure within, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, which he had been commissioned to shed abroad.

The apostle's secret of endurance is revealed in the beautiful words: "For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal," (vs. 18).

The Purifying Hope (Jan 1957)

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F. J. Squire

God has given to us, not only something to live with, even eternal life, thereby constituting us His children; but also something to live for: the manifestation of His Son in glory; when we shall partake of that glory and be transformed into His likeness. This hope is presented to us as an incentive to holiness (1. John 2:28-3:3).

What Manner of Love

The Holy Spirit, as if to challenge comparison, points to God's love. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: …" (and several versions add, "and such, we are"). As well might we seek an answer to the question asked in Isaiah 40.25: "To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." His love is as incomparable as Himself.

Yet the Lord Jesus Christ takes up the challenge. Can God's love to us be adequately described? With unshod feet we would draw near while He holds communion with His Father and overhear those sacred words: "… that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me… and I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou halt loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:23, 26). His love, like His understanding, is infinite.

Sons of God

There was a time when our condition could be described as " … dead in trespasses and sins… by nature the children of wrath…" We were "…foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another…" (Ephesians 2:1-3., Titus 3:3). But God loved us. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

When, awakened by the Holy Spirit to the realization of our need, we received Him, and became His own. Then it was that we found that we had been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. But further, our faith in Him was followed by a very practical experience: even the actual indwelling in our bodies of the Holy Spirit of God. "In Him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14. RSV.). "…When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is the Spirit Himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God…" (Romans 8:15-16. RSV.). "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father'. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:6-7).

"…therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." In the five verses before us His Name is not mentioned: pronouns being used thirteen times. Yet

there can be no doubt as to His identity. “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not” (John 1:10); and unto us, in this the day of His rejection, “…it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Philippians 1:29).

It Doth Not Yet Appear

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet… appear… what… we… shall be:…” There are glories which concern the children of God which are yet to be revealed. Although “we know in part”, we know that the God of all grace has called us unto His eternal glory, for in the purpose of God we are already glorified together with His Son on the throne. By faith we now rejoice in hope of the glory of God, but the fulfilment of our hope of seeing Him and being made like Him might well be just the beginning of the glories which God has planned for His own. With our present limited capacities we are not able to understand all that is involved in the words of the Spirit as He describes the ultimate purpose of God, even though He has “… made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth…” In that day “… the creature (creation) itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” These things no doubt will be included in the “… salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” as the fulness of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus

is unfolded to the greater glory of God" (Ephesians 1:9-10., Romans 8:21., 1 Peter 1:5).

We Shall Be Like Him

"…but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him;…" Before the foundation of the world, God chose His people in Christ that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love, predestinating them unto son-ship. At that time He purposed that every one of His children should be conformed to the image of the Son of His love. Ultimately, God will be surrounded by a multitude which no man can number who will love Him perfectly and who will display the beauty and glory of His Son throughout eternity (Ephesians 1:4., Romans 8:29).

That this purpose might be accomplished, the Lord Jesus Christ died and rose again. "For it became Him … in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Hebrews 2:10). And now, as He awaits His manifestation, God is taking out of the nations the people whom He foreknew (John 6:43-45). As each individual believes the gospel, he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, God's seal of ownership: Who will never leave him until the redemption of the whole man is complete: spirit, soul and body.

The redemption of the body will be accomplished when the Lord Jesus Christ returns. Paul, writing to the Philippians (3:20-21. RSV.), reminds them that "…our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power which enables Him even to subject all things to Himself"; and to the Corinthians he wrote (1 Corinthians

15:51-53), “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality…”

We shall be like Him in all the perfection of His character. His work of grace in us will be complete, and then shall the Scripture be fulfilled: “…His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His Name shall be in their foreheads” (Philippians 1:6., Revelation 22:3-4).

We Shall See Him

“… for we shall see Him as He is.”

The day of Christ; His appearing; His manifestation; His revelation; His coming: all these words are used in Scripture to describe that great time when our Lord shall be seen “as He is.”

The Lord Jesus prayed: “Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24). The Father “…raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet” (Ephesians 1:20-22). His desire shall be fulfilled. It is to that great sight that we look forward: we shall be “eyewitnesses of His majesty.”

As the twelve companied with our Lord during the three years of His ministry: seeing His works, hearing His words, and witnessing His sufferings, His death, resurrection and ascension; their testimony was, "…we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14). That glory was the inherent purity of the Holy One of God: He Who is "Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders" (Exodus 15:11).

Yet that glorious holiness which drew forth the love and worship of His disciples only served to infuriate the ungodly and manifest their hatred. In the day of His manifestation the excellency of His glory shall be displayed to all creation. To His own this will be the greatest glory; but to those who do not know Him it will bring the utmost consternation: for "…every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Revelation 1:7).

Peter encouraged those who were passing through a time of testing by pointing to His appearing: "… now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, … might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:6-8). It is a testimony to the work of the Holy Spirit, that since our Lord ascended on high, myriads of newborn souls have confessed with joy that they love Him and that they are among the number of them "…that love His appearing." When we see His face we shall "…be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and…

know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge" (Ephesians 3:18-19). Under the sun, "…the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Ecclesiastes 1:8). But when we see Him our eyes shall remain on Him; for throughout eternity we shall never see a more glorious sight. We shall see the King in His beauty.

Let Us Cleanse Ourselves

This then is the hope which our Lord has set before us as an incentive to holiness: a hope which grows brighter day by day: for the path of the just is as the light of the dawn, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. "And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

God exhorted Israel, seven times in the book of Leviticus alone, to be holy; and in each case the exhortation was coupled with the perfectly adequate reason: "for I am holy." Peter the apostle, in the light of the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Christ Jesus, gives us the same exhortation, and the same reason (1 Peter 1:13-16).

"Follow… holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). We were predestinated to holiness; we have been called unto holiness; we are exhorted to be holy; we have been created in righteousness and true holiness; we are already accounted holy in Christ; and when He comes we shall be like Him in all the beauty of His holiness.

This is an intensely practical truth. In the measure with which we believe and enjoy the prospect of seeing our Lord in His glory and being like Him, we shall practise

holiness. We rejoice in the love of God which made us His children. Such a privilege lays upon us the responsibility to demonstrate our divine parentage by behaviour which is worthy of our Father. Those who bear His Name must bear His character. Since it is true, as the psalmist sang: “Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance” (Psalm 90:8). What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness! For we too shall be manifested. What we are shall be revealed, and some shall be ashamed in that day. John wrote “And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming” (1 John 2:28).

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ…our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:1-4). Exceeding great and precious promises are ours, that by these we might be partakers of the nature of God; and the means are available to us to purify ourselves: which we are exhorted to do in 2 Corinthians 7:1: “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

The filthiness of sin: both the gross corruption of the flesh and the abomination of pride, envy, self-righteousness, and other evils of the spirit, are ever within us; but children of God, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, need not be under the power of these things; for by means of the word of God and the prayer

of confession, we may, if we will, prove daily the reality of the Scripture: “…sin shall not have dominion over you” (Romans 6.14).

“God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin… If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:5-7, 9).

Holiness is well-pleasing to God. “That we might be partakers of His holiness” is the open secret behind much of the discipline through which He leads His children. A holy life is above all things most desirable and profitable even for itself; and especially in view of our “…blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (Hebrews 12:10, Titus 2:13).

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

For Me to Live is Christ (July 1957)

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F. J. Squire

Please read Philippians 1:12 - 26.

There are those whose whole life is spent for music; they love music with all their hearts: they have no other interest. With others the same is true of science; or business; or literature; or sports; or religion. Wholehearted effort in any of these spheres usually results in success, but as a rule the specialist knows little of anything else.

But Paul's life was comprehended in the word "Christ": not Christianity, but Himself. "Indeed" he confessed, "I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him.."; even though his ability and education must have been of such a character as to ensure prominence in any field of endeavour that he might have chosen (Philippians 3:8-9, RSV).

God's Perfect Man

It might be asked, "Would not such a life be very restricted; would there not be a danger of one becoming a fanatic: a religious enthusiast?" God has not left us in any doubt about the answer to that question, for in the four Gospels we see the life of God's perfect Man: the Lord Jesus Christ. There we have demonstrated what God intended every man to be like; and what every one

of His own will be like some day, for we are " … to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:29). The more our lives are conformed to His the more we shall attain to the fully-developed man.

Christ Magnified

When Paul wrote to the Philippians he was in prison for the testimony of Christ Jesus and facing possible martyrdom. He was assured, however, that through their prayers God would grant him deliverance; but as he mused upon the possibility of his death for Christ's sake, he declared that whatever his lot, his resolution was that Christ should be honoured in his body. The glory of his Lord was an object dearer than life itself; for to him to live was Christ, and to die but the climax to the fellowship of His sufferings which he continually endured, and his great gain. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ Who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20, RSV.).

Yet this attitude of Paul is not to be considered extraordinary in any respect whatever; for what Paul purposed is to be the normal object of every believer. If this is not so we are failing to heed the exhortation of the Holy Spirit as He presents us with our obligation to glorify God in our body, and the overwhelming reason why this should be our chief concern: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify

God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

"Ye Are Christ's"

What could be more reasonable than that we should seek our Father's wisdom to direct our lives? As our Creator, He surely knows better than we do how the faculties with which He has endowed us should be used to the greatest profit.

"Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not He correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity" (Psalm 94:9-11).

A man consists of spirit, soul and body. One who has not the Spirit of God is described as "soulish." (1 Corinthians 2:14, Newberry, margin). He has a spirit, but he lives in the realm of his soul. (All those things mentioned above are "soulish": not necessarily sinful, but not spiritual). His spirit is in a condition which is described in scripture as "dead." When such an one receives Christ he passes from death to life. Then Christ dwells within him, and the Holy Spirit Himself witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God (Romans 8:16). Not till then is it possible for his intelligence, his emotions or his will to function as God intended them to. Then he begins to live; and the extent to which he exercises his will in yielding to God the use of his faculties will be the measure in which he will be able to say truly, "To me to live is Christ!"

Counting the Cost

Of course there is a price to pay, and not everybody is willing to pay it. One of the saddest of scriptures is Matthew 19:21-22: “Jesus said unto him, ‘If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me.’ But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.”

“God has His best things for the few

Who dare to stand the test;

God has His second choice for those

Who will not take His best.”

It will cost—everything: and in addition, the cross; for it must be stressed that we cannot live Christ without the cross. God demands our utmost: for He gave His utmost to redeem us to Himself.

“If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.… So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:26-27, 33).

What did the cross mean to Paul? At least part of the answer is found in 2 Corinthians 11:23-31 (RSV).

“Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one — I am talking like a madman — with far greater labours, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one… Three times I have

been beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He Who is blessed for ever, knows that I do not lie."

Yet far from indulging in self-pity, he gloried in the cross. Could there be a more triumphant attitude to those bitter experiences than this?

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

"And He said unto me, 'My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (Galatians 6:14, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

Was such a life worth what it cost to Paul? After a life spent for "soulish" things, what of eternity? If this is all we have, to die is loss: "for what shall it profit a man, if

he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). But the prospect before the apostle as he faced eternity was "… to die is gain"; "…to be with Christ; which is far better"; "… for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" (Philippians 1:21, 23, 2 Corinthians 4:17). Yet we do not have to wait for death, for "… godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:8).

To Please Him

Was Paul's life a success? After nearly twenty centuries he who described himself as "…less than the least of all saints" is regarded by millions to be among the greatest of men: towering spiritually above the people of God as his namesake did physically, "… higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward" (1 Samuel 10:23). What greater assurance of success could one have than to be able to say in truth:

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Enoch, in ancient times, had this testimony "… that he pleased God"; and God the Father could bestow no higher honour upon His beloved Son than to express His approval in the words, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased …" (John 8:29, Matthew 17:5). To obtain such a commendation was the purpose which

dominated the life of Paul, for he wrote, “We make it our aim to please Him.” This grand object, the only one worthy of those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, is well within the reach of every child of God. To prove experimentally “… what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God,” is the joy of those who will present their bodies to Him unconditionally. None ever did more than this, for this is to choose God’s best (2 Corinthians, 5:9, RSV, Romans 12:1).

“Brethren,” wrote Paul, “be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample … For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 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” (Philippians 3:17, 20-21).

God's Sure Foundation (Feb 1958)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 4 No. 2, Feb 1958.

Fred J. Squire

Please read Numbers 16 & 17 and 2 Timothy 2, 3, & 4:1-4.

The Gainsaying Of Core" was evidently in the mind of Paul when he wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy. The sad consequences of that affair were so disastrous that God sought to keep Israel in remembrance of them by means of "broad plates" which were used to cover the altar. The brazen altar is no more; but the necessity to be continually reminded of the lesson which those plates taught, remains: and always will as long as there are men who will repeat the sin of Korah.

The Rebellion Of Korah

The rebellion of Korah and his adherents was three-fold: they sinned against God, against Moses, and against themselves; for they are described as ".. sinners against their own souls". This identifies it as the work of the arch-rebel, Satan.

Korah's complaint to Moses and Aaron was, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Dathan and Abiram added insolence to this accusation: they refused to come to Moses at his request and charged him with deception. The revolt spread throughout the camp. Korah succeeded in gaining the confidence, not only of "… two

hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown", but of all the congregation; for he gathered them all to the door of the tabernacle, where the glory of the Lord appeared unto them.

It is evident that before the sedition could have become so extensive there must have been much secret conspiracy among the people. Their defection was brought about, no doubt, in three stages: first, they listened to Korah's plausible plan; then they began to believe in it; and finally, they joined him actively. Their conversion to Korah's ideas was so thorough that they persisted in them even after their leaders had suffered the judgment of God.

God's Answer

Moses was cast upon God. He fell on his face: not before the rebels, but before God. Moses did not attempt to vindicate himself: he threw the responsibility upon God. He had learned that he could do this when he was doing the will of God. In a later day God taught Jehoshaphat the same lesson when He said (2 Chronicles 25:15-17), ".. Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's … Ye shall not need to fight in this battle.. " Moses was given grace to handle the matter according to the mind of God. He recalled that it was written (Numbers 3:10), "And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death." Moses, with the experience of Nadab and Abihu fresh in his memory (Leviticus 10:1-11), must have realized the solemnity of putting this scripture to the test when he suggested that

both Aaron and Korah and his company take censers, and, with incense, approach unto the Lord. He knew that the presumption of the rebels would meet with judgment, for he was on the sure foundation of the word of truth. That judgment was administered quickly by God Himself, for ".. there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense."

God answered the insurrection with three-fold judgment: fire, the pit, and the plague. These terrible consequences of sin foreshadowed the awful end reserved for the author of rebellion and all those who are his ".. where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:44). God vindicated Moses: not primarily for Moses' sake, but, because he was appointed of God, rebellion against the authority of Moses was rebellion against God Himself. "The Lord will shew who are His, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto Him: even him whom He hath chosen will He cause to come near unto Him." Then God demanded a clear-cut separation from those under condemnation: "Depart … from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins."

Then, after the fire had fallen, God remembered mercy. "The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar:.. to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord; that he be not as Korah, and as his company.. " Thus the Lord sought to warn coming generations in Israel of the danger of disregarding God's order of approach unto Him. In spite

of this ever-present memorial, however, no less a person than King Uzziah '.. transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense", so bringing upon himself the plague of leprosy. (2 Chronicles 26:16).

God's Choice

Following these events, which resulted in the death of over fourteen thousand of the people: God gave Israel a "sign", in order to settle once for all the question of His choice of who should approach unto Him and go before the people. Moses did not need this evidence: he was quite content to believe the word of God; but unbelieving Israel needed signs and wonders to convince them that God was still among them.

The rod is the symbol of leadership: so a rod from each tribe was laid up before the Lord. "And it shall come to pass," said the Lord, "that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from Me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you." "And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds."

Thus God witnessed to His appointment of Moses and Aaron and the truth of His word. From a piece of dead wood God brought life and fruitfulness: thereby presenting a beautiful type of resurrection; pointing forward to the coming Great Leader Whom God would declare to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4). That fruitful rod was kept for an everlasting reminder of God's

authority. So the victorious resurrection of our Lord is ever to be kept in remembrance both as a living power in our lives and in our gospel testimony before the world.

The rebellion of Korah reveals in prophetic events the source, the nature, the aims, the methods, and the end of both the author and all those who spread evil doctrine. It also shows us the method whereby Satan’s purposes can be defeated and foretells that great work by which God has finally overcome the adversary. Surely we need not be ignorant of his devices.

God's Sure Foundation (Mar 1958)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 4 No. 3, Mar 1958.

Fred J. Squire

Please read Numbers 16 and 17 and 2 Timothy 2, 3, and 4:1-4

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself was the first to warn us of the coming of false teachers. Since then the Holy Spirit has continued to remind us of the dangers of the flood of evil doctrine which now overspreads the world. The increase of false teaching in the world to-day constitutes ample proof of the truth of the many prophecies concerning these things in the word of God.

God has given us many detailed warnings of false teachers and their doctrines. These will increase unto more ungodliness, for evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. These men are under the direction of “seducing spirits”, and their teachings are “doctrines of demons.” Satanically inspired, their ultimate object is to dethrone God in the hearts of His own and to dishonour His Son. This has always been the purpose of Satan from the garden of Eden. He seeks to do this by the propagation of “the lie”. This doctrine has many variations, but it always includes “Ye shall not surely die!” in one form or another and the denial of the Deity of Christ. The devil’s lie was the original “party line.” It has never changed; it is still successful in luring men and women to eternal doom and in overthrowing the faith of unwary saints who linger in the paths of sin.

The word of God shows us who and what are against us. Satan has no other resources than those which are clearly revealed in the word of God.

If His word abides in us we cannot be taken by surprise, "… for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11). We are not called upon to know all the many forms of error which the devil uses to deceive: there is enough teaching within the pages of the Written Word concerning the devices of Satan to enable us to avoid them intelligently. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which 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).

Exploiting His Triumph

In spite of the fact that we may not always be able to answer false teachers or to expose the fallacy of their arguments, we have no reason to fear Satan and his wiles. We know that ".. greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4), and that by His death and resurrection our Lord "…. spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15). We may know experimentally "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet.." (Ephesians 1:19-22). Just as it is wonderfully possible to have the peace of God

ruling our hearts and minds in the midst of a world of sin and strife and sorrow by the exercise of a God-given faith in Him, so is it possible to be kept from evil doctrine and practice by obedience to His Word for along with the prophecies and warnings of danger the Holy Spirit has shown us the means whereby we may walk in safety.

The Foundation Of Our Faith

Hymenaeus and Philetus were among the first of those apostates to whom Paul referred when he said to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:30), ".. also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." They had evidently taught their error to others for the faith of some had been overthrown. When warning Timothy of these men the Apostle by the Spirit recalled two of the words which God gave to Moses upon the occasion of Korah's rebellion. He presents these scriptures as the sure foundation for our faith: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, 'The Lord knoweth them that are His', and, 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'" (2 Timothy 2:10).

Let us consider this two-fold "seal". "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 8:3), "But if any man love God, the same is known of Him." The first line of defence against doctrines of demons is for our affections to be wholly taken up with our blessed Lord. "… He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him." (Psalm 45:11). He is to be the Lord of our lives indeed: to such an extent that every thought is to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). "Thought control" is to be a

practical reality to those who would be disciples indeed. Only by this means can our minds enjoy perfect liberty. If He is Lord of our lives then He will be Lord of our ears: and He has directed that our ears are not to be used to listen to the devil's lie in any of its forms. The Holy Spirit has given us repeated warnings to "shun", "avoid", "turn away", from evil doctrine and those who teach it. If the individual members of the congregation of Israel had not lent their ears to Korah's heresy it would not have become so disastrous. Knowing the truth, it is not necessary for us to know every false way.

How good it is to know that we are His! Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, we rejoice in the knowledge that we are the bondslaves of Him Who bought us. We look forward to the day when the Father will fulfil the prayer of our Lord, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). The day will come when He will show to all creation who are His and who is holy. This will indeed be "… salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Timothy 2:10). To be known and owned of Him, sharing all the Father's love, will be heaven beyond imagination.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." (John 10:27-29).

“The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders” (Deuteronomy 33:12).

The Lord knoweth them that are His.

The Proof Of Faith

“Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.” This portion of the “seal” has a very practical side too.

This is at once a solemn warning and a reminder of our responsibility. It is, of course, obvious that only those who are Christ’s can depart from iniquity: for all others are still in the bond of iniquity, regardless of how they may appear unto men. Because our Lord has conferred the honour of His Name upon us we are not to presume that we are immune from the danger of bringing dishonour upon that holy Name. No doubt Hymenaeus and Philetus bore the Name of Christ at one time; perhaps at the very time that Paul wrote of them, but they erred concerning the truth. How this should remind us of the scripture, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

Salvation is meaningless if it does not deliver us from sin in our lives. Job understood this when he said “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” (Job 28:28). A holy life will keep us from falling a prey to the snare of the devil and the only way to accomplish this is to abide in Christ (John 15:3-4). We are easily led into doctrinal error if we are living in sin, for after all, the devil’s purpose in propagating the lie is to entice us back into the bondage

of sin. Failing to depart from iniquity, we do the devil's work for him.

How little we realize what an honour it is to be one of those who name the Name of Christ! And how careful we should be "… that the Name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed" (1 Timothy 6:1), for the proof before the world of the reality of salvation through the blood of Christ is a holy life on the part of those who profess to believe in His Name. Such a life, lived by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God, is unassailable by demons or men for it upholds the honour of His Name. The life which is characterized by this two-fold seal is one which God will use for His glory. It will be "… a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Timothy 2:21). Just how He will use us, He knows; but the preparation for that work is largely in our own hands. We may not be called upon to preach the word as was Timothy, but whether we preach or not the responsibility of every one of us is to "… adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:10), that all men may see that the word that is preached actually has the power to deliver men from sin.

God's Triumphant Declaration

God's answer to the powers of darkness and all those associated with them in the propagation of evil doctrine is the resurrection of Christ Jesus. There can be no answer to that argument. Hence the Holy Spirit's charge to Timothy by Paul, and to gospel preachers in every age is "Remember Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel…" (2 Timothy 2:8): and, most solemn of all, "I charge thee

therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; PREACH THE WORD; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come (it has already come) when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:1-4).

In view of this, it behooves us to be in deadly earnest in the discharge of the responsibility which God has laid upon us. He has entrusted us with the proclamation of the unsearchable riches of Christ to a poor sinful world whose chief need is that very message. This is the only message really worth preaching, for it is the power of God to every one that believeth. Let us then see to it that, as stewards, we shall be found faithful to our holy trust.

Our Inheritance in Christ (July 1959)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 5 No. 7, July 1959.

F. J. Squire

The first chapter of “Ephesians”, which mentions “the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” also speaks of the gathering together of all things in Christ “ … even in Him: in Whom also we have obtained an inheritance …”

The chosen ones are His inheritance: to be chosen, ours; His inheritance is to possess us: ours to be possessed by Him; His joy is to place His Name upon us: ours to be called by His Name.

The Promise of Eternal Inheritance

When God made His covenant with Abram He promised him the land — a temporal inheritance; but under the new covenant God has given to those who are the called, “the promise of eternal inheritance” (Hebrews 9:15). The apostle Peter praised God for this grace when he wrote, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you …” (1. Peter 1:3-4).

In contrast with earthly inheritances, ours can neither spoil nor be spoiled; it will not fade away nor can it be stolen from us; even we ourselves cannot waste it for it is reserved in heaven for us. This is real estate that is

real indeed, for it is eternal, and of much greater value than all the treasures of earth.

Three of the qualities of this inheritance are mentioned in Ephesians 1:3-6: He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing; He has chosen us in Him that we should be holy; He has predestinated us in love to be His sons.

Every Spiritual Blessing

God revealed Himself to Abram as “El Shaddai”: the All-Sufficient God (Genesis 17:1); and in His subsequent dealings with his descendents He used the title “Jehovah.” Down the years, as the various needs of the people became evident, God disclosed further aspects of His sufficiency when He referred to Himself as: “Jehovah our Maker”; “Jehovah will provide”; “Jehovah that healeth thee”; “Jehovah my banner”; “Jehovah that doth sanctify you”; “Jehovah our God”; “Jehovah thy God”; “Jehovah my God”; “Jehovah send peace”; “Jehovah of hosts”; “Jehovah my shepherd”; “Jehovah most high”; “Jehovah our righteousness”; “Jehovah is there.”

When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, He made additional revelations of His ability to meet the needs not only of Israel but of all mankind when He linked the Divine Name “I Am” (Exodus 3:14) with several familiar metaphors: “I am the bread of life”; “I am the light of the world”; “Before Abraham was I Am”; “I am the door”; “I am the good shepherd”; “I am the resurrection and the life”; “I am the way, the truth, and the life”; and when He presented Himself to the temple guards in the garden of Gethsemane, the word He spoke, grand in its simplicity and superbly significant

was, “I Am!”. In resurrection glory He supplemented these with further claims when He said: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” and “I am the first and the last: He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death”; and finally, in prospect of the breaking of the day: “I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.”

These different expressions of the Name of God emphasize the fulness of His sufficiency and make known something of the infinite resources behind the assurance, “But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). In Christ all things that pertain to life and godliness are ours. The Levites (Numbers 18:20) lost nothing by having the Lord alone as their inheritance; neither do the people of God today. Men of this world “have their portion in this life,” but we who are His can say in truth, “My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever” (Psalm 17:14, 73:26).

Elected In Holiness

Pre-eminently, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the “Chosen of God” (Isaiah 42:1, 1 Peter 2:4), but in the exceeding riches of His grace we were chosen in Him — that we should be holy and without blame before Him. God wishes to perfect His love in us as it is perfected in His Son. Should He tolerate one sin in us, that would be sufficient to cause us to doubt His love for it would separate us from Him for ever.

If there is one word more than any other which aptly describes the nature of God, that word is “holy.” The Spirit of God uses the word frequently for this purpose. The Lord Jesus Christ, Who expressed the Holy Name of the Father, is identified as the Holy One of God, while the Spirit Himself is the Holy Spirit. God has not left us in any uncertainty as to His character, for He has embodied it in a human life. The life of the Lord Jesus Christ fully demonstrated the character of God; but the contemplation of the glory and the beauty of that life would but cause us to despair were it not for the further revelation of His purpose that His own children shall partake of His holiness experimentally. God has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son: the beauty of the Lord our God shall be upon us and He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe in the day of His glory (2 Thessalonians 1:10).

The presence of the Holy Spirit within us is evinced by the desire for holiness and a “hunger and thirst after righteousness”; and we have His assurance that these longings shall be satisfied for He will present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. “Just as we have borne the image of the mail of dust, we shall also bear the image of the Man of Heaven” (1 Corinthians 15:49, RSV).

Predestinated to Sonship

“He destined us in love to be His sons through Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 1:5, RSV).

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!” (1 John 3:1). Without question, if we would understand the

true dignity of sonship we must consider The Son. That blessed relationship which exists within the Being of the Godhead was made known to mankind when the Son of God became the Son of Man. He was entrusted as Man with the honour of the Father. He came in His Father's Name to manifest that Name. Everything He was and said and did had this purpose in view and it was abundantly fulfilled. He counted it the greatest honour to be the Son of Man, for as such He became the Servant of God. He delighted to carry out His Father's will, even though it involved the depths of degradation and sorrow: physical, mental, and spiritual. His love was proved by His obedience, even unto death.

The walk of the Son of Man was marked by dependence upon His Father. That dependence was shown by His regard for the fulfilment of the things which were written concerning Himself. By the written Word He knew all the things which were to come upon Him; and when those things were all accomplished He said, "It is finished": and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. His dependence upon the Father was also shown by His prayer life. His whole life was spent in the conscious presence of His Father, yet He set apart days and nights for the purpose of using His lips for supplication, thanksgiving, intercession, and the adoration of His Father's Name. These occasions must have been the most enjoyable which He spent upon earth, for He loved the presence of God.

Sonship implies love, communion, guidance, counsel, sharing of resources and interests, provision, instruction, training, discipline: and all these He experienced at the hands of His Father; and all these are also included in our sonship: which is a closer and

dearer relationship than any earthly bond. Our Father expects us to believe this and to love Him and obey His will. "… because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father'" (Galations 4:6).

Our inheritance is in Him. "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; (He has been appointed heir of all things) if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Romans 8:16-17).

"Beloved, 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" (1 John 3:2).

The Earnest of Our Inheritance

Our inheritance is reserved in heaven for us; but we do not have to wait for heaven before we can enjoy it, for God has given to us an earnest — a pledge. The presence of His Holy Spirit in our hearts is the hope, or assurance of coming glory.

When God said to Abram, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it", Abram answered, "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" God then instituted His covenant with him: which covenant became the basis for all God's dealings with the chosen seed (Genesis 15:7-8). When, in fulfilment of His promise, He redeemed His people from Egypt, He did not leave them to make their own way to their inheritance. He assured them of His presence among them and promised to lead them,

supply their needs and defend them until they entered the land of promise. “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest” was God’s promise to Moses. “… He made His own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. And He led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. And He brought them to the border of His sanctuary, even to this mountain, which His right hand had purchased: He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents” (Psalm 78:52-55).

Thus, by “example and shadow” God established the principle that His presence would be with His heavenly people during their pilgrimage. Tabernacle and Temple, designated as God’s dwelling place, foreshadowed the “Greater and more perfect Tabernacle”: the Lord Jesus Christ.

He revealed Himself as the true Temple of God when He said, “Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me” (John 14:11). He first revealed the truth of the indwelling of the Spirit in His own with the words: “… the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17). Since Pentecost the Holy Spirit has been both in and with the people of God: dwelling in their hearts individually and in their midst collectively: in their bodies His temple, and, since this is so, the Church His body, bound together in the unity of the Spirit: the habitation of God. (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20, Ephesians 2:21-22). It can be truly said of every believer, “In Him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the

gospel of your salvation, and have believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14, RSV).

The Reward of Inheritance

"Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:23, RSV).

Nothing can be more certain of fulfilment than the promise of God. His written word is the title-deed of our inheritance. The time will surely come when the Lord will say: "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world …" (Matthew 25:34).

God made a promise to Abraham regarding his inheritance and his posterity at a time when all appearances were against the possibility of the promise being fulfilled. Nevertheless he believed God in spite of appearances: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able to perform … and so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise" (Romans 4:20-21, Hebrews 6:15).

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Hebrews 10:35-36).

* * *

We have no promise that the road
Of life has no detours;
But that the love and grace of God
Forevermore endures!
We have no promise that our way
Will not be hard and long,
But that, at last, will dawn the day
Of endless joy and song.

His Inheritance (Aug 1959)

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F. J. Squire

Of all the incomprehensible things which God has revealed concerning Himself, perhaps the most difficult to understand is why He, the Possessor of heaven and earth, should need an “inheritance”; for it is written of Him: “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needed any thing, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things…” (Acts 17:25). But when we learn that those whom He has saved by His grace are His inheritance, as Israel in Egypt when they heard that the Lord had visited His people and had looked upon their affliction, we can but bow our heads and worship. When we were dead in sins He loved us with an everlasting love, redeemed us by His blood, and united us to Himself for ever. Then, after all this, He speaks of “His glorious inheritance in the saints” (Ephesians 1:18, RSV).

Chosen for His Own Inheritance

The Psalmist sang concerning Israel: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance” (Psalm 33:12). In the unfolding of His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus, which involved the revelation of Himself to men, God chose the seed of Abraham; and throughout their long history He continued to pour out expressions of His love to them; using them to display His love by word and

deed until the time came when that love was fully demonstrated in His Son. To what other people did God speak such words as these?

“For the Lord’s portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance” (Deuteronomy 32:9).

“Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in Thy hand.”

“The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders.”

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.”

“Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and Who is the sword of thy excellency!” (Deuteronomy 33:3, 12, 27, 29).

“Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee” (Jeremiah 31:3).

Other Sheep I Have

These promises to Israel, although given in love, were despised by them as a nation, for in the fulness of time when He Who had made these promises came unto His own, His own received Him not. He had to accuse them: “I am come in My Father’s Name, and ye receive Me not …” (John 5:43). After speaking to the Jews in the parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen, He said: “Did ye never read in the Scriptures, ‘The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in

our eyes?' Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof … And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them" (Matthew 21:33-46). The Holy Spirit by Peter the apostle takes up this same Scripture and applies the promises which were made to Israel on the condition "If ye will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant" (Exodus 19:5), to that "one flock" of which the Lord Himself is the "One Shepherd" (John 10:16).

"Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, 'The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,' and 'a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,' even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a 'chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;' that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: which in time past were 'not a people', but are now 'the people of God:' which 'had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.' " (1 Peter 2:7-10).

A Chosen Generation

God's purpose provided that in Abraham all families of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3). Israel in unbelief sought to limit the scope of that blessing to their own family; but God had from the beginning planned that a people for His Name would be called from all nations. Those who are in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, were chosen and called with a holy calling, "not according to their works, but according to His own

purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Timothy 1:9).

Israel were an elect people: they were chosen in Abraham before any of them were born; and God gave them two reasons why He had chosen them (Deuteronomy 7:7-8). "The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people: for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen …." These two reasons also apply to the people of God today. Because of that great love wherewith He loved us, and because of the blood of the everlasting covenant, we are His. Before the world began we were His by the gift of the Father; then His by creation; then by redemption; and now, by His grace, we are His by choice. He calls us His beloved; His bride; His fulness; His body; His people; His saints; His sheep; His Church; all of which teach us something more of the blessed relationship which He has established between Himself and His inheritance.

An Holy Nation

"The Hebrew term for 'holy' is generally supposed to mean 'separated, set apart.' But this is only its secondary signification, derived from the purpose of that which is holy. Its primary meaning is to be splendid beautiful, pure and uncontaminated. God is holy — as the Absolutely Pure, Resplendent, and Glorious One. Hence this is symbolized by the light. God dwelleth in light that is unapproachable … And Israel was to be a

holy people as dwelling in the light through its covenant-relationship to God. It was not the selection of Israel from all other nations that made them holy, but the relationship to God into which it brought the people…" (Dr. Edersheim, "Bible History" II, Ch. 2, p. 110).

"When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land … and hath cast out many nations before thee … thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them … but thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God …" (Deuteronomy 7:1-6). As with Israel, so with His inheritance today: there must be no compromise with sin or sinners. "Peace through the blood of His cross" was not a negotiated peace. There was no "appeasement" at Calvary, but an utter destruction of the enemy.

The Lord emerged from that conflict as the Conqueror, Who destroyed Satan and delivered those who were in the bondage of death: re-creating and sanctifying them to Himself, for they were predestinated to partake of His holiness.

The presence of the Holy Spirit within us, ever seeking to conform us to His image, is the assurance that some day we shall be like Him and stand holy and without blame before Him. We are now in Him as a holy nation; but He seeks to wean us away from the uncleanness of the world and display His character in us. He calls us to

a life that is splendid, beautiful, pure, and uncontaminated: even to walk as He walked.

A Royal Priesthood

"And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests …" (Exodus 19:6). Israel's priesthood was instituted by God Himself and her priests were described as "the ministers of the Lord." They were appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins; but everything about them and their ministry was typical: they served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." (Hebrews 8:5). But when Christ Jesus appeared, as the Great High Priest He offered the one sacrifice for sins for ever: thereby perfecting for ever them that are sanctified. Since the Substance has come, the shadows have departed and there remains no more offering for sins.

When our Lord passed into the heavens, the Holy Spirit proclaimed the institution of an eternal priesthood; consisting of One Great High Priest and in Him a great company of those whom He has redeemed by His blood. This His inheritance constitutes His royal priesthood: ever to be occupied with His ministry. "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ … But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood …" (1 Peter 2:5,9). "To Him Who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Revelation 1:5-6, RSV). We are called upon to exercise the privilege of approach as believer-priests in these words: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He

hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water …" (Hebrews 10:19-22).

The priest's office was given to Aaron and his sons as a "service of gift" and was to be exercised by them exclusively unto the Lord (Numbers 18:7). In like manner when our High Priest ascended on high He dispensed gifts to His ministers that they might serve Him acceptably. His First and Greatest Gift was, of course, the Holy Spirit Himself: without Whom no service can be acceptable to Him. With and in Him He has given to all His priests gifts, or endowments; and these the Spirit has apportioned to each one as He willed (1. Corinthians 12:11).

The tribe of Levi was separated "to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto Him, and to bless in His Name …" (Deuteronomy 10:8). To exalt Him Whom the ark of the covenant typified, to minister unto the Lord, and to be a blessing by displaying His holiness is priestly ministry indeed. It is a "royal priesthood because we are inseparably associated with the King and the kingdom; and our ministry shall endure for ever, for His kingdom is everlasting. "His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His Name shall be in their foreheads" (Revelations 22:3-4).

A Peculiar People

"Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure

unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine …" (Exodus 19:5). The most beautiful and precious object carried by Israel's high priest was the breastplate of judgment. It consisted of twelve jewels, each engraven with the name of one of the tribes, and each displaying a beauty of its own, yet all contributing to the resplendent glory of the whole collection. Mounted in a setting of pure gold, and borne upon the high priest's heart before the Lord continually, they typified the Lord's inheritance and their identification with Him in everything but the sprinkling of the blood in the holiest.

It is a cause for great rejoicing that our names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20). The symbol of the breastplate suggests that these names are written, not on some celestial honour roll, although that would be glory far more than we could ever deserve, but actually upon the heart of Him Who sits upon the throne. As a victor proudly wears the decorations won on the field of battle, He ever confesses our names before His Father with great joy. God chose Israel because He loved them and His people today are His beloved; His peculiar treasure. No more beautiful description was ever applied to any people than "The beloved of the Lord." The measure of His love is beyond our understanding for it "passeth knowledge." He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Truly He regards us as a "pearl of great price!" Where His treasure is — that which He values most — there is His heart.

Praise Ye the Lord!

“This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise” (Isaiah 43:21).

We have been chosen for His own inheritance; appointed a kingdom and a priesthood; sanctified and made fit for His presence; treasured as a precious possession: all in order that we might show forth the glory of His Name, for no more worthy occupation is possible for His creatures. Yet the theme of our praise is not the fact that we have been called out of darkness into His marvellous light; not that from being hateful and hating one another we have been called to be God’s own people; not that He saved us according to His abundant mercy: these things are the manifestation of His grace and fit subjects indeed for eternal thanksgivings; but the infinite worth of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Whose Name alone is excellent.

The new heaven and the new earth will be filled with His praises; and we, into whose mouth, He has put the new song will sing that song unto Him Who is greatly to be praised. Heaven must be a place of exceeding joy for it is the place of everlasting praise. There is an intimate connection between the statements, “In Thy presence is fulness of joy: at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” and “ … every creature which is in heaven, … heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Psalm 16:11, Revelation 5:13). But our Lord would have us show forth His praises here and now — and we have every reason for so doing —for this anticipates our occupation in glory and gives us a foretaste of the joy of heaven.

“From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord’s Name is to be praised” ‘Psalm 113:3).

Because Ye Are Sons (Mar 1962)

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F. J. Squire

The greatest joy of the Man of Sorrows was His Father's love. He prayed, "O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was… Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." What was that "glory" but the eternal love which subsisted between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: the bond of Deity? (John 17:5, 24).

"The Son of His love:… Who is the image of the invisible God, Firstborn of all creation: for by Him were all things created that are in the heavens, and that are on earth, visible and invisible,…all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist…that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand." This authority He never relinquished; for even on the eve of the cross He knew that "the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God." The "princes of this world" actually crucified the Lord of glory! (Col. 1:13-18, Newb. marg.; John 3:35, 13:3; 1 Cor. 2:8).

Predestinated to Sonship

However, the Father's greatest love-gift to His Son was not the possession of those "all things" which He created, but the inheritance of a people for His Name. That people was foreknown and chosen in Him before anything was created, and predestinated to be conformed to His image; that Heaven might be filled with a multitude of children, every one of whom would be resplendent in the holy character of the beloved One and united to Him in the bond of everlasting love. Their names were written in the book of life, for they were predestinated to sonship (John 17:23; Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:4-5; Luke 10:20).

But the bringing of many sons to glory required that the Son of God Himself must become their Redeemer and lay down His own life as Son of Man, for the whole world lay in the wicked one and those whom He loved were alienated from Him and enemies by wicked works. Primarily because He loved the Father and delighted to do His will, but also because He loved those whom the Father had given Him, He was willing to give Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. Even though all the fulness of Deity dwelt in Him, He made peace by the blood of His cross and reconciled us to Himself; that He might present us holy and unblameable and unreproveable in His sight (1 John 5:19; Col. 1:19-22; John 14:31; Heb. 2:10; Eph. 5:2).

How We Became Sons

We were not always sons. Nobody ever became a son of God by natural birth. On the contrary, before we were given life by the Spirit of God we were dead in sins, and as such "children of wrath:" revealing our evil nature by

fulfilling the desires of our corrupt minds. But God, who is rich in mercy, called us from death to life. Experimentally, we became sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. We received the Lord Jesus Christ; even as those of whom it was written, “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” “Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth” (Eph. 2:1-7; John 1:11-14; Jas. 1:18).

God sent forth His Son to redeem His people: that they might receive the gift of sonship. “And because ye are sons,” He sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba, Father.” When we received Christ Jesus, the Spirit of God took up His dwelling within us, bringing the life of God: we were born of the Spirit, and His presence became evident by our recognition of God as our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, and the Holy Spirit as our Comforter. The indwelling Spirit characterizes the sons of God. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God…ye have received the Spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, “Abba, Father.” … the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God (Gal. 4:4-7; Rom. 8:9, 14-18).

We are sons; not “adopted sons” in the sense in which that term is generally understood, but sons by spiritual birth: born into the family of God and partakers of the divine nature. God our Father would have us to be fully assured of our sonship; for He has a glorious destiny planned for His children; and there are exclusive privileges to be enjoyed and obligations to be discharged (2 Pet. 1:4).

Destiny of the Sons of God

“If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together… wherefore thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” With our sonship, our Father has given us an inheritance in Christ. Our destiny is inseparable from His, for we were given to Him before the foundation of the world. One in Christ, the sons of God shall share His glory and the possession of all those things which were created by and for Him.

“All things are yours,” wrote Paul, “whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, for His divine power has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. Since we have received God’s greatest Gift, this could not be otherwise, for “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:7; 1 Cor. 3:23; Eph. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 8:32).

But God has a greater and more glorious future planned for His sons than the enjoyment of “all things,” or even than the dignity of sonship. His purpose in choosing us in Christ was that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: that we should be His sons not only by divine birth but also by divine character; and that each of His own should bear the likeness of His beloved Son and be united to Him forever.

The fulfilment of that purpose is the object of all of our Father's gracious dealings with us on our journey home. God deals with us as with sons. Every activity of the Spirit within us; all His exhortations; all His discipline; all suffering for Christ's sake; are designed for the perfection of our character: that we might be partakers of His holiness. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose:" and to understand that purpose is to solve many of the perplexing problems which we encounter in our lives (Heb. 12:5-11; Rom. 8:28).

His purpose will surely be accomplished; for even though we manifest little of the character of our Lord now, when we shall see Him we shall be like Him. Fully transformed into His image, we shall be presented faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Then shall our beloved Lord, who loved the Church and gave Himself for it, having sanctified and cleansed it, present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish (1 John 3:1-3; Jude 24; Eph. 5:25-27).

The Privileges of Sonship

We share our Father's life. Of all the blessings that could have been bestowed upon men, the greatest is the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Christ is our life; and we enjoy the closest communion with His Father, because He is our Father. Far beyond earth's sweetest relationship is the bond which binds us to our Father. He has placed His Name upon us; sealed us as His own by the Spirit, and made Himself responsible to supply all our needs, spiritual and material, until He

takes us home. He seeks our love; and for that love to be evinced by obedience to His will, for therein is the maximum of blessing and satisfaction forus. He delights to hear our voices in prayer, and to accept the thanksgivings, the worship and praise which must flow from adoring hearts (Psa. 37:4).

We share His light. Once we walked in the vanity of our minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in us; but the light of truth brought us the knowledge of our sin, and led us to confession and the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We became children of light, rejoicing in the truth and enjoying fellowship with Him in whom is no darkness at all, and obtaining access to all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in Him. We enjoy the privilege of shining as lights in the world and of showing forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light (Eph. 4:18; 1 Thess. 5:4-8; 1 John 1:3-7; 1 Pet. 2:9).

We share His love. “The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me.” How great a privilege it is to be of those who are beloved of God! Our salvation had its source in the love wherewith the Father loved the Son; and we have been made partakers of that love, which has been poured into our hearts by and with the Holy Spirit. Thus we in turn are able to love: because He first loved us. The fruit of the Spirit is love: which brings in its train joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. These lovely graces are the heritage of the sons of God and the Spirit delights to produce them within us and cause them to flow out to our Father, to those who are His, and even to

those whom He loves, though they may be enemies. “Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God … for God is love” (John 16:27; 1 John 4:7-8, 19; Gal. 5:22-23).

Noblesse Oblige

Because we are sons, and enjoy the privileges of the highest degree of sonship, we have commensurate obligations to discharge: to God our Father; to His children; and to the world.

The Father’s approval of the Lord Jesus Christ was expressed by His word, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him!” Our Lord not only claimed to be the Son of God, but He manifested His Father’s Name by His perfect life. His own testimony to the Jews was, “He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.” Our Father has honoured us by calling us unto the fellowship of His Son and making us His sons; and since He has not left us alone but given to us His Spirit to dwell in us, He expects us to behave as His sons. Therefore, “He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked” (Matt. 17:5; John 8:29; 1 John 2:6).

“Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.” It is unfortunately possible for us to be like those of whom it was written, “For the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you;” but on the other hand, we may let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven (2 Tim. 2:19; Rom. 2:24; Matt. 5:16).

We have an obligation to the Church. Since God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. This commandment have we received from Him, “That he who loveth God love his brother also.” Our love for Christ must he shown by loving deeds to His own. “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” “The perfecting of the saints …the edifying of the body of Christ” is an object dear to our Father’s heart; and for this purpose He has endowed each of us with some spiritual gift; and we owe it to the saints to develop and use that gift: for when it is not exercised the whole body suffers from the lack of it. When we are not in a spiritually healthy condition we become a burden and a care to others (1 John 4:11, 21; John 13:34-35; Eph. 4:12; Rom. 12:4-10; 1 Cor. 12:25-26).

Our responsibility to the world chiefly concerns our testimony. We have been put in trust with the Gospel and charged to publish it with and by the Holy Spirit, for we have a part in the taking out of the nations of a people for His Name. Paul the Apostle realized this responsibility when he wrote, “I am debtor both to Greeks, and to Barbarians; …so, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also … for though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 1:14-15; 1 Cor. 9:16).

We have the responsibility to commend Christ to the world by our life. Our walk, our talk, our interests, and the manner in which we meet the vicissitudes of life provide us with plenty of opportunity to prove the power and the desirability of the salvation which is in Christ

Jesus. We can show the world how a Christian should endure trial or adversity; how to suffer bereavement, or pain, or injustice; how to carry success; and how to die: in all circumstances we may bring glory to our Saviour's Name. Even the opposition, the adverse criticism, the ridicule which we sometimes encounter, can be used to magnify Christ; for there is no better answer to these things than a holy life, "for so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Peter 2:15).

The Doctrine of the Cross (Part 1) (June 1964)

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F. J. Squire

The four “Gospels” narrate the suffering, death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; and those accounts constitute the factual basis of “the preaching of the Cross.” All that the Holy Spirit has to teach those who have received that preaching and believed in His Name can be included in the term “the doctrine of the Cross.”

This teaching is generally viewed under different “aspects”; but these are somewhat artificial: for in the Scriptures they comprise one indivisible body of truth. Considering them in this manner however, enables us to apprehend the truth ‘little by little.’ The serious Bible student will endeavour to comprehend these different phases in their entirety and observe how they complement and illuminate one another.

In this series it is not claimed that every angle of ‘the apostles’ doctrine has been included; but it is recommended that the example of the Bereans be emulated and the Scriptures searched to find ‘whether these things are so.’ The series will consist of: 1 The Manifestation of the Love of God. II Triumph and Deliverance. III Propitation. IV Reconciliation. V Justification. VI Sanctification.

The Manifestation Of The Love Of God

The Cross manifested the love of God: the Father's love for the Son; the Son's love for the Father; the love of God to mankind; the love of Christ for His Church, and His love for individuals.

The Father's Love For The Son

The greatest joy of the Man of Sorrows was His Father's love. He prayed: 'O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was… for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world.' What was that 'glory' but the eternal love which subsisted between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit: the bond of Deity? (John 17:5,24).

Christ Jesus is "The Son of His love: … Who is the image of the invisible God, Firstborn of all creation: for by Him were all things created that are in the heavens, and that are on the earth, visible and invisible, … all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist…that in all things He might have preeminence." "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things unto His hand." This authority He never relinquished; for on the eve of the Cross He knew that "the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God" (Col. 1:13-18, Newb. marg.; John 3:35; 13:2).

However, the Father's greatest love-gift to His Son was not the possession of those 'all things' which He created, but the inheritance of a people for His Name. That people was foreknown and chosen in Him before anything was created, and predestinated to be conformed to His image; that Heaven might be filled with a multitude of children: every one of whom would be resplendent with the holy character of the Beloved

One and united to Him in the bond of everlasting love. Their names were written in the Book of Life, for they were predestinated to sonship (John 17:23; Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:4-5; Luke 10:20).

But the whole world lay in the wicked one and those whom God loved were alienated from Him and enemies by wicked works; so that the bringing of those many sons to glory necessitated their redemption from the authority of Satan and the power of sin. Therefore the Father willed the Cross; and to this end He sent the Son of His love to be the Saviour of the world. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself frequently mentioned this truth, for in the Gospel according to John it is recorded over forty times.

Who can understand the infinite love of the Father for the Son? He is essentially the Father's Beloved One; and this could not be otherwise, for He is eternally the brightness of His glorious Being and the express image of His indescribably beautiful Person. Before He became incarnate it was written of Him: 'Behold My Servant, Whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in Whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him…' and in the days of His flesh: 'This is My beloved Son: in whom I am well pleased' (Isa. 42:1; Matt. 17:5).

When He stood before the Cross, in the full realization of all that He was about to suffer at the hands of evil men, and most of all to the awful burden of the judgment of God upon the sin of the world, with its unutterable shame and sorrow, He was conscious of His Father's fellowship and He was able to rejoice in a fresh outpouring of His love, occasioned by His perfect obedience to His will: "Therefore doth My Father love

Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again." The Cross constitutes the eternal testimony to the Father's love for His Son; and this was demonstrated by His resurrection and exaltation. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow… and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:6-11; John 10:17).

This aspect of the Cross was beautifully illustrated by the offering up of Isaac by Abraham. In that trial God particularly emphasized Abraham's love for his son. As God saw the broken heart of the father as he took the knife to slay his beloved son, He foresaw His own great heart of love being torn with grief as He would give His own Beloved One to sorrow and death; for He knew that as He hung upon that Cross there could be no voice to hold back the hand of judgment, for none could be offered in His stead. There is little doubt that on mount Moriah the father's suffering was greater than that of the son, for he received the blessing: 'By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee….because thou hast obeyed My voice' (Gen. 22:1-18).

The Son's Love For Tile Father

"Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: …Then said I, Lo, I come… to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart" (Heb. 10:5-9; Psa. 40:6-8).

The Lord taught His own that their love for Him must be demonstrated by His will; and this truth He exemplified in His own life. ‘As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.’ ‘I come to do Thy will, O God’ meant to the Lord Jesus Christ a whole life of obedience to the will of God, culminating in the supreme act of devotion and worship of the Cross (John 15:9-10).

The Lord Jesus loved His Father and He delighted to do His will; and He knew all that was involved in the doing of that will. He knew that His Father had sent Him to do the work which none other could do: the work of redemption. The Lord desired that all the world should know that in going to the Cross He was manifesting His love for His Father by obedience to His will. He said to His disciples: But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do.’ He counted it the greatest possible honour to lay down His life on the Cross in obedience to His Father’s will and to glorify Him in death and resurrection as He had done in His life (John 14:31; 17:1).

God’s Love For Mankind

God seeks to be loved by men, for He is Love. When man sinned God was grieved, for He had lost that which brought Him joy; and from that time He has sought to bring men back into the communion of love with Himself: the place of blessing. In the course of the fulfilment of this great purpose, He chose Israel; and He gave them a two-fold reason why He did choose them:

‘Because the Lord loved you …’ and ‘Because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers.’ That oath was not confined to one nation but included ‘all families of the earth.’ God continually reminded Israel of His love: ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love … Yea, He loved the people’… ‘I have loved you, saith the Lord’: and He sought to beloved in return. True it was that He demanded obedience to His holy law, but not servility born of fear; but that delight in His will which is the evidence of love for Him which is mentioned in the second commandment:… them that love Me, and keep My commandments.’ The first and greatest commandment is, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thine heart.. (Deut. 7:8; Exodus 20:6; Matt. 22:37-38).

The heavens declare the glory of God; the creation reveals that God is all-powerful; His works make known His righteousness; His laws manifest His wisdom; but the Cross tells us that God is Love. The more that we meditate on the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ the more we know of that great love wherewith He loved us — that love which passeth knowledge. The Holy Spirit points to the Cross as the evidence of the love of God to men: not to Israel only but to all the world: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”…“God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”…”In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him” (Psa 19:1; Rom. 1:20; Psa. 145:17; Psa. 19:7; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:9).

Christ's Love For His Own

The Lord Jesus Christ knew His own from the beginning, for they had been chosen in Him before the foundation of the world that they might be holy and without blame before Him in love; and predestinated to be conformed to His image. With the Cross in view He said, 'I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd' (John 10:14-16).

Even though at that time not all of those whom His Father had given Him had come to Him, for most of them had not been born, He loved them 'As the Father loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.' He saw them as one flock. He prayed for them: that they might be sanctified; that they might be kept from the world; that they might partake of the Father's love; that they might behold His glory and be with Him where He is; but He knew that the only means whereby His prayers for them could be answered was the Cross (John 15:9).

In the Cross He offered to His Father a sweetsmelling sacrifice that He might redeem us to Himself and thereby He fulfilled the Father's purpose. The greatest proof of the love of Christ both for His Father and for His bride the Church was the Cross, for it is written: 'Christ also loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour…Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the

washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spat, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish' (Eph. 5:2,25-27).

Our presence in glory will constitute eternal testimony to His great love for His own on the Cross; for the song of the redeemed will be 'unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever' (Rev. 1:5-6).

He Loved Me

Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it; but there are at least two men mentioned in the Scriptures who rejoiced in that love in an intimate personal sense. John the Apostle described himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," as though he were the only one beloved of the Lord; and Paul, by whom the Holy Spirit gave us the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, wrote of "the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (John 21:20; Gal. 2:20).

Salvation is an intensely personal matter, for God deals with us as individuals. We were born individually and we are individually accountable to Him. Unless our individual relationship to God our Father is right it cannot be so to others. He demands the first place in our thoughts, our affections, and our wills and this cannot be realized unless we believe that on the Cross our Lord demonstrated His love for us as individuals. Our God is much closer to each of His own than our most intimate loved one, for by His Spirit He dwells within our hearts; and He seeks to impart to us as individuals the fulness

of His love; as Paul prayed: ‘That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with (into) all the fulness of God’ (Eph. 3:17-19).

The Doctrine of Christ (Part 2) (Aug-Sept 1964)

From Food for the Flock, Aug-Sept 1964.

F. J. Squire

Triumph And Deliverance

The first man sinned: and in him the whole race. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned …” A two-fold effect resulted from the first man’s sin: he became guilty before God; and he became subject to Satan (Rom. 5:12).

When Adam sinned, he suffered spiritual death. In the day that he sinned there entered sorrow, and tears, and trouble, and pain. His whole existance was enveloped in death, for he was without God, without life, without hope, dead in sins; but he was also a child of disobedience and therefore under the righteous condemnation of God; a child of wrath facing an eternity of judgment.

He was also in bondage to Satan. He had been taken captive by the devil at his will. Because he now loved sin, he was no longer able or willing to resist the temptations of the devil, for he was in his power. Satan became the god of this world: “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” The whole world was under his domination. The character of the devil began to be manifested in the lives of men, until it had to be written: ‘And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in

the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart … for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth'; and though God destroyed man from the face of the earth, his corrupt nature reappeared after the judgment of the deluge (Gen. 6:5-6, 12).

God's Declaration of War Upon Satan

The word which the Lord God addressed to Satan after the entrance of sin was actually a declaration of war: "Because thou hast done this …I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." This was the first prophecy. The devil "…was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh the lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." True to his nature, he lied to Eve; and in spite of God's warning, both she and Adam believed the lie and found themselves in the bondage of corruption. Instead of being loved, God came to be hated by His creatures. Then the judgment of God was pronounced: firstly upon Satan; then upon the woman; and finally upon the man (Gen. 3:14-15; John 8:44).

But at the same time God revealed the plan of redemption. Since by man came death, by man must come life from the dead. The first man failed-utterly. Being under the authority of Satan, he had neither the will nor the power to return to God. Then for God's purpose there must be a second Man who would not fail: One capable of suffering death without being subject to it. God therefore ordained the incarnation of His Son, for

He alone could fulfil all the obligations of the Redeemer. The Son of God must become Son of Man.

The Second Man the Lord from Heaven

When the time had fully come. God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons… For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil' (Gal. 4:4-5, RSV.; 1 John 3:8).

The Lord Jesus Christ was fully aware of this aspect of His coming for from the beginning of His ministry He began to destroy the works of the devil. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." The powers of evil were also aware of His identity and purpose, for in the synagogue at Capernaum He opened His attack upon them. "And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God!" And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him! And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him. And immediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee" (Acts 10:38; Mark 1:23-28).

When the Pharisees accused the Lord of casting out demons by Beelzebub, He used the occasion to announce His power over the forces of Satan and to foretell by implication the mighty work which He was about to do against the devil and his hosts: "…if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house… When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils" (Matt. 12:25-29; Luke 11:21-22).

From the time of His coming into the world, the Lord Jesus Christ was the object of Satan's enmity. Every evil means at his disposal was used against God's holy Son. This enmity was foretold by God Himself. Satan's attacks were of two kinds, characteristic of his nature: he used corruption and violence. Satan sought to corrupt His soul, as he had done so successfully in the case of the first Adam. By direct attack upon Him in the wilderness he sought to tempt the Lord by appealing to the three lusts: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; but as there was no sin in Him, Satan was repulsed and rebuked. Then he sought to discredit His teaching, and he even tried popularity; but the Lord was proof against all these. Then he resorted to violence. He made several attempts to bring about His death prematurely. Finally, when God's time had come, Satan loosed all the iniquitous forces of his power against Him: resulting in His sufferings and culminating in the Cross (Gen. 3:15).

The Lord’s Power Over Satan

The Lord Jesus Christ was the one man over whom Satan had no power. From the beginning the Lord resisted all the onslaughts of Satan — as might be expected of the Holy One of God — with divine dignity; but when the sufferings of the Cross were about to begin He said, ‘Father, the hour is come…’ From then on He yielded to His enemies. His attitude towards what He was about to suffer was that of submission: “No man taketh it (His life) from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.” Peter, who was a witness of His sufferings, wrote: “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously …” (John 10:18; 1. Pet. 2:21-24).

On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit revealed through Peter that, in spite of the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ had been crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men, His death was according to the predetermined plan of God. They nailed Him to a cross, yet, in that moment of utter weakness, when the powers of darkness seemed to be victorious, God the Omnipotent was, by that very act of suffering death by crucifixion, rendering the devil himself powerless and working deliverance for every one who was in bondage to him. After the Lord’s death, God displayed “the exceeding greatness of His power” by raising Him from the dead, thereby fulfilling His master plan of redemption: the bringing into being

of an entirely new creation: holy in character as Himself (Acts 2:23-24; 2 Cor. 5:14-18).

The Lord's Triumph

The means whereby the Conqueror overcame Satan was two-fold: by enduring the judgment of God against sinners and delivering them from sin's bondage: by His blood and by His power: by His death and by His resurrection. As He approached the Cross He said: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die." God's righteous judgment was executed against His beloved Son on behalf of sinners; and as Satan derives his power over men from their sin, the taking away of that sin deprives him of his authority (John 12:31-33).

The Second Man, the Lord from Heaven, He against Whom we have sinned, became answerable for the sin of the world and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; as it is written: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" "… and you, being dead in your sins, and the circumcision of your flesh hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a

show of them openly, triumphing over them in it (the Cross)" (Heb. 2:14-15, 9:26; Col. 2:13-15).

Having fully and finally dealt with sins, the Lord rose from among the dead and thereby delivered His own from the kingdom of darkness and translated them by a new creation into His own kingdom. Now for them death has lost its terror, for He has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. Satan and sin have dominion over them no longer for they have passed from death to life. Those who were once slaves to sin now serve the Lord Christ. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Col. 1:12-14; Rom. 6:1-18).

Moreover, "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" has been cast out and replaced by Him for Whom His own were originally created — the Holy Spirit of God. Satan usurped power over the creation; but he can have no power at all over God's new creation; for it is in Christ: "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." The Holy Spirit Himself is in possession of the hearts of His redeemed ones; and from those hearts, once full of enmity against God, flows the love and worship and praise for which God in love created man in the beginning (Eph. 1:21).

By the Cross the world and its god have been judged, and God had declared that the execution of that judgment will surely come to pass. It is written: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire

and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:10).

The Doctrine of the Cross (Part 3) (Oct 1964)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 10 No. 10, Oct 1964.

F. J. Squire

Propitiation

Sin Is Against God

Isaiah wrote of, 'The Lord, He against Whom we have sinned'; and the truth cannot be overemphasized that all sin is against God: for the acknowledgment of this truth is essential to an understanding of God's gracious dealings with men in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Experimental knowledge of the grace of God begins when one comes to the place where David was when he confessed: 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest.' When David said this, he knew that he was also guilty of sins against a number of people, but he realized that one cannot sin against men without sinning against God. We are accountable to God for all our sins (Isa 42:24; Psa. 51:4).

Sin And Death Are Inseparable

God is love; and it causes Him sorrow to see men suffering in their sins; and that not only because sin itself is evil and wholly unprofitable to men, but also because sin cannot be separated from death: here and hereafter. God has revealed this very clearly in His word: '… for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou

shalt surely die … the soul that sinneth, it shall die … the wages of sin is death …'; and He has warned men of the awful judgment that awaits unrepentant sinners: '… when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance upon those who do not know God and upon those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. They shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might.' 'But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liers, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death' (Gen. 2:17, Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9, RSV: Rev. 21:8, RSC).

God's Righteousness And Man's Sin

God is not willing that any should perish; but because He is righteous, He demands a propitiation for sins — or all sinners must die the second death; for 'righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne' and "The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works.' Sin cannot be disregarded by Him, for He loves righteousness and hates wickedness (Psa. 97:2; Psa. 145:17).

God's Grace And Man's Sin

Because He is gracious, God has provided the propitiation which He righteously demanded. This great purpose was in His mind when 'Christ, as a Lamb without blemish and without spot was foreordained before the foundation of the world'; it was set forth typically by God Himself to the first man immediately

after the entrance of sin — by the coats of skin wherewith He covered him; and He kept it before men in the ceremonial law until the Great Propitiation 'was manifested in these last times for us' (1 Pet. 1:19-20).

The terminology of the ceremonial law is used in the New Testament to teach this aspect of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the 'Propitiatory' or 'Mercy-seat' was the golden cover of the ark of the covenant in the most holy place of tabernacle and temple. Upon that propitiatory was sprinkled the blood of the sin offerings when the priest of Israel went '…alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present…' The blood-sprinkled propitiatory became the place of communion between God and His people (Heb. 9:7-9; Exod. 25:17-22; 29:42-43; 30:6).

The most important day of each year to Israel was undoubtedly the day of atonement; and the most significant event of that day was the sprinkling of the blood of the sin offering on and before the mercy-seat in the most holy place by the priest on behalf of the people. This act foreshadowed year by year that great event of supreme import when the Son of God as the Great High Priest, after the shedding of His own blood as the Sacrifice, presented that precious blood before the throne of God once for all: the true Propitiation for the sins of the whole world. It was written of one day in history that 'when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him…' That day was the one true 'day of atonement' (Luke 23:33).

He Is The Propitiation

'And the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no judgment. And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm brought salvation unto Him; and His righteousness, it sustained Him.' 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins … Jesus Christ the righteous One: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' 'Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood.' 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' These Scriptures leave no doubt as to the identity of the Propitiation which God has provided (Isa. 59:15-16; 1 John 1:7; 2:1-2; 4:10; Rom. 3:24-25).

In becoming our Propitiation the Lord Jesus Christ suffered the judgment of death on account of our sin. The Cross revealed God's righteous attitude towards sin. There could be nothing but judgment for sin — even when that sin was borne by the Holy Son of God. God judged sin and sinners in the holy flesh of His beloved One. 'For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us…' God dealt with His Son as the guilty One; for upon Him was laid the iniquity of us all; but we must never forget that He Who suffered that judgment was actually He against Whom those sins had been committed and to Whom we are accountable. He Who bore the inevitable judgment of sins was the only One Who could forgive them (Rom. 8:3-4, RSV).

The sprinkled blood — whether on the altar or the propitiatory — constituted the evidence of the death of the sacrifice; so it came to pass that He Who was God manifest in flesh presented His own blood before God's righteous throne as the evidence of His death on behalf of sinners. His entrance into the holiest by the way of the Cross opened the way for His own to enter into the presence of the Father. We are now exhorted by the Spirit to enter boldly by His precious blood (John 13:33, 14:6, 27-31; 16:28; 17:11; Heb. 9:12; 10:19-22).

The Cross proclaims Him 'a Just God and a Saviour'; for His purpose in that Cross was 'that He might be just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' Our great salvation, being wholly of God, is based upon His unassailable righteousness. It might well be asked, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Shall God, Who has justified us? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. "This is the Name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our righteousness" (Isa. 45:21; Rom. 3:26; 8:33; Jer. 23:6).

Sinners can never 'propitiate' God. If any justification is possible for sinful men it must come from the Just One Himself, for He alone can forgive sins against Himself. The blood-sacrifices of the heathen and pagan world are the result of the corruption of the truth which was given by God in type to the first man, and that corruption is perpetuated by the evil one in order to attempt to discredit the Sacrifice of the Cross. The devil's lie interprets such sacrifices as a means for appeasing an angry Deity; ignoring the truth that it was God Himself Who provided the one acceptable Propitiation in the blood of His Cross.

The Doctrine of the Cross (Part 4) (Nov 1964)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 10 No. 11, Nov 1964.

Reconciliation

F. J. Squire

The Enmity of the Natural Man

When the Lord Jesus Christ sent His disciples to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” He warned them not to expect to be welcomed by the people. “Behold,” He said, “I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves… beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;” and when preparing them for the wider ministry to the nations He told them that they must be ready to encounter hatred and even death for His sake. They were being sent to a world at enmity with God and their message was the word of reconciliation’ (Matt. 10:16-17; John 15:18-16:3).

The Holy Scriptures bear abundant testimony to the enmity of the natural man against God. ‘There is none that seeketh after God … the whole world lieth in the wicked one … alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works … the carnal mind is enmity against God … having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God… all the world guilty before God.’ These are but a few of many similar Scriptures; and there are none that contradict or modify these truths. But the most convincing evidence of the enmity of man

is the Cross; they hated Him without a cause and manifested that hatred by crucifying the Lord of glory.

Reconciliation Made

“But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins,” by that very Cross which demonstrated the hatred of man against Himself, bore the judgment which was due to men on account of their sins. The Cross manifested the ‘exceeding sinfulness of sin’ as even the law could not do, but at the same time it revealed the exceeding riches of God’s grace (Eph. 2:4; Rom. 7:13).

‘It pleased the Father that in Christ Jesus should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself… and you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in His sight…’ There was no third party involved in the transaction; it was entirely of God. ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself: not imputing their trespasses unto them …’ God Himself removed the cause of the enmity — man’s sin; and then the enmity itself (Col. 1:19-22; 2 Cor. 5:19).

Reconciliation Proclaimed

Christ has made peace. This is ‘the word of reconciliation’: the good news of the grace of God. Christ has entered into the holiest by His own blood and so opened the new and living way to the Father.

This message was first proclaimed to the very men who were responsible for the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Unto you first,” said Peter to them, “God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.’ But the blessing was not confined to Israel, for after the Lord had died and risen again from among the dead, He came, and by the Spirit ‘preached peace to them which were afar off, and to them were nigh.’ The word has been proclaimed to all nations, for Jews and Gentiles alike need to be reconciled to God. Paul wrote to the Gentiles: “Now then we are ambasasdors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ’s stead, Be ye reconciled to God.” For He hath made Him to be sin for us Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him’ (Eph. 2:17; see also Isa. 57:19; 2 Cor. 5:1921; Acts 3:26).

God actually pleads with men to be reconciled to Him. Through Isaiah He said: ‘I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee’ (Isa. 44:22).

Reconciliation Must be Accepted

Reconciliation was made on the cross; and it is offered to men in their sins, to meet their deepest need; but to be effective it must be accepted by both parties. But receiving the reconciliation is not merely believing the message; the reconciliation is in Christ Jesus and it is only when He is received that peace is imparted. Men at enmity with God must be willing to lay down their arms of rebellion and receive forgiveness of sins on God’s terms: which are unconditional surrender to His will; for when we receive Christ Jesus we receive the Lord: Who demands our whole being: spirit, soul and body (Rom. 5:1; 1 Thess. 5:23).

The Nature of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a work worthy of God. He takes those who were His enemies and makes them His children. God has forgiven our sins; but forgiveness alone would not have reconciled us to Him, for the natural man has no desire for God. But by our faith in Christ we have received the Holy Spirit and are born into the family of God. “Ye have received the Spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God; and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ’ (Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:15-17; Gal. 4:5-7).

The reality of our reconciliation is shown by the change in our hearts towards God. ‘Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, Who through Christ reconciled us to Himself …’ Those in Christ, in-dwelt by the Spirit, manifest the life of God. The eyes of their understanding are enlightened; the love of God is poured into their hearts; and they seek to know and do the will of God. ‘If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life’ (1 Cor. 5:17-18, RSV; Rom. 5:10).

His children love Him; His presence; His word; His people; and they live in the prospect of seeing Him face to face; but the fulness of reconciliation will be the fulfilment of their Father’s purpose to conform them fully to the image of His beloved Son: Who will present them to His Father: holy and unblameable and unreproveable in His sight; meet to be partakers of the

inheritance of the saints in light: faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Peace on Earth

The second chapter of Ephesians traces the transition of the redeemed from their natural condition in their sins to that position into which they have been brought through grace, even to membership in the family of God. It reads, in part: 'And you… who were dead in trespasses and sins … Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh … at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, Who hath made both (Jew and Gentile) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity … for to make in Himself of twain one new Man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby … for through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.'

This chapter also reveals God's plan for men to live together in peace by showing how the Lord Jesus Christ abolished the enmity between Jew and Gentile believers in Himself. All sorts and conditions of men are separated by what seem to be insurmountable differences; and history has shown that men cannot live in peace indefinitely, even though they may be related by ties of blood; and this in spite of man's best efforts to establish permanent 'world peace.'

But as long as men refuse to be reconciled to God there will be no ‘world peace’; for peace is to be found only in Christ, and God has declared that ‘there is no peace to the wicked.’ Men need to be reconciled to God before peace can rule their behaviour. Reconciliation with God includes reconciliation with men; for in Christ there is no nationality; no ‘apartheid’; no segregation; or any other barrier to unity. As saith the Scripture: ‘Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all.’ Because His own have the Spirit of God in their hearts, they are under the law of Christ to love one another. The communion of saints is one of our most treasured possessions in Christ (Isa 57:21; Col. 3:11; Gal. 3:28).

The one great need of the world therefore, is the Gospel of Christ; and the most urgent concern for the people of God should be the evangelization of the world. The Gospel can do far more than all the statesmen, or legislative bodies, or armaments, ever have done or could do: it can change mens’ hearts.

The Doctrine of the Cross (Part 3) (Dec 1964)

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F. J. Squire

Justification

The Righteousness of the Law

The basis of this righteousness was obedience. Moses taught: “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as He hath commanded us.…Ye shall therefore keep My statutes, and My judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.” It depended upon obedience to all the law, always. The Lord Jesus Christ confirmed this when He said to “a certain lawyer,” “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live” (Deut. 6:25; Lev. 18:5; Luke 10:28).

The Lord’s Interpretation of the Law

As the Lord Jesus Christ interpreted the law, all righteousness of man was swept away as inadequate to meet God’s requirements. In the sermon on the mount He showed that God read the heart and that motives and desires are before Him as actions. By His standard of truth it is evident that in the sight of God no man living can be justified by his own righteousness (Psa. 143:2).

At the same time, the Lord Himself fulfilled the law. He wrought out in His own life a righteousness which stood the test of the throne of God. He fulfilled His own interpretation of the law in its strictest sense. He merits

the title: ‘Jesus Christ the righteous One.’ He offended not in one point. Had He been a sinner He could never have become our Redeemer (Matt. 5:17-18; 1 John 2:1).

‘Why Then the Law?’

The law of Moses was never intended to be a means of justification. It revealed the sinful nature of man and emphasized the need of justification without supplying it. ‘…for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”… for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.’ ‘For by the law is the knowledge of sin.’ The law was given then to reveal the need of sinful men and to prepare the way for the revelation of the one way of justification (Gal. 2:21; 3:19-26; Rom. 3:20).

The Witness of the Law to the Righteousness of God

‘But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it.’ Wherein the righteousness of the law was inadequate, that in Christ is sufficient. Paul proclaimed at Antioch: ‘Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses’; and he wrote to the Galatians: ‘We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ,

even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified' (Rom. 3:21, RSV.; Acts 13:38-39; Gal. 2:16).

Tile Righteousness Which is of God

Justification is that position of acceptance with God into which the believer is brought in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Seven aspects of this justification are here considered.

Authorially, we are justified by God: As to the source of our justification, we are justified by God and by Him alone; in contrast to the righteousness of the law which depended upon the obedience of man. 'It is God that justified … that He might be just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus' (Rom. 8:33, 3:26).

Conditionally, we are justified by grace: The condition upon which we may obtain justification is solely by the grace of God. 'Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.' This must be so, for before God, on account of our sins, we merit nothing but condemnation. No other way of obtaining acceptance before God is open to sinful men. We are thrown upon His mercy; justice condemns us. Since this is so, how can God justify the sinner? Does God suspend the eternal law of righteousness which is the foundation of His throne? Not so; He Himself is just and the Justifier of the believer (Rom. 3:24-26).

Judicially, we are justified by His blood: The law demanded obedience; righteousness was the reward. But to those who failed in this obedience — and there are none that sinneth not— it was not simply a matter of

losing a reward; the offender finds himself under a grievous curse; ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.’ Sin merits death; all sinners must die: law or no law (Dent. 27:26; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 2:11-12).

God has not annulled these Scriptures. He, in justifying the believer has vindicated the law. He has reckoned with the truth — the truth that we are sinners and must suffer death. God has provided a way consistent with His own righteousness whereby we may die; whereby we may meet the righteous requirement of the law and yet live before Him. He has provided a propitiation. ‘Justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him’; judicially therefore, we are justified by His blood. The blood of Christ is the means whereby we may meet our deserved fate. God reckons (or imputes) His death to us as our death. Our debt is paid in full; henceforth God sees us in the risen Christ. Our old sinful self, condemned and undone is for ever put away from the face of God. The law is established. We have risen in Christ, and because this is so (Rom. 3:31,5:9):

Positionally, we are justified in Christ: “…ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus … justified in Christ.” We are justified because we are one with and in the Lord Jesus Christ: that ‘new Man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.’ Our standing is in Him. Since we are partakers of Christ, how can we be otherwise than accepted before God? We are accepted in the Beloved One, and all the beauties of His holy character are imputed to us. There is no justification outside of Christ (Gal. 2:17; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 1:6; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Actually, we are justified by the Spirit: The practical means whereby justification becomes a reality in our experience are two-fold: by the Holy Spirit and by the exercise of faith. By nature we are not inclined either to desire or to seek justification before God, but God Himself, by His Spirit leads us to the realization of the truth and presents Christ to us to meet our need; so that justification becomes ours by the Spirit. We are justified by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:11).

Experimentally, we are justified by faith: “To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness …a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law …being justified by faith we have peace with God… even as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness, know ye that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham.” The epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians teach this aspect of Justification (Rom. 4:5; Gal. 3:6-7). There is yet another aspect to be considered: the practical manifestation of justification.

Evidentially, we are justified by works: Although we can by no means obtain justification by our works, for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, unless our righteousness reveals itself by righteous acts, it is a justification of theory and not of fact. We are justified by works: not to obtain it, but because we have obtained it by grace. ‘Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.’ Abraham’s faith revealed itself in works which could be seen by all. He showed his faith in God by obedience to His will; which will be the experience of all who are truly justified before God. Our standing is

glorious indeed; but even that does not absolve us from blame when we walk in sin (1 John 3:7).

“This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.” “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” Even after we believe God we are no more capable in ourselves of producing righteous acts than we were before; but by that act of saving faith in Christ we owned our death and we received the new life. We became indwelt by the Spirit of God. There is now a Living Power, even God Himself within us, enabling us to bring forth fruit to God, fruit acceptable to Him because it is of Himself (Titus 3:8; James 2:14-26).

Christ by His Spirit is made unto us righteousness. To have this righteousness manifested in the daily walk, it is necessary to walk in the Spirit, thereby allowing Him to reveal His presence through our members. We are justified by works: not the works of the flesh, but the fruit of the Spirit; so that our righteousness is wholly of God, whether before God or before men.

A man was once urging a younger man to go into Christian work in mission countries. The younger man answered with an excuse that had a familiar ring:

“But I have never felt any compelling call to give my life in that way.”

“Are you sure you are within calling distance?” was the disquieting reply.

The Doctrine of the Cross (Nov 1965)

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Fred J. Squire

6. Sanctification

Sanctification Through the Cross

The Lord Jesus Christ prayed to His Father concerning ‘those whom Thou hast given Me out of the world.’ In the course of His prayer He said: ‘Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth... and for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth’ (John 17:17, 19).

They were to be sanctified through the truth; but His sanctification -- the object of which was the Cross — must precede theirs; for the truth concerning Christ crucified was to be the ground of their sanctification. It remained to the Holy Spirit to reveal how this prayer of the Lord would be answered. He caused it to be written: ‘…Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish’ (Eph. 5:25-27).

The Ministry of the Spirit

The Hebrew term for ‘holy’ is generally supposed to mean ‘separated, set apart.’ But this is only its secondary signification, derived from the purpose of that which is holy. Its primary meaning is to be splendid,

beautiful, pure, and uncontaminated. God is holy — as the Absolutely Pure, Resplendent, and Glorious One. Hence this is symbolised by the light. God dwelleth in light that is unapproachable … and Israel was to be a holy people as dwelling in the light, through its covenant-relationship with God. It was not the selection of Israel from all other nations that made them holy, but the relationship to God into which it brought the people.' (Dr. A. Edersheim, 'Bible History,' III, p. 110).

The children of God are described as 'saints' or holy ones, for a holy life is their normal experience. Before the foundation of the world they were chosen in Christ that they might be holy and they were predestinated to be conformed to His image; and that purpose will be fulfilled, for 'when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.' That we might be holy, God has imparted to us His holy nature; and in addition to this He Himself has taken up His dwelling within each of His own; so that 'The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' Our sanctification is the peculiar ministry of the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:16, 29; 1 Cor. 15:49; Eph. 1:4; 1 John 3:1-2).

But although we enjoy such great privileges as our standing in Christ, the possession of His holy nature, the continual presence of the Holy Spirit and the prospect of being fully conformed to His image, it is unfortunately true that we often fail to manifest His holiness, and our lives are sometimes more conformed to the world than to the likeness of His Son; for we still have within us our old Adam nature: whose purpose is to hinder every activity of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Therefore the word of God abounds with exhortations to holiness, for example: 'As obedient children, not fashioning

yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, “Be ye holy: for I am holy”’ (1 Peter 1:1416).

God has endowed His children with the power to yield their wills to either the flesh or the Spirit; so that we are exhorted to ‘Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.’ To accomplish this end the teaching of the Spirit might be summarized in the two words: ‘Believe’ and ‘Obey’: firstly, to believe the Word of God concerning our having died to sin with Christ and risen with Him to share His life; and secondly, to manifest that faith by a two-fold obedience: to ‘put off the old man’ and to ‘put on the new man’ (Gal. 5:16).

Sanctification Through the Truth

In the New Testament the so-called ‘old man’ is contrasted with the ‘new man’; he is old, not because of any distinction due to age or time, but because of his relationship to the original creation: of which the first man Adam was the federal head and from whom his fallen nature is derived. The character of the old man is so corrupt as to merit nothing but death; and as all mankind share his nature all are under condemnation. This ‘old man’ has been declared by the Spirit of God to have been crucified with Christ, in order that the ‘body of sin’ might be destroyed, that henceforth His people need not serve sin.

In the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, God has created a ‘new man’: consisting of Christ the Head and including all of His redeemed ones: who constitute the members of His body and who partake of His life and nature. ‘Just as the (human) body is one (being) and has

many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with (the) Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit' (1 Cor. 12:12-13, RSV).

We were united to Him in His death, wherein we died to sin; we were united to Him in His resurrection, wherein we received His life by the Spirit; and, since our Lord ascended to the right hand of the Father, so we were made to sit together with Him there; and as God glorified His Son so we share His glory. He is our Head and we have no life but His. The fact that the Spirit dwells within us is the assurance that we shall one day be with Him in body as we are now in spirit. 'For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified' (Rom. 8:29-30).

This truth is the doctrinal basis for the practice of holiness; and on the ground of which the Spirit of God exhorts believers to reckon themselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the truth which is symbolized in believers' baptism: wherein the believer identifies himself with Christ Jesus in His death and resurrection. Paul uses the symbol to teach the doctrine of sanctification. 'Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in

newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God …' (Rom. 6:3-10).

Be Ye Holy!

Although judicially the old man was crucified with Christ and with Him we died to sin and in Christ we partake of His life, it rests with the individual believer as to whether or not he makes use of the power of God which is available to him to live a holy life. It is only as he obeys the exhortation of the Spirit to walk in Him that he can prove the blessedness of practical sanctification. Therefore the Spirit continues: 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace' (Rom. 6:11-14).

'He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which

died for them, and rose again… Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God…

The believer is to see to it that those ‘old things’ actually do pass away from his life. The exercise of his own will is necessary to bring this about; therefore the Spirit specifically mentions not only those old things but also the new things that are of God: that his walk might be according to the rule of the new creation (2 Cor. 5:15-17; Gal. 6:15-16).

Things Old and New

‘…if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness… Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children: and walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour…’ (Eph. 4:21-24; 5:1-2).

Here we are exhorted to ‘put off’ and to ‘put on’; to discard the grave-clothes of the old man who was put to death, and to don the robe of righteousness of God’s providing, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and to make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof (Rom. 13:14).

‘If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the

world? … If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."

'Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.'

'Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony…' (Col. 2:20: 3:17, RSV).

By obedience to these exhortations we shall 'walk as He walked.'